

# SPEAK OUT!



## Staffing, Scheduling, and Posting Dwayne Cerbone, President

This time of year, we begin the district and building level processes for sectioning, staffing, and posting of available positions. This can raise stress and concern among members, especially those seeking a new assignment, expecting displacement, or facing uncertainty. If you find yourself in any of these situations, I encourage you to become informed, stay connected with your supervisor, verify your understanding with your union representatives at each phase, and remain actively engaged.

Though the process has the potential to feel belabored and overwhelming for those most directly impacted, it can be reassuring that most aspects are directed by contractual provisions, seniority rights, and our collaboratively established governing practices. These guidelines assure consistent, fair, and equitable handling of each scenario.

Our District does not utilize a roll-over model of sectioning but rather incorporates a more student-directed approach. Student enrollment and course offering/sectioning tend to be the most pertinent and influential factors contributing to the positions needed at each level. Annually, the union collaborates diligently with HR to assure the contractual and employment interests of our members are protected. We strive to do so in a sustainable manner that responsibly allocates limited district resources while providing the very best opportunities for our students. With our members' interests always at the forefront of our representation we enter these challenging conversations valuing our partnership in the district's mission.

Though the union may prefer to sustain all existing positions, programs, and offerings, there are many conflicting factors that influence the district's ability to do so. Shifting student interests, limited state/local funding, fluctuations in enrollment numbers, competing needs, and community values all contribute to outcomes that have the potential to impact our members. Though at times these changes can be welcomed, some may not be ideal. I am proud that we have forged positive relationships that provide us a seat at the table as we consistently work together with district officials to manage these situations thoughtfully and respectfully.

Seniority and other posting rights are the fundamental factors used to assess the order of eligibility for positions that arise from retirements, resignations, transfers, or new offerings. These rights are applicable within the unit and/or area that each member is assigned and do not necessarily extend to other units within the PDTA. For instance, a CSE assigned paraprofessional is not entitled to "post" to an open Educational Assistant position, but they are invited to "express interest" in such a position prior to outside candidates. Though on the surface each of these rights may initially seem easy to comprehend, the intersection of multiple factors tends to convolute the understanding. Luckily, this is where your union can serve as a tremendous resource. Your best interests are our priority, and we are here to serve you. Please be cautious taking advice from well-meaning colleagues who may only possess a limited understanding of the details involved with your specific

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scenario.

Currently, PDTA leadership is working with district administration to lockdown, clarify, and clean-up our agreed upon practices. In the next few days, we will post a revised Posting Practices document to the PDTA website. I recommend that you explore this document for much more helpful guidance.

### A few highlights:

- Typically, we prioritize in-building movement first and then open remaining positions to others within the district.
- You may post to multiple positions at one time, noting priority, and in multiple rounds.
- Any PDTA position that changes more than 0.2 must be posted.
- Displaced staff have the first right of return if the positions become available prior to the summer cut-off dates of July 31 for Certificated Staff and Aug 15th for SRPs.

If you have any posting interests, I again encourage you to become informed, stay connected with your supervisor, verify your understanding with your union representatives at each phase and remain actively engaged.



# SRP Newslink

## Connie Maust

### Important reminders:

· Para and SRP members considering retirement in June who are eligible for the Career Award should review the contractual provisions and submit your letter to HR by Tuesday, April 9, 2024. (PDTA negotiated a deadline extension because the due date fell during Spring Break.) Please contact the PDTA office if you have any questions.

· [Register HERE](#) for the March 25, 2024 (5:00 pm to 6:30 pm) Retirement Seminar. When you click on the link to register, if it asks for a password, you can ignore the password request and click on the register button. You will need to provide your name and email address.

· Open position postings for school year 2024-2025 will be starting after retirement letters are received, processed, and confirmed.

· PCSD Budget Vote & School Board Election is May 21, 2024 (7:00 am – 9:00 pm)

· Retirement Party is May 23, 2024, at Eagle Vale at 4:30 pm.

Please plan to register for a Para Academy course or two this spring. Registration is open on WinCapWeb. Remember these are paid learning opportunities. Following are the

available courses with descriptions:

**Social Thinking: Monday, March 18**  
Learn key concepts that can be used to promote students' abilities to be a part of a classroom learning community. Strategies will be shared to use every day to support social thinking and behavior changes in the classroom setting.

**CPI Refresher: Thursday, April 11**  
Improve your understanding of the key program concepts, enhance your skills, and answer any questions you may have about how to apply the information to your classroom realities.

**Understanding Culturally Responsive Instruction for English Learners: Monday, April 29**  
Learn about culturally responsive instruction for our English Language Learners [ELL] and how to use equitable behavior support practices.

**Autism Spectrum Disorders: Monday, May 29**  
Explore autism spectrum disorders and the basic information paraprofessionals need to know when working with students on the Autism Spectrum.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your building representatives or me by email ([connie\\_maust@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:connie_maust@pittsford.monroe.edu)) or ext. 1026.



# Health and Safety

## Emily Natoli-Burns

When safety issues arise in buildings, it is helpful to know that there is a process for addressing them. Each building has a safety representative as well as unit leader/building representative. All these individuals can assist you in handling a safety concern.

As a reminder, here are the steps to take when you have a safety concern in your building:

Alert your building representative/unit leader and building safety representative to the issue. Email me, Emily Natoli-Burns, as well. Building representatives/unit leaders/building safety representative will alert administration so that it can be addressed **through the building first**.

Building representatives/unit leaders/building safety representatives should follow up with administration and members to ensure that the problem is solved, and all parties are comfortable with the solution. It is helpful to send me an email at this point if the issue is not resolved or there are other concerns.

If the issue is not resolved at the building level, building representatives/unit leaders/safety representatives and members will [fill out the form found HERE](#). This form will go to the principal to be filled out and sent to Jeff Beardsley

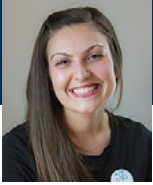
for a closer look. A copy of this form will also be sent by the administration to the building safety representative.

Jeff Beardsley will work to assess the scenario and, if needed, resolve the issue. Jeff will bring the issue to Safety Council to report out. Jeff will also send information back out to the principal and originator with ways that issue was addressed.

If the issue is still not solved or fixed in a suitable manner, please do not hesitate to contact Emily or Dwayne. There are other options we can explore.

### Safety Representatives:

- AC-Madeleine Honan
- MC-Kate Amorese/Emily Harris
- JR-Cathy Tomassi
- PR-Stacey Beyer
- TR-Teresa Lattuca
- BRMS-Ijlal Guney-Lenio
- CRMS-Anjali Chaudhary
- MHS-Megan Brown
- SHS-Emily Natoli-Burns



# Resolution Specialist

## Kim Chesko

One of the things I know that I often say to members at meetings and in Speak Out is to “check your attendance balances in WinCap.” The effective teacher in me realizes how vague these directions are! Today’s article is a brief overview to get you started on how and what to check when you are looking at your balances – read on to find out!

There are 2 ways to check your attendance records to make sure they accurately reflect your actual attendance and absences. Either can be used alone, but I find it best to take a look at both and compare for further clarity.

### My Attendance Activity

Select Employee Self-Service from the purple bar across the top of the WinCap site. Select **My Attendance Activity** from the resulting menu. This is a great tool to view when each of your absences was taken, and how it was categorized in the system – I will explain the categories more in the next section of this article. You can select the “My Attendance Activity” tab and choose a date range. When you click “Get Attendance” you will be provided with a categorized list of how many days you have taken and the exact dates they occurred. Alternately, you could choose the “Calendar” tab selecting the year and month followed by “Update” and see the same information in calendar form.

#### What to check for in WinCap:

1. Make sure that all recorded absences are consistent with your records and those in the substitute system.

### My Attendance Balances

Select Employee Self-Service from the purple bar, then **My Attendance Balances** from the drop-down menu. This tool provides a view of all absences recorded during the selected school year up to the current point in time. It shows accrued (“carry over”) and contract granted (“earned”) days for that year in several categories. It also shows absences, although these lines can be a bit difficult to read.

First – be sure to select the correct year. You will always select the second year of the current school year. For example, to view totals for the 2023-2024 school year, even if it is still 2023, select 2024 as the year, as shown below:



### Prolonged Illness

#### What they are:

Prolonged illness days are granted to all full and part-time employees at different intervals determined by our contract (3-2, 29-2, 49-2). They are used automatically if an employee is out for a medically documented absence longer than 15 consecutive workdays, and can only be used for personal

illness (not family illness). Prolonged illness days accrue (“carry over”) if not used.

#### What to watch for in WinCap:

1. Make sure you have the proper number based on your years of part- or full-time service. Please note that prolonged illness days are granted at the end of the year, not the beginning, like personal illness days.
2. If you have a medically documented absence of more than 15 days, make sure that the first 15 personal illness days used have been restored to your balance, and prolonged illness days have been used instead. Prolonged illness days should then be used until they are exhausted or you return from the absence.

### Personal Illness

#### What they are:

This bank of days is to be used for personal illness, family illness, or personal business as outlined by the contract (3-9, 29-8, 49-8). Each employee is granted 15 per year (prorated if hired mid-year) which accrue if unused year to year to a maximum of 200 days. Although we enter personal illness, family illness, and personal days differently in the sub system, they come from the same bank of days. WinCap breaks out the number of family illness and personal business days on separate lines, BUT they are already accounted for within the sick column.

#### What to watch for in WinCap:

1. Your total number of personal and family illness days are listed on the item line labeled “Sick.” If you follow that line across to the “available balance” column, you will see your current balance. This is highlighted in yellow in the graphic below.
2. Personal illness days taken will appear in the “taken” column on the “sick” line, although the number that appears also includes “personal” and “family sick.” This is circled in blue in the graphic below.
3. Family illness days (absence to care for an immediate family member, if this is known or specified in the sub system) will appear in the “taken” column on the “family sick” line. Even though it is broken out on a separate line, it is not counted twice. This is circled in red in the graphic below.
4. Personal days taken will appear in the “taken” column on the “personal” line. Even though it is broken out on a separate line, it is not counted twice. This is circled in red in the graphic below.
5. Make sure that the “taken” column of **ONLY** the “sick” line accurately reflects your records of how many personal illness, family illness, and personal days you have used this school year.

*Please see the following page for an example of how your Attendance Balances will appear on your WinCap account.*

### Sick Bank Contribution

#### What they are:

This line will appear in your WinCap totals even if you are not a member of the PDTA Sick Bank. If you are a member

and would like guidance in reading this line in WinCap, or if you are not sure you are a member, [click here for more information](#). Please note that there have been some ongoing issues with Sick Leave Bank deductions that PDTA and payroll are continuing to work together to resolve.

I hope this brief overview helped you start to delve into your attendance balances and check their accuracy. Please watch the PDTA website, as well as your email for a more specific guide by the end of the school year.

Happy Spring – here’s to hoping it’s almost here!

| My Attendance Balances                  |            |         |        |             |                   |            |            |
|---|------------|---------|--------|-------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| 1-7 of 7 First   Previous   Next   Last |            |         |        |             |                   |            |            |
| Attendance Codes ▲                      | Carry Over | Earned  | Taken  | Adjustments | Available Balance | As Of      | Last Taken |
| Family Sick                             |            |         | 1.5000 |             | 0.0000            |            | 10/26/2023 |
| Personal                                |            |         | 2.5000 |             | 0.0000            |            | 11/14/2023 |
| Prolonged Illness                       |            |         |        |             | 0.0000            |            |            |
| Sick                                    | 0.7500     | 14.0000 | 9.5000 |             | 5.2500            | 07/01/2023 | 02/12/2024 |
| Sick Bank                               |            |         |        |             | 0.0000            |            |            |
| Sick Bank Contrib.                      |            |         |        |             | 0.0000            |            |            |



## Professional Learning Updates

### Julie Barker

For those who are interested in participating in professional learning this spring, there are still activities available through the Teacher Center that have open seats. Remember that professional learning for certificated staff that takes place outside of the District and your regular work hours is eligible for Individual Initiative credit. The form to request this credit from your principal/supervisor is available on the [Teacher Center webpage](#).

**Reminder!**  
**The contractual requirement for professional learning for all certificated staff needs to be completed by May 31st. Please plan accordingly if you have not met the requirement for this year.**

#### Important dates

Mentor Program: applications for new mentors are being accepted through March 31st. If you are interested in being a mentor, the application is on [Teacher Center webpage](#).

PDTA Wanda Ward Study Grants: the purpose of study grants is to provide staff members an opportunity for reimbursement of expenses for professional learning activities that would not be covered by other methods. If you are interested in professional learning this summer that falls into this category, you can apply for a PDTA Study Grant. The deadline for summer requests is April 15th and the application is [available on the PDTA webpage](#).

Para Mentor Program: applications for new Para Mentors will be accepted from April 9th through April 30th. Look for an email with more details after Spring Break.

Collegial Circles: Final Reports are due no later than May 15th.

#### What We Say and How We Say It Matter

At a recent meeting of NYS Teacher Center Directors, I had the opportunity to hear Mike Anderson speak. Anderson is the author of What We Say and How We Say It Matter and the focus of his keynote was on the words that teachers

choose and how they impact student learning and behavior.

In addition to an engaging presentation, Anderson provided multiple resources to share with other teachers. Below are links to a few of the articles he has on his site that may be of interest to you:

[Rethinking Praise \(Anderson\)](#)

[How \(and Why\) I Stopped Saying, “I like the way you...” \(Anderson\)](#)

[Five Alternatives to “Good Job!” \(Anderson\)](#)

[Powerful Words \(Gail Zimmerman\)](#)

[Talk Less So Students Learn More \(Shannon McGrath\)](#)

[Should Teachers Call Students “Friends” \(Anderson\)](#)

If you are interested in learning more about this topic, please let me know.

Wishing you all a happy spring!

*Julie*

**Save the Date!**  
**July 24th 8 AM to 3 PM**  
**This summer the Greater Rochester Teacher Center Network is bringing in Ed-Tech Consultant and author Monica Burns for a full-day workshop on “Harnessing the Power of Generative AI & Chatbots.”**

**This free program will be open to Professional/Certificated staff members for Teacher Center credit. Look for an email with more information in the coming weeks.**

# Your Reps:

## Building Representatives:

Michele Riedl, ACE  
Bret Burrows, JRE  
Jennifer Villareale, MCE  
Spencer Jones, PRE  
Greg Bischooping, TRE  
Kristen Dolan, BRMS  
Melissa Althouse, CRMS  
Todd Warren, MHS  
Amanda Marshall, SHS  
Connie Maust, SRP

## Assistant Building Representatives:

Alyson Hallett, ACE  
Patty Steeley, JRE  
Nina Dezio and  
Trisha Sullivan, MCE  
Kelly Sanderson, TRE  
Ann Conciardo, Ellen Fox, and  
Karen Grace, BRMS  
Jessica Wojcik and Sophie  
Spyra, CRMS  
Mindy Johnston and Sam  
Hyde, MHS  
Marc Hellemms, Brian Shafer,  
and Jeff Wing, SHS

## Assistant SRP Representatives:

Susan Benson, ACE  
Julie Pellegrino, JRE  
Rebecca Tan and  
Debbie Ricketts, MCE and PRE  
Radhika Ramesh, TRE  
Farida Patrawala, CRMS  
LaShanda Clark McCadney,  
MHS  
Brian Oliver, SHS

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## Important Information and Dates:

- **Certificated Staff can find more information about APPR [here](#).**
- **4/19/24: Barb Shapiro Scholarship Applications due**
- **5/21/24: Budget and School Board Vote, Annual Chicken BBQ Fundraiser**
- **5/23/24: Retirement Party at Eagle Vale**



**Speak Out! has been edited and compiled by Murie Gillett. Feel free to contact me with any questions at [murie\\_gillett@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:murie_gillett@pittsford.monroe.edu).**

## SPEAK OUT! Ads

You and your family members are invited to place ads in future issues of SPEAK OUT!  
Rates for members and family (price is for one issue):

1/8 Page: \$12.50   ¼ Page: \$25.00   ½ Page: \$50.00   Full Page: \$100.00

Above rates are for copy ready advertising. If additional design or set-up is required, an additional fee of \$25 will be assessed. Space for ads is limited per issue. Checks should be made out to PDTA and mailed to the PDTA Office. **Ad proceeds will support PDTA charitable efforts.**

Send copy and questions directly to [murie\\_gillett@pittsford.monroe.edu](mailto:murie_gillett@pittsford.monroe.edu).

Follow us on X  
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## Paid Ads



## Creating Neurodiversity-Affirming Schools

Featuring



**About the expert:** Emily is dedicated to destigmatizing neurodiversity and supporting neurodivergent individuals of all ages! She started her career as a gifted education teacher, eventually becoming a school counselor, and currently works as a licensed mental health counselor in private practice. Emily has published three books related to the development of children and teens who are neurodivergent and cognitively gifted. She is also the host of the **Neurodiversity Podcast**, and founder of the **Neurodiversity University Educator's Hub**.

Emily Kircher-Morris, M.A., M.Ed., LPC

April 15th at 6pm via Zoom

Register at: <https://bit.ly/SEPTAApril2024>

*Professional staff may seek Individual Initiative credit, following their supervisor's approval, for attending this workshop. The request form can be found on the PCSD website.*

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LET'S TALK  
[julie@kiddingaroundyoga.com](mailto:julie@kiddingaroundyoga.com)

# Check out all your union membership has to offer!

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of endorsed programs and services that can save you money, assist you in protecting your family, and help you plan for the future.

## Legal Service Plan

Plan benefits include:

- Crucial estate planning documents (Simple Will, Health Care Proxy, Living Will & Durable Power of Attorney)
- Free telephone consultations
- Guaranteed maximum fees for specific legal matters

## Financial Counseling Program

Plan benefits include:

- Unbiased objective advice
- Free telephone & virtual consultations
- Assistance with retirement planning, 403(b) savings, college savings, tax planning and more

For an annual fee, the Legal Service Plan -- provided by the law firm of Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. -- offers legal expertise on a variety of personal legal matters such as dealing with a speeding ticket or handling estate planning. Plan participants receive unlimited access to toll-free advice weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (EST) as well as a toll-free hotline for urgent legal assistance outside of these hours.

Meanwhile, the Financial Counseling Program -- provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. -- offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation. The full-service program provides up to six hours of objective toll-free telephone or virtual consultations with a Stacey Braun Certified Financial Planner.®



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](https://memberbenefits.nysut.org), or calling 800-626-8101.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.



Mar/Apr 2024