

INFORMATION, NEWS AND SUPPORT SPEAK OUT!

PITTSFORD DISTRICT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



An Opportunity Our Fellow Unionist Would Envy Dwayne Cerbone, President

On March 28th, PDTA members residing in the Pittsford School District have a precious opportunity to take action as individuals that will directly impact ourselves, our colleagues and students. Often, as members, we can primarily look to what others can, or should, do to address educational inequities, safety improvements and various other issues that exist in our schools. The upcoming vote on the Pittsford Schools Capital Improvement Project enables us to directly impact these interests.

Beginning in the late 1700's, trade unions have been a core institution fighting for the rights and protections of the average American worker.

A predominant role of a union is to negotiate the terms and conditions of employment. As you are aware, our local union is currently engaged in this work through the ongoing efforts of our PDTA Negotiations Team. Another significant focus for unions over the decades has been to lobby, organize and advocate for improved safety in the workplace.

Railroad, mine, textile, health care and trade workers have been forced to rely solely on these efforts to bring awareness to the issues, influence reform and to obtain the funding from either management or the government to remedy their concerns.

These workers could not even imagine

the precious opportunity afforded to us through our vote providing for the safety, repairs and renovations for our own work environment. We implore every member residing in the district to not only acknowledge this opportunity but to additionally accept this as a professional responsibility to get out to vote in support of this **Capital Improvement Project** on **March 28th at the Barker Road Middle School Gymnasium**. Your union can not do this; only you can!



An unfortunate reality is that most of the priorities identified within this improvement plan will need to be completed *no matter the outcome of the vote*. The impact of this would be tremendously deleterious to our staff and students.

The financial implications are further accentuated by the resulting inability to leverage the opportune timeline of past capital improvement debt dropping as this project is brought on. Instead, the work would need to get financed using existing resources that would otherwise be directed toward budgetary items that directly serve our students and staff.

I fear future conversations regarding limited funds across the district pitting vital instructional programming against the installation of needed safety doors or the replacement of dilapidated portable classroom spaces against our ability to attract and retain the best staff in a dwindling employment market. Hopefully, with your vote

In this issue:

- 1 from the PRESIDENT
- 2 EXECUTIVE VP//POLITICAL ACTION
- 3 SRP NEWSLINK/ RESOLUTIONS
- 4 CAPITAL PROJECT INFO
- 5 BLDG NEWS/EVENTS/ CALENDAR
- 6 REPS AND DATES

of support for this referendum, this crisis can be easily averted without additional impact on the tax levy.

The PDTA Representative Assembly voted at our February meeting to **Endorse the Capital Improvement Project**. The following is an excerpt from my comments at a recent Board of Education Meeting, "As teachers and SRP's, we recognize and appreciate that a significant amount of money is required to maintain facilities at the most basic of levels to keep us operational. Issues with leaking roofs, busted pipes and a lack of power are unfortunately in the forefront of our minds. However, we are grateful this plan goes beyond that to address a few greatly needed improvements.

We respect and acknowledge there are clearly interests that have been identified which were not able to be included in this current project. Although we welcome such future investments to our facilities, at this time we are pleased this project can be carried out without a planned increase to the tax levy."

More information regarding the project and the vote can be found on the PCSD website [HERE](#).



Executive Vice-President Stephanie Warchol

PDTA Constitution Revisions

Since June 2019, I have been collecting recommendations for proposed changes to the PDTA Constitution. Some began as a result of the last contract ratification, and others have popped up as we have worked through various scenarios.

These changes have been vetted by the PDTA Executive Committee and Representative Assembly, but require support from two-thirds of our voting membership to make them officially part of our Constitution. In anticipation of voting taking place when we ratify our new contract, I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some of the major changes, so you have time to reach out to me with questions/concerns prior to the vote. You can also see the document, with changes highlighted, in its entirety [here](#).

DESIGN/LAYOUT- We will be adding our new logo to the cover, updating the latest revision date to the footer, reassigning the table of contents page numbers, inserting a new election rotating calendar (page 12), and updating the record of revision and

amendment ratification dates.

ARTICLE UPDATES- As a result of the previous contract ratification, we have removed language regarding “health office assistants”. We have also updated language regarding the APPR Committee, which is now called the Professional Standards Committee. Under Article V, Section 6, we call out the desire to have equal SRP representation by stating that

“There will be an SRP Representative elected who shall sit on the Executive Committee, Representative Assembly, District Planning Team, and the Negotiating Team. The unit will have representation based on one unit representative per building (SRP Representative or Assistant SRP Representative). Every attempt will be made to have a unit representative in each building. If one does not reside in a particular building, one of the representatives may be assigned to assume responsibility where there is a vacancy.”

BY-LAW UPDATES- The following statement has been added at the bottom of By-law 7 - Building Representatives, “In summary,

Building Representatives have the freedom and responsibility to work collaboratively at the building level within the frameworks of the Contract, MOA’s, past-practice, job titles, and common protocols on interests that do not have implications on other buildings, interests or unit members. Anything outside of these parameters requires the engagement of a PDTA officer.”

Several additions were made to the position of Resolution Specialist, which falls under By-law 8 – Committees, Section 7. These additions do not reflect changes to the position, but captures the work already being done. It also gives the person holding the position voting rights, only if they have them through another position they hold on the Representative Assembly (like being a Committee Chair or Delegate).

The final proposal we are suggesting is to move Building Representatives and Assistant Building Representatives to two-year terms, that will run in opposing election cycles (By-law 9, Section 3), which will be consistent with our Officer elections.



Political Action Karen Grace

NYSUT’s [Legislative Department](#) lobbies state and federal representatives to help retain professional enhancements we fought for and won. Support for our public schools comes from the efforts of hundreds of grass-roots lobbyists. This statewide, grass-roots network of member-volunteers, called the Committee of 100, adds local political impact to NYSUT’s effort.

Members fighting for issues affecting their lives and schools is a proud tradition dating back to the mid-1970s, when a group of 100 local leaders came to Albany to fight for pension legislation. NYSUT members from locals all over the state who want to influence issues directly affecting their lives, including pensions, job security, and health and safety, are part of NYSUT’s yearly Committee of 100.

NYSUT Committee of 100 took place this week March 8-9. K-12 Topics covered with legislators included:

Fix Tier 6; School Aid; Community Schools; Charter Schools; BOCES; Teacher Centers; Special Schools; Healthy School Meals for All; Native Schools.



Jen Simons attended the committee of 100 as PDTA’s PAC appointee.



SRP Newslink

Lorinda Spring

Retirement Reminder:

SRPs who are planning to retire at the end of this school year must submit a letter to HR by Monday, April 3rd. Please be mindful of this date, as it falls during our spring break week. Please review page 49, section 27-1 of the contract for information on the Career Award. If you haven't done so already, you will need to open up a 403b account to receive the Career Award, if you are eligible.

SRP Summer Work Day:

The summer work day for paras is attached to the new upcoming school year. You should receive an updated form from your administrator. It can also be found on our www.pdta.org website under **Documents**, and then **Forms**. The **prior approval** portion of the form needs to be filled out and submitted to your administrator by June 16, 2023.

Full-time paras are required to complete one 6-hour work day and part-time paras are required to complete a prorated work day.

PDPA Elections:

The **SRP Representative** position and the **Assistant SRP Representative** positions are up for election this year. These are two-year term positions. If you are interested in continuing in your role, or are applying for the first time to one of these positions, please submit your petition to the PDPA office in the Lomb Building by 12:00 PM on Tuesday, March 21, 2023.

VOTE!

The Capital Improvement Project vote is Tuesday, March 28th at Barker Road Middle School. If you are a Pittsford resident, we encourage you to vote!



Resolutions Specialist

Kim Chesko

If you are a regular reader of Speak Out, you may remember that I have begun a series of articles around the topic of leaves. This month's article will only focus on FMLA – what it is, and what it is not.

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a Federal law that

“...entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.”

So what does this mean?

The first thing to know is that PCSD is a covered employer. Any employee who has been employed full time for at least a year is eligible. If you are a part-time employee at Pittsford for at least a year, eligibility is based on hours worked in the previous year and may differ from member to member. If you are a part-time member anticipating a family or medically necessary leave, you can contact HR to check your eligibility for FMLA.

Secondly, you will notice that the law calls out “specified family and medical reasons.” Click [here](#) to read more about what kind of leave counts in this category.

Thirdly, is the length. FMLA is typically initiated after 5 or more days of a qualifying absence and covers 12 work weeks, every 12 months. It pauses on breaks (because they are not

work weeks.) It also does not have to be taken all at once. For example, if a member takes 4 weeks of FMLA leave for surgery in March of 2023, they still have 8 weeks remaining until their total resets in March of 2024.

Lastly, and mostly importantly, is what FMLA guarantees you if you are eligible:

- Continuation of insurance coverage – as in, the District will continue to pay their contractual portion of your health insurance premium.
- You will continue to accrue seniority as if you were not on a leave.
- You will continue to accrue time towards tenure as if you were not on leave.

FMLA is NOT a guarantee of pay during your leave. Our contract does allow for members to use available sick days during certain leaves – if Prolonged illness, Sick or Sick Leave Bank days are being used, you will be paid.

FMLA is NOT the same as New York State's Paid Family Leave Law. PCSD is not opted into this law in New York, as we have negotiated similar benefits into our contract.

The most important takeaway:

FMLA is a law that protects specific benefits if you are on a qualifying leave. However, every leave is different. If you have a family or medical situation that may require a leave, reach out to your building representative, Kim Chesko, or Dwayne Cerbone. We will be able to walk you through the process and answer any questions you may have.

Pittsford Schools

**\$69,822,169
Capital Project**
There is no planned
increase in the tax
levy as it relates to this
capital project*

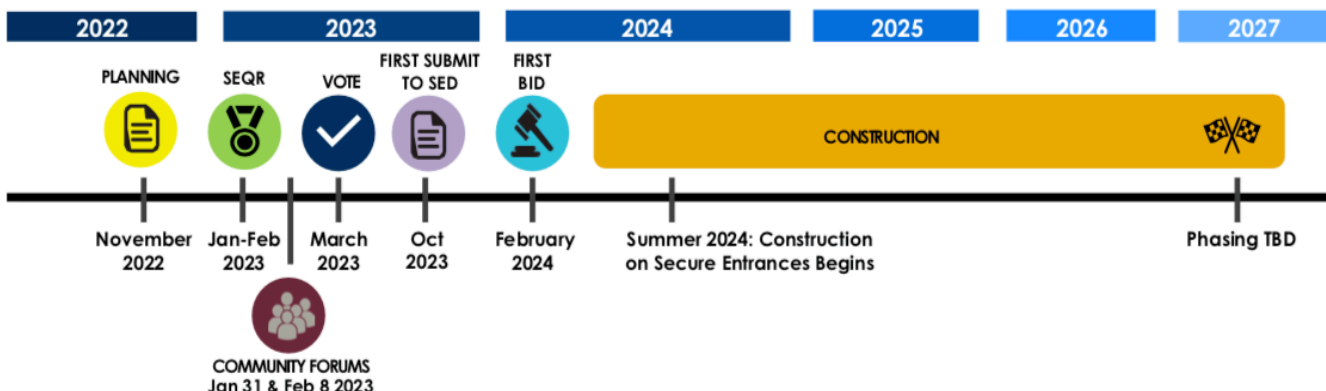
Capital Improvement Project

*Focus on Secure Entrances, Academic Space Renovations,
Equitable Facilities and Efficient Space Utilization*

Timeline



2019-2021	Conducted building condition survey per State Education Department requirements
2022	May - December..... Planning
2023	January - February..... State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR)
	January 31..... Public Forum, 6:30 p.m., BRMS Cafeteria
	February 7..... Regular Board of Ed Meeting, 7 p.m., BRMS McCluski Room
	February 8..... Public Forum, 6:30 p.m., MHS Commons
	March 28..... Vote, 7 a.m.-9 p.m., BRMS Gym
2024-27	If referendum passes, construction begins



\$69,822,169 Proposed Capital Project

Leveraging State Aid

"Building aid" provided by New York State reduces the cost of school construction for local taxpayers. Principal and interest costs for eligible capital improvement projects are reimbursed by the state at rates calculated for each district. For every dollar borrowed, the state would reimburse the district for approximately 74.9% for all eligible expenses. These funds can only be accessed for approved capital projects.

Utilizing Capital Reserves

The proposed capital project proposition also authorizes the District to utilize \$14 million in capital reserve funds that have already been saved to pay for a capital project. These funds were authorized by the voters for the sole purpose of reducing the impact on the tax levy for future capital projects.

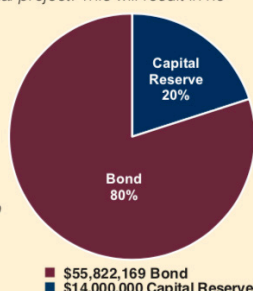
Predictable Debt Service

The District recently paid off over \$5.1 million in debt related to the 2002 construction project which heavily focused on Calkins Road Middle School and Sutherland High School. In order to minimize the cost to taxpayers, the District can use a portion of the previous tax levy to support the proposed capital project. This will result in no additional taxes needed to support the tax levy.

Tax Impact

The timing of this proposed project was carefully planned to coincide with the repayment of debt and is a result of careful long-range financial planning to minimize the impact on the tax levy. For illustration purposes, a proposed project like this **would have** cost an estimated \$67 annually on a home assessed for \$300,000. However, the cost of this new project will be covered by the drop in debt from a previous capital project.

There is no planned increase in the tax levy as it relates to this capital project.



**PDТА has endorsed the
PCSD Capital Project, and
STRONGLY encourages every
PDТА member who lives in
the district to vote on March
28, 2023, from 7am – 9pm at
BRMS! The full details are [here](#).**

Building News:

Submit Building News for future issues [HERE!](#)

JRES

- Congratulations to Marissa Cogle on the birth of her daughter, McKenna Grace, born Saturday, Feb 11th She was 6 pounds 11 oz, 20".

MCES

- Lorinda Spring welcomed a new grandson, Teddy!

BRMS

- Caitlyn Schmitt (7/8 math teacher) had a baby girl, Rylee on 3/11.



PCSD & PDTA Retirement & 20-Year Celebration Shari Ebert

PDTA will be holding our annual Retirement and 20-Year Celebration on May 25th starting at 4:30pm at Eagle Vale Country Club. Based on the feedback we received last year, we will be restructuring the food that will be provided during the event. Traditionally, we have provided a variety of hot and cold appetizers at the beginning of the event. This will be replaced with a small cheese and cracker appetizer followed by a buffet style dinner containing Salad, Herb Roasted Chicken, Sliced Roast Top Sirloin, Potatoes, Vegetables as well as Pasta Marinara. This change in menu will require us to increase the cost per guest to cover the additional expense.

**We hope this will be a positive change to our event,
and we look forward to celebrating with all our honorees!**

Monroe County 2023-2024 Academic School Year Calendar

KEY DATES:

First Day for Teachers: Sept 5
First Day for Students: Sept 7
Fall Conference Days: Sept 5, 6, Oct 6
Spring Conference Day: April 26
Last Day for Students: June 26
Last Day for Teachers: June 26

	I	S
Sept	19	16
Oct	21	20
Nov	18	18
Dec	16	16
Jan	21	21
Feb	16	16
March	20	20
April	16	15
May	22	22
June	17	17
Total:	185	181

LEGEND:

Conference Day	
Holiday Recess	
Federal Holiday	
Regents Exams	
Rating Day	
3-8 PBT Assessments-ELA/April, Math/May	

FEDERAL HOLIDAYS:

July 04: Independence Day
Sept 04: Labor Day
Oct 09: Columbus/Indigenous Peoples' Day
Nov 10: Veterans Day (Observed)
Nov 23: Thanksgiving Day
Dec 25: Christmas Day
Jan 01: New Year's Day
Jan 15: M L King Jr Day
Feb 19: Presidents' Day
May 27: Memorial Day
June 19: Juneteenth

NOTES:

August 2023 Regents: Aug 16-17
January 2024 Regents: Jan 23-26
Winter 2024 Recess: Feb 19-23
Spring 2024 Recess: Mar 29-Apr 8
June 2024 Regents: Jun 4, 14-26
Rating Day/No Exams: Jun 17, 26

July 2023							August 2023							September 2023							October 2023							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
						1			1	2	3	4	5						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					
30	31																											
November 2023							December 2023							January 2024							February 2024							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
			1	2	3	4						1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
26	27	28	29	30			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29			
							31																					
March 2024							April 2024							May 2024							June 2024							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
					1	2		1	2	3	4	5	6				1	2	3	4							1	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
31																					30							

3-8 Assessments:

PBT ELA Administration Window: April 10-12
CBT ELA Administration Window: April 8-May 17
PBT Math Administration Window: May 7-9
CBT Math Administration Window: April 8-May 17

3-8 Assessments make-up dates:

PBT ELA make-up window: April 15-17
CBT ELA make-up window: April 8-May 17
PBT Math make-up window: May 10-14
CBT Math make-up window: Apr 8-May 17

FINAL 01-10-2023

Your Reps:

Building Representatives:

Michele Riedl, AC
Brett Burrows, JR
Jennifer Villareale, MC
Spencer Jones, PR
Greg Bischooping, TR
Kristen Dolan, BR
Melissa Althouse, CR
Todd Warren, MHS
Lynne Drake, SHS
Lorinda Spring, SRP

Assistant Building Representatives:

Alyson Hallett, AC
Elizabeth Kramer, JR
Nina Dezio and
Trisha Sullivan, MC
Rebecca Kemp, PR
Amy Adams, TR
Liesa Ehrlich, Dana Brown,
Tammy Cole, BRMS
Jessica Wojcik and Sophie
Spyra, CRMS
Tom Kennell,
Mindy Johnston, Jennifer
Shaffer, MHS
Marc Hellems, Brian Shafer,
Amanda Marshall, SHS

Assistant SRP Representatives:

Rebecca Tan, MC
Debbie Ricketts, MC
Michele Seidel, AC
Radhika Ramesh, TR
Julie Pellegrino, CRMS
Farida Patrawala, CRMS
Connie Maust, BRMS
Brian Oliver, SHS

EMBROIDERED PDTA SWAG



15% of all sales go directly to our PDTA Student Scholarship Fund. We've raised over \$230 since the Fall!

All products are embroidered.

Purchases are done online through the company and shipped directly to your house. Keep an eye out for sale codes and free shipping deals which are frequently offered.

Link will always be open - make purchases whenever and as often as you like.

Makes a perfect gift for yourself or your favorite PDTA member- feel free to share the link with friends or family.

pdta.logosoftwear.com

Important Dates:

- Capital Project Vote – BRMS Gymnasium – March 28, 2023 7am – 9pm
- SRP retirements letters for retirement at the end of the school year with Career Award are due by April 3rd.
- Application forms for the “Barb Shapiro Scholarship Fund” have been distributed to the high school Counselors and is available on the PDTA website. PDTA members, please share this information with students planning a career in education. This unique scholarship opportunity is funded through the annual work of PDTA. (Applications Due: 04/18/23)
- School District Budget Vote & School Board Election – BRMS Auditorium – May 16, 2023 (7am – 9pm)
- Retirement Party (Eagle Vale) - May 25, 2023 at 4:30pm
- Graduation: Saturday, June 24 at RIT

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 brian_regan@pittsford.monroe.edu.

CHECK OUT ALL YOUR UNION MEMBERSHIP HAS TO OFFER!

When you're planning for the future, what's at the top of your list?

- A comfortable nest egg for retirement
- Providing for your family
- Purchasing a new home
- Home improvement
- Purchasing a new vehicle
- Travel and entertainment

NYSUT Member Benefits offers dozens of endorsed programs to help turn those dreams into reality.



When it comes to saving you money, protecting your family and helping you plan for the future, NYSUT Member Benefits has a variety of programs and services to help with your goals. Whether you are just starting out on your journey, well into your career or enjoying a well-deserved retirement, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org. There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics. Member Benefits also endorses important **legal and financial services** along with an **online savings program** featuring some of today's most competitive interest rates.

Next up would be looking in the “Shopping, Travel & Personal” section of our site for **MB Discounts & Deals**. This program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to provide NYSUT members with exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on restaurant dine-in or take out, groceries and food delivery, clothing and shoes, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, vehicle maintenance, and much more.



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting 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 2023



Speak Out is edited and assembled by Brian Regan.
Your feedback is welcome at brian_regan@pittsford.monroe.edu
All images are Creative Commons and/or used with permission.



NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund

Fact Sheet

- **The NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund was established in 2005 for the charitable purposes of promoting and enhancing the welfare of NYSUT members and others in need.**

The purpose of the Fund is to provide assistance, financial or otherwise, to those in need because of the occurrence of a disaster or tragedy. The Fund provides support for eligible losses stemming from:

- (a) man-made occurrences (such as an accidental house fire)
- (b) natural disasters not designated as federally declared qualified disasters (such as weather-related storm damage)
- (c) federally declared qualified disasters (such as hurricanes and flooding).

The Fund also provides contributions to other similar not-for-profit organizations.

- **The Fund sprang into action over the years when members needed it the most.**

NYSUT members showed their extreme generosity by immediately contributing to the Fund while those most in need quickly received monetary grants. Victims of Hurricanes from Irene to Ian, the 2021 tropical storms, flooding, and tragedies in Buffalo have been just some of those the Fund was able to assist.

- **To date, the Fund has received over \$3.2 million in contributions.**

Those contributions have supported direct monetary grants to more than 4,500 NYSUT members. These grants are made possible primarily by donations from NYSUT Members along with support from NYSUT, AFT and NEA Member Benefits. The Fund aided other not-for-profit organizations in their relief efforts as well, including grants to the American Red Cross, United Way, World Central Kitchen and Doctors Without Borders.

- **NYSUT members can contribute to the Disaster Relief Fund online by visiting the NYSUT website, nysut.org/disasterrelief.**

The NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund is an Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) public charity. Contributions to the fund are tax deductible to the same extent as contributions to other IRS-approved charities.

For more information

For questions about the Fund, please contact the NYSUT Disaster Relief & Scholarship Fund at 1-800-342-9810.

If you would like to speak to someone about your circumstances, please contact NYSUT Social Services at 1-800-342-9810.

