

CPTA CHRONICLE



KNOW YOUR
RIGHTS:
WOMEN'S RIGHTS
IN THE
CLASSROOM

Benefit Spotlight:
Student Loan
Forgiveness

News:
EXCEPTIONAL
TURNOUT FOR
THE PHONE
BANKS



REMEMBER TO CHECK OUT OUR
WEBSITE:

WWW.CARLEPLACETA.ORG
(OR THE APP)

CPTA Chronicle

Quarterly Newsletter

168 Cherry Lane, Carle Place, NY 11514

<https://www.carleplaceta.org/>

@carleplaceteachersassociation

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A calendar with our local's events, neighboring locals' events, and school events



LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Please enjoy our latest issue of the CPTA Chronicle. Again, special thanks to our Public Relations Chairperson, Sam Plotkin, for putting it all together, and thank you to everyone who contributed to its content.

This year, the members of the CPTA faced the loss of our dear friend and colleague, Ro Hunter, but as always, we pulled through it together. Through all the ups and downs that made up this year, we stood tall in the face of every challenge that came our way. Many times, it was not easy, but in the end, we found a way to have each other's backs while simultaneously providing a fantastic education for all of our students.

The CPTA Board of Directors and I remain committed to ensuring that the rights of our membership are always protected. This year, we:

- Negotiated a \$7,500 dependent care benefit that is now part of our contract
- Successfully negotiated impact bargaining and secured Monday WIN time for our members
- Secured lane advancements for over 40 members
- Obtained payments for members who were not compensated for professional development
- Acted quickly to rectify the missed salary check issue so members would not be financially harmed by the error
- Renewed our CD for the Health and Welfare Fund to provide added financial protection should the district arbitrarily stop paying us
- Continued offering free Student Loan Forgiveness seminars along with our Defensive Driver classes
- Continued providing the membership with one of the best Health and Welfare Funds around

These are just some of the day-to-day actions the CPTA takes to protect our members and improve our professional lives.

It is truly an honor to represent all of you, and I wish each of you a fantastic summer filled with everything that is great in life.

All the best,

Mike



**“The CPTA
Board of
Directors and I
remain
committed to
ensuring that the
rights of our
membership are
always
protected.”**

Beyond the Classroom

Featuring teachers who accomplish the impossible, who go above and beyond, who enrich the lives of our students and enhance our school culture regularly... and who are not always acknowledged for it.* All teachers featured here have been nominated by their colleagues!

This edition features Mrs. Carolyn Cowan, a 33rd-year teacher at Cherry Lane. She began her career substitute teaching in several different school districts on Long Island for one year before being hired by the New York City Department of Education. She then taught in the Bronx for two years at P.S. 121, where she worked in a self-contained MIS-IV Special Education classroom.

In 1996 she was hired by Carle Place Union Free School District, where she has spent the past 30 years. She taught Kindergarten for 24 years before transitioning to 2nd grade which she has been teaching for the past 6 years.

Outside of the classroom:

According to Mrs. Cowan, "Outside of the classroom, I have been actively involved in many school and community initiatives. I currently organize the ALS fundraiser at Cherry Lane... This year's "Tattooing Teachers" fundraiser has already raised over \$1,000 in one week.

I also serve on the Cherry Lane Service Committee for BPT, coordinating a 2nd grade partnership with a local animal shelter to help animals find homes...

Over the years, I have served as a Kindergarten grade-level liaison and coordinated 2nd grade school trips, helping build strong connections within the school community."

In Her Words:

What was your favorite memory/biggest accomplishment working beyond the classroom?

One of my favorite accomplishments and traditions began when I was teaching Kindergarten. Each year, I had my students write about what they wanted to be when they grew up. I carefully saved those papers and, when the students became seniors in high school, I invited them back to my classroom for a special "Kindergarten Reunion."

During the reunion, the former students read their childhood writing aloud to my current class and then help my students create their own future goal papers. This has become an annual tradition that I have continued for the past 17 years.

It is truly one of the highlights of my year. There is something incredibly special about seeing my former students return as young adults and reconnecting with them after having taught them when they were just five years old. Watching their growth, hearing about their accomplishments, and sharing that experience with my current students is both meaningful and rewarding. I have continued this tradition in second grade as well, and it remains a cherished part of my teaching career.

What advice do you have for new teachers when it comes to getting involved?

One piece of advice I would give to new teachers is to get involved in the school community whenever possible. Carle Place Union Free School District has been such an important part of my life, both personally and professionally. Over the years, I have built many meaningful friendships with colleagues who have supported me through all of life's milestones – marriages, the birth of children, family losses, and so much more.

Being involved allows you to work closely with others, collaborate as a team, and build strong relationships based on trust and support. Teaching is not something you do alone; you rely on one another in countless ways each day. Through committees, school events, and shared experiences, you form connections that become lasting friendships.

The relationships I have made throughout my career are ones I will always cherish. Getting involved not only strengthens your connection to the school community, but it also makes your experience as an educator even more rewarding and fulfilling.



If you know a teacher who goes above and beyond in his/her role as an educator, let us know so he/she can be featured in a future edition! Email Splotkin@cps.k12.ny.us to nominate someone!

DEAR NORA*

ADVICE FROM KNOW-IT-
ALL NORA



**EACH MONTH, A DIFFERENT
TENURED TEACHER IS
SELECTED TO BE OUR
ANONYMOUS “KNOW-IT-
ALL” NORA**

If you are a teacher, new or seasoned, with a question for Nora, please email splotkin@cps.k12.ny.us to get your query answered!



By Know-It-All-Nora

Q

Dear Nora,
There are some students in my class who I am having a hard time reaching. I know there are other teachers with the same issues. Looking back, I wish there was a way for previous teachers to have communicated what worked for them to address these behaviors.

**With Love,
Discipline-Driven Daisy**

Dear Daisy,
There is a often under utilized feature of SchoolTool called “notes” that allows teachers to make keep records of communication with parents, or information about students that can be personal or public. It can be passed from year to year and may also help colleagues who share the same student. It is worth noting, that you should always check your spelling, grammar, and tone, as these can be subpoenaed!
Love,
Nora

Q

Dear Nora,
I have an issue with another teacher who shares my room. When my class is over I need to go to my duty. However, students arrive, and the other teacher does not show up until well after the bell rings, making me late for my duty. What can I do?

**Yours,
Frustrated Fred**

Dear Fred,
Your priority needs to be getting to your assigned duty. Thus, I have a couple of suggestions for you. First, do not allow students to enter your room as you are leaving. Lock the door behind you so that the other teacher can unlock it to let them in when he/she arrives. Second, it is important that you communicate with this late teacher. It is unfair that his/her tardiness is affecting your own responsibilities.
Love,
Nora

***Note- While “Nora” is always selected from a pool of tenured teachers, and is therefore a member of the CPTA, she is NEVER a board member. Thus, the advice is coming from a fellow teacher instead of the union itself. The opinions/answers given by “Nora” do not necessarily reflect those of NYSUT, the CPTA, or the CPTA Chronicle.**

Know Your CONTRACT

Teacher Load

These are not guaranteed.
Rather, if at all possible,
they will be followed.

* This number increases to
135-140 for all classes
other than specialty
classes.

a. Every effort shall be made:

- (1) To schedule and maintain maximum class sizes, excluding physical education classes, as follows:

Skills or remedial classes	20 pupils
Standard Classes	28 pupils
Kindergarten	25 pupils

- (2) Not to consign children to any classroom in larger numbers than the capacity of the teaching facilities available in that classroom.
- (3) * The maximum daily teaching pupil load for each teacher of English may not exceed 125 pupils and for each teacher of Social Studies may not exceed 130-135 pupils.
- (4) If any emergency situation should occur and a sixth teaching period is assigned to a teacher, the teacher shall be paid according to Article XIV(J).

If the teacher is assigned the extra class full-time for one-half (1/2) the year or more, the teacher will be paid at the rate of one-fifth (1/5) of salary for such coverage.

Teachers must cover a class for
half of the school year or more in
order to receive an extra 1/5th
salary.

Benefit Spotlight

Student Loan Forgiveness

Did you know that many educators may qualify for federal student loan forgiveness programs- often with lower monthly payments and potential tax-free forgiveness through programs like Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)?

Through a partnership with the Carle Place Teachers' Association, members now have access to the National Student Debt Forgiveness Center, a counseling program designed to help educators navigate the often confusing student loan process.

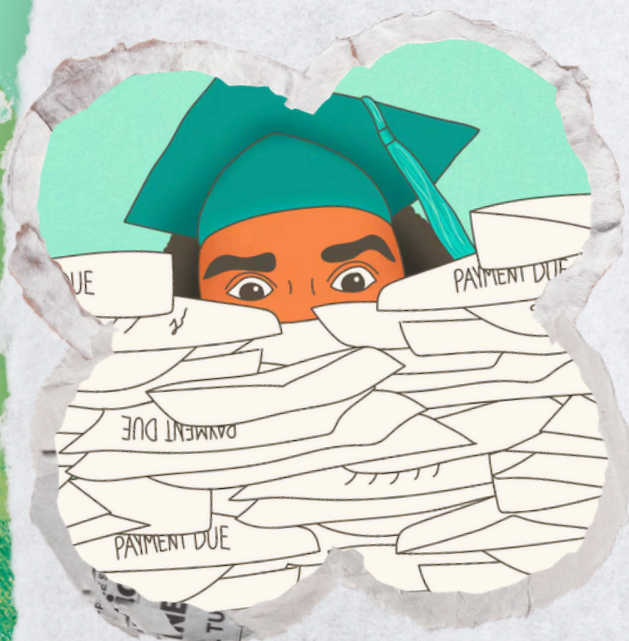
According to the program materials, most members with federal student loans may qualify for reduced monthly payments and/or forgiveness of a portion of their debt. The service provides:

- Free one-on-one consultations
- Assistance with federal student loan and PSLF paperwork
- Guidance on income-driven repayment options
- Ongoing support and annual reviews to ensure members remain on track for forgiveness

[Click here for more info](#)

The program reports an average forgiveness amount of more than \$22,000 for approved participants, with some members seeing significant annual savings through reduced payment plans.

Whether you are early in your career or have been paying student loans for years, this is a benefit worth exploring. Members can learn more and schedule a free consultation through the program website.



100%
PROGRAM SUCCESS RATE*
National average for eligible borrowers who navigate the PSLF program on their own and receive loan forgiveness: ~3%**
Success rate for eligible borrowers who use this program* to navigate PSLF or TLF programs and receive loan forgiveness: **100%**
Get on the fastest path to financial freedom from student loan debt. You have nothing to lose and potentially thousands to gain!

*National Student Debt Forgiveness Center Student Learning Program. **Dept. of Education 2023 PSLF

CONGRATULATIONS!



If you know of a colleague's good news, triumphs, etc. PLEASE (PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!!!) email splotkin@cps.k12.ny.us to have it featured here!

Engagements/Weddings

- Lexie Pulizzi (CL) is now engaged to her fiancé, Rob Russo.
- Nick Badaracco (RU) will be marrying Megan Delaney this summer.
- Alana Goldberg (RU) will be getting married to her fiancé, Anthony Camacho, this August.
- Christina Ragusa (MS) will be getting married this summer.



Family Growth

- Lindsey Ondris (HS) gave birth to James Michael Ondris III, February 3rd.
- Alyson Cruz (CL) welcomed Remi Rose Cruz to the world March 10th.
- Paul Randazzo (MS) welcomed Layla Marie Randazzo on March 11th.
- Amanda Tavares (CL) gave birth to Madison Rose Tavares on April 14th.
- Marissa Panicci (RU) will be having her daughter any day as of the writing of this newsletter!
- Ivana Pezza (MS) is expecting her third child, and first boy, on July 20th.
- Eilis Ryan (RU) is expecting a baby girl in November



Awards/Recognition

- Caryl Lorandini (HS) represented Carle Place at the Nassau BOCES Regional Showcase.
- Chris Vella (HS) has won the Student Organization Appreciation Award.
- Sandra Dietz (HS) has had the 2026 yearbook dedicated to her!



Member's Family Achievements

- Dan Krause's (MSHS) daughter, Danielle, has received the Long Island Teacher's Benevolent Fund Len Motisi Memorial Scholarship.
- Michael Bello's (MSHS) son has had a fantastic end of the year: he is graduating a year early AND played the male lead in Legally Blond!



Tenured

- Maureen LaMarca
- Alexa Pulizzi
- Nicole Santos
- Patricia Castillo-Lovaglia
- Jacqueline Michelli
- Ivana Pezza
- Jennifer Valerio



Retiring

- Carolyn Cowan (CL)
- Dana Olsen (MSHS)

Happy Retirement

Position/Title Changes

- Lauren McGovern is taking over the role of Head of Special Education in East Meadow CSD



New Hires

If you know of a colleague's good news, triumphs, etc. PLEASE (PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!!!) email splotkin@cps.k12.ny.us to have it featured here!



The More You Know

Women's Rights

Lena Ackerman, NYSUT's Assistant General Counsel, has created a series of webinars designed to educate teachers on our rights. To watch the full webinar that the following points came from, please click here-<https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/know-your-rights>.

- **Sex discrimination can include:**
 - Denying promotions or opportunities because someone is a woman.
 - Making assumptions about women with children or women of childbearing age.
 - Unequal pay for equal work.
 - Discriminatory dress codes or workplace expectations.
- **Note:** "Disparate treatment" is intentionally treating someone unfairly whereas "Disparate impact" includes workplace policies that appear neutral but disproportionately harm certain groups.



Pregnancy, Breastfeeding, and Workplace Accommodations

- Pregnancy discrimination is illegal under both federal and state law.
- Employers must provide reasonable accommodations for pregnancy-related conditions, such as:
 - Modified schedules.
 - Extra breaks.
 - Light-duty assignments.
 - Temporary reassignment away from hazardous work.
- Employers cannot force pregnant employees to take leave if accommodations allow them to continue working.
- New York's additional protections, include:
 - The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.
 - Beginning in January 2025, 20 hours of paid prenatal leave for healthcare appointments and procedures.
- Breastfeeding employees are entitled to:
 - Break time to pump breast milk.
 - A clean, private space near the work area that is not a bathroom.



LOCAL NEWS

CPTA Phone Bank Results

May 14, 2026

The Carle Place Teachers' Association proudly showed up in record numbers to support our endorsed Board of Education candidates, Kathleen Reardon and Kim Ribarich, ahead of this year's school budget vote and board election.

Over two days, May 12 and May 14, a total of 42 CPTA members and retirees volunteered at the new NYSUT offices to participate in our community phone banks. Together, volunteers made an incredible 4,477 calls and personally spoke with 283 residents. In particular, Tyler Colosa, Jen Dintino and Leigh Malinsky made the most calls over the two days!

During those conversations, members shared why both candidates are fiscally responsible, lifelong Carle Place residents who remain deeply student-centered in their approach to leadership. Volunteers also encouraged residents to support the district budget and vote for both endorsed candidates.

The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive. Of the residents reached directly:

- 186 gave firm "yes" commitments to vote for our candidates
- 143 remained undecided
- 11 indicated they would not support the candidates
- 201 residents gave firm support for the school budget

Thank you to every CPTA member and retiree who dedicated time and energy to supporting our schools, students, and community. Your efforts made a tremendous impact.

Why We Fight

May 4, 2026

The strength of the CPTA has always come from its members. As President Mike Renga says, "we are the foundation of our District," and our collective voice matters now more than ever.

This year's Board of Education election is about protecting "our students, our schools, our community, and our livelihood." Through phone banks and community outreach, CPTA members are continuing a long tradition of standing up for public education and ensuring our priorities are heard.

Mike also reminds us that the rights and benefits we enjoy today exist because earlier members were willing to step up and fight for them. That same spirit continues today. As he wrote, "if our 165 members contribute even one hour, there is nothing we cannot accomplish together."



NYSUT NEWS

(All articles originally written by NYSUT Media Relations. To see the full entries click [here](#))



Civics and Media Literacy: NYSUT asks for support to build democracy-ready citizens

New York State United Teachers is urging state leaders to expand civics, media literacy, and civic readiness programs in schools as New York approaches the nation's 250th anniversary. Educators say these programs help students become informed, engaged citizens by teaching them how government works, how to evaluate information critically, and how to participate thoughtfully in civic life.

Teachers across the state emphasized that civics education goes beyond textbooks, encouraging students to connect history to current events, discuss important issues respectfully, and use their voices to create positive change in their communities.

Media literacy essential for democracy-ready students

As students spend more than eight hours a day consuming digital media, educators across New York are calling for a stronger focus on media literacy in schools. During National News Literacy Week, teachers and librarians emphasized the importance of helping students learn how to evaluate sources, recognize bias, and identify misinformation in an online environment increasingly shaped by social media and AI-generated content. A recent Pew survey found that 68 percent of high school students lack confidence in assessing the credibility of online information.

Educators and leaders from New York State United Teachers say media literacy is now essential for both academic success and civic engagement. They are advocating for expanded civics education and a certified full-time library media specialist in every school to help students develop the critical thinking skills needed to navigate today's complex information landscape.



NYSUT brings together 15,000 unionists for Fix Tier 6 rally



More than 15,000 educators, nurses, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and public employees from across New York gathered at Albany's MVP Arena for the sold-out Statewide Fix Tier 6 Rally, calling on lawmakers to reform the state's Tier 6 retirement system. Organized by unions including New York State United Teachers, New York State AFL-CIO, and Civil Service Employees Association, the rally focused on lowering retirement ages and reducing penalties for public workers who currently must work longer, contribute more, and receive fewer benefits under Tier 6 than previous pension tiers. Speakers emphasized that these conditions are hurting morale, recruitment, and retention in public service professions across the state.

The event featured remarks from union leaders, public employees, and elected officials, including Governor Kathy Hochul, who pledged to continue fighting for pension reform during the state budget process. Attendees shared personal stories about the financial and emotional toll of Tier 6, while veteran members voiced solidarity with newer workers facing decades of additional service before retirement. Rally organizers described the event as a powerful demonstration of unity among public sector unions and a renewed push to restore what many called a broken promise to New York's public servants.

Important Things to Remember

- 1 If you absolutely need to take a day off before a vacation due to an extenuating circumstance, you must seek approval from the administration.
- 2 You can always request the presence of a union representative if you suspect disciplinary action.
- 3 Sign in every day and be in your room 5-10 minutes before classes start.
- 4 You can seek free legal advice from our lawyers at 1-800-832-5182.
- 5 Familiarize yourself with the language regarding vacation days before/after a holiday.
- 6 Untenured teachers- stay after school, support CP at games/shows, volunteer, chaperone, show spirit, etc.
- 7 Never be alone in a closed classroom with a single student.
- 8 Do not share any personal information like a home address or cell phone number with a student.
- 9 Try turning it off and on again before calling Bill and Yianne!
- 10 Stay off your cellphones during class.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CPTA END OF YEAR PARTY

COME
CELEBRATE OUR
RETIREES,
TEACHER OF THE
YEAR, NEWLY
TENURED
MEMBERS, ETC.!

**FRIDAY, MAY 29
3:30 PM-5:30 PM**



TO RSVP, ADD YOUR
NAME TO COLUMN A

CENA 081

103 POST AVE, WESTBURY, NY 11590

**COST- \$10 CASH OR CHECK*
GIVEN TO BUILDING REP BY 5/20!
INCLUDES FOOD AND FIRST DRINK**

*** ALL CHECKS MADE OUT TO: CARLE PLACE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

JUNE 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 -RU Concert Grade 5-6 and Art Show 7 PM	4 -RU Grades 3 & 6 Field Day	5	6
7	8 -HS Varsity Spring Sports Awards	9	10 -RU Concert Grade 3-4 and Art Show 7 PM	11 -RU Grades 4-5 Field Day -HS Fine Art Awards	12 -CL Spring Celebration	13
14	15 -MSHS End of 4 th marking period	16 -MSHS F I N A L S A N D R E G E N T S	17	18	19 Juneteenth No School	20
21	22	23 -RU Grade 6 Party 7-9	24 -HS Senior Prom -CL Moving Up Day -RU EOY Social	25 -MS Moving Up Day -RU Moving Up Day	26 -LAST DAY OF SCHOOL -HS Graduation	27
28	29	30 -Parent Portal Opens				

Key:

Holiday

Local Event

School Event

Neighboring Local Event

JULY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 No school in honor of Samuel Plotkin's Birthday	4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

CARLE PLACE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION NOW HAS A WEBSITE AND AN APP!!!

USING EITHER UTILITY YOU CAN:

1. SEE ALL OF THE BENEFITS WE OFFER AS WELL AS INFORMATION ABOUT EACH BENEFIT!
2. STAY UP TO DATE ON OUR UPCOMING EVENTS, NEWS ABOUT NYSUT, ETC.!
3. READ THROUGH PERTINENT CPTA DOCUMENTS LIKE CBA/SALARY SCHEDULES!
4. PURCHASE SWAG FROM OUR UNION STORE ALL ON THE GO!

TO FIND THE WEBSITE OR USE THE APP:

THE WEBSITE



THE APP



YOU CAN ALSO TYPE IN THIS LINK :

www.Carleplaceta.org

Make sure to bookmark the website & remember the current password: Frogs25



0

Posts

2024

Followers

0

Following

carleplaceteachersassociation

CPTA'S INSTAGRAM ERA



Submit



- professional accomplishments (ex: awards, honors, degrees earned)
- career milestones (ex: hired, retired, years of service)
- creative lessons
- extracurricular updates (ex: activities, trips, performances)
- PSAs (ex: fundraisers, drives)
- anything that deserves bragging rights to showcase the talents of our educators

Info

- optional
- students can be pictured
- teacher does not have to be pictured
- comments disabled
- account is public on Instagram
- personal accounts will not be tagged
- account follows district's guidelines for PR

Submit high resolution images or video files (allow for 48 hours to post).

[Click Here To See The Instagram](#)

[Click Here to Add Photos Online](#)

[Click Here to Add Photos Via Email](#)



Member Benefits covers all your summer needs!



May/June 2026

No matter what your upcoming plans include, NYSUT Member Benefits can help turn this summer into one that you'll always remember.

If you're seeking excitement, look no further than the Grand Circle Travel & Overseas Adventure Travel program. NYSUT members enjoy reduced pricing (at least a \$150 savings per trip along with many other discount opportunities) on a variety of international and domestic tours, including new "Immersion" adventures (8-12 days in length) designed for travelers seeking a more active style of adventure. "Immersion" tours combine iconic destinations, authentic cultural experiences, and dynamic outdoor activities.

Transform your indoor or outdoor

living space with a variety of options from **Purchasing Power**. Eligible NYSUT members can browse from thousands of items and pay over 12 months through payroll deduction or Automated Clearing House (ACH) withdrawals. Save 20% on your first order and at least 10% on all subsequent purchases. While not a discount program, Purchasing Power offers the benefits of no credit check, no hidden fees, and fixed payments.

Thinking about upgrading your home with new appliances, countertops, or kitchen cabinets? The **Buyer's Edge, Inc.** buying service program can be

used to purchase these items and many others such as new or used vehicles, televisions, furniture, mattresses, desktop and laptop computers, home security systems, and more (all backed by a low price guarantee). With Buyer's Edge, you have the option of purchasing online, by phone, or in-person (in certain benefit categories and geographic regions).

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE BENEFITS AND MANY OTHERS

SCAN ME



Scan the QR code, visit mb-nysut.org/summerplanning, or call 800-626-8101.