

INFORMATION, NEWS AND SUPPORT SPEAK OUT! PITTSFORD DISTRICT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



The Summer I Turned President Stephanie Warchol, President

On July 1, 2025, I officially assumed the PDTA presidency. Not many realize that the PDTA presidency is a 12-month position, and I am grateful that I had the opportunity during a quieter period to get acclimated to the role. Having release time in the spring allowed for a very smooth transition both in the PDTA office with Tracy and with members of the Central Office Team. My standing meetings with HR and the Superintendent continued, and I was able to be part of the ongoing conversations on hiring, the Workplace Violence Act annual review and building tours, Capital Improvement project updates, and helping to shape what the Bell-to-Bell legislation could look like in action. I had initial meetings with department members from Athletics, Special Education, Technology, Curriculum and Instruction, and Student Services. I also met the new Board of Education President, Jeff Casey, over coffee one morning.

To kick off the summer, I was asked to help lead the Summer Leadership Retreat which was attended by over 50 District and PDTA leaders. Superintendent Pero mentioned on opening day that the focus of the retreat was “change,” which we explored through the book *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Dan & Chip Heath. We used the framework of the book to guide our work on the Bell-to-Bell legislation, and broke up by level to start to dig in to what it would look like both in regulation and practice. Following the retreat, the facilitators

met, took the work done by the large group, and created communication documents that were then reviewed by the PDTA Representative Assembly. The documents eventually became what was communicated out to the Pittsford Community.

To me, another important aspect of the presidency is relationship building. On my first official day, I reached out to all building administrators, introduced myself, and requested a sit down/building tour. They ALL happily agreed, and I cherished our time together. They answered questions like: “What are you most proud of?” “What is the building culture and staff morale like?” “Where can PDTA support you and your goals?”, and “How can PDAA and PDTA partner together?” Many of them talked through scenarios they were dealing with and we



VALUED
EDUCATORS
ADD VALUE

brainstormed solutions together. Several gave me tours and eagerly showed me their home away from home. I look forward to continuing to build these relationships, and know the groundwork we’ve already laid will

In this issue:

- 1-2** from the PRESIDENT
- 2** EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
- 3** TEACHER CENTER UPDATES,
SRP NEWSLINK
- 4** RESOLUTION SPECIALIST
- 5** MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!
- 6-9** REMINDERS AND ADS

be important when challenges arise.

Continuing to utilize NYSUT as a resource and hold them accountable to advocate for pro-education legislation (Fix Tier Six!) is a major component of the presidency. I met separately with the Rochester Regional Director, Heidi Miller, the Regional Political Organizer, Emily Goldsmith, and our Labor Relations Specialist, Shelly Clements. In August I attended the annual Summer Leadership Conference held in Chautauqua, NY. In addition to networking with other union leaders, which is always a fantastic learning experience, I went to several sessions that not only applied to me in this new role, but to the entire local and how we conduct business and interact with members.

Throughout the summer I took the time to meet with several PDTA leaders, onboarded new Committee Chairs and Building Reps, and worked with various Standards Leaders in person or via email. I sat on the interview committee for the new Director of Student Services, attended two days of training on Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports,

...continued on page 2....

...continued from page 1...

and worked with a group of PCSD staff exploring alternative study programs. I had the absolute pleasure of wrapping up my summer work by welcoming over 30 new union siblings at New Staff Orientation. What an exciting time to be there for them as they embark on their career here in Pittsford!

So, while it was an incredibly busy summer, I am delighted with how patient and welcoming everyone has been. The positive response to my opening day speech has been greatly

appreciated. I was incredibly nervous to tell you all the ways I have failed to get to where I am. Probably not the best thing for a new leader to do, but it seemed to resonate with many of you as educators, parents, or just when thinking about your own path. PDTA is poised for great things and while I may be the one with the title, it is actually all of YOU who make us what we are! Thank you for your membership and the trust you put into our organization.



District Benefits Fair & Flu Shot Clinic

Save the Date! Thursday, October 23
CRMS Commons 2:30-5pm



Executive Vice President Kim Chesko

Welcome back PDTA members! My name is Kim Chesko and I have taken over this year as Executive Vice President of PDTA.

If you don't know me, here are a few important tidbits:

- I teach general music at Jefferson Road
- This job was my FIRST full-time position, and I have been at it for 19 years – all at JRE
- I have held a number of different leadership positions in PDTA, most recently Resolution Specialist for 7 years.
- I am SO PROUD to be a part of one of the largest unions in New York (NYSUT) and also one of the largest locals in Rochester (PDTA).

Right now, unions are more important than ever and keeping ours strong is essential. I take this work very seriously and am honored to be able to serve as your Executive Vice President.

One of my roles is to be the liaison between our union and PTSA. This is an important relationship, as WE are the "T" in PTSA. Our previous EVP (Stephanie Warchol, now our President) worked tirelessly to maintain a professional and supportive relationship between our two organizations. We plan to continue to collaborate and communicate with PTSA for the benefit of our teachers, students, and families.

PTSA Membership

Did you know that your Pittsford Central PTSA membership needs to be renewed every year? If you are new or have never been a member of the PTSA before, please consider supporting the work they do for us and our students. Your membership dues benefit all nine buildings through cultural arts and field trips, student directories, gifts and grants, student agendas, and the PTSA e-news and web site. To be more specific, at the high schools it covers student awards, the student opportunity fund, homecoming, college night, and the senior bash/year end celebration. At the middle schools it supports library and reading programs, fun nights, and the year-end celebration. The elementary buildings benefit through the art ambassador, science action, library and reading programs, Red Ribbon Week, visiting authors, the back-to-school picnic, and fifth grade transition.

All staff may join annually at the \$10 teacher/staff level, even if you have children who attend schools in the district or another. Five dollars of this membership stays right here in Pittsford to benefit our students directly, while \$1.75 goes to the NYS PTA and \$3.25 goes to National PTSA. PTSA representatives will be on hand at this year's Benefits Fair, if you prefer to pay with the paper form and cash/check, or click [here](#) to join now using a credit/debit card. The next evening District PTSA meeting will be held on November 17, 2025, from 7:00PM- 9:00PM at the Sutherland High School LGI. Check out [their website](#) to stay up to date on all things PTSA.



Teacher Center Updates

Nicole Barry

As always, the Teacher Center had a busy summer! Our programs featured workshops that included various topics, including a series of impactful training sessions for educators focused on mental health awareness, student behavior support, and emerging technology in education. These sessions provided practical strategies, education, and up-to-date research. The positive feedback and strong engagement from participants underscored the importance of continued professional development in these key areas. Many of these workshops are being offered again during the school year so there is still time to participate!

Important information related to professional learning for 2025-26:

Collegial Circles – proposals will be accepted through March 1st. Information regarding the Collegial Circle process and the proposal form [is available here](#).

Individual Initiatives – Certificated staff who attend professional learning outside the district and beyond regular work hours are eligible to request up to 12 hours of TC credit. The [form is on the TC webpage](#) and can be submitted to your principal for approval.

Wanda Ward PDTA Study Grants – the fall application deadline is November 1st and the spring deadline is April 15th. [Application forms are on the PDTA webpage](#) and should be submitted to the PDTA Office. Please remember that study grants will only be awarded for activities that take place outside of workdays.

Para Academy – a full program of activities is planned for our SRPs this year. Look for the details in the Elective catalog.

Contractual Requirement – Remember that the 12 required contractual hours must be completed by May 31st. Certificated staff who have not completed their contractual hours are encouraged to sign up for activities being offered this fall. Keep in mind that activities in the Electives catalog do not count toward your contractual hours.

If you have any questions related to professional learning, please let me know.

Wishing you all a great year!



SRP Newslink

Connie Maust

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a wonderful summer and your school year is off to a great start.

Here are reminders and important dates:

- If you still have questions about your hours of work, please reach out to your administrator as soon as possible. If there was a late change that was not reflected in your September 15 pay, remember to check your September 30 pay statement for the adjustment.

- Please continue to use the wording [attached HERE](#) to send to your administrator if you are reassigned to a position you are not trained for and do not feel comfortable in. When you are reassigned, instead of completing a gray timesheet, you will continue using [the Para Reassigned to Para Compensation Form](#). [Here](#) is an example on how to complete the form. Please submit forms promptly and keep a copy for yourself.

- Thank you to the new and returning Assistant SRP Representatives. Your representatives are Susan Benson (ACE), Heather White (JRE), Rebecca Tan (MCE/PR), Debbie Ricketts (MCE/PR), Radhika Ramesh (TRE), Farida Patrawala (CRMS), LaShanda Clark-McCadney (MHS) and Kelly Nanavati (SHS). They are there to support you and to provide you with answers for any questions or concerns you may have throughout the year.

- The yearly mandated Sexual Harassment Training needs to be completed by September 30. You have until December 31, 2025, to complete all other mandatory training. You can access the training through ClassLink using the Global Compliance icon. Once you click “launch” for 2025-2026 Yearly Compliance Courses - All Employees, select the training, and on the next screen, you need to click “Add to My Courses” and confirm it to receive credit for the training this year. [Click HERE](#) for Amy Lamb’s quick how-to video.

- Benefits Fair/Flu Shot Clinic will be at CRMS on October 23, 2025, from 2:30-5:00 pm (Solidarity Wear Day- wear your PDTA gear or something blue)

- NYSERS (SRPs) Pre-Retirement Workshop- October 29 @ 3:30-5:00 pm (SHS LGI)

- Please consider joining PTSA. Membership is \$10 for Faculty/Staff. The membership dues help all nine buildings through cultural arts and field trips, student directories, gifts and grants, student agendas, and the PTSA e-news and website.

- Also, please remember [the PDTA website](#) is a great resource to find information about your union.

If you need to reach me or have any questions, please feel free to email or call me on ext. 1026. Have a great year!



Resolution Specialist Jennifer Villareale

Welcome to the new school year! My name is Jen Villareale, and this is my 23rd year teaching here at PCSD. It's an honor to continue serving the PDTA membership in my new role as Resolution Specialist. I remain committed to advocating for our collective rights and ensuring that every member is supported and informed.

Start the School Year Right: Make Sure Your Schedule Matches the Contract

The beginning of the school year is the perfect time to make sure your teaching schedule and responsibilities are aligned with your contractual rights. If you notice anything that seems off, reach out to your Building Rep for support.

Here are a few key points to review:

Understanding Overage vs. Overload

Overage - A situation in which a teacher's class/ minute load exceeds contractual maximums. When the total sections/ minutes needed to be taught exceed the available personnel, a conversation begins between PDTA and the principal/HR. We then come to resolution about how to best cover the extra section/minutes. In some instances, an overage is the best solution. The principal would then offer the overage to a teacher, who can accept or decline. If accepted, a teacher would receive an extra duty stipend for such an assignment, as outlined in contract section 6-7.

Overload - A situation in which a teacher's class size, or number of IEPs in one section exceeds contractual maximums. If this occurs, a conversation begins between PDTA and the principal/HR about how to best resolve the situation. In some instances, an extra section is created; in others, a teacher receives a negotiated payment.

Information for Traveling Teachers

If you're teaching at multiple locations, know that PDTA has advocated for supports that make your travel more manageable. A few key benefits include:

- A 30-minute window between assignments to allow for travel
- Reimbursement for mileage
- Reserved parking spots at your sites

A full list of travel-related guidelines can be found on the [PDTA website](#).

Lunch and Planning Time: Know Your Rights

Every educator is entitled to a duty-free, uninterrupted lunch. In addition, certificated staff are guaranteed planning time, which varies based on role and grade level. Make sure to review the relevant sections of your contract to verify that your schedule includes the proper amount of time for both lunch and planning.

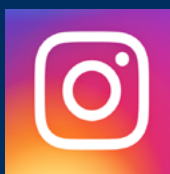
If anything in your schedule seems out of line with the contract, reach out to your Building Rep as soon as possible so the issue can be addressed.

Here's to a smooth and successful start to your school year!

SICK LEAVE BANK (SLB)! – New Member Open Enrollment coming up in OCTOBER!

The intent of the SLB program is to provide the means to assist employees who, because of long-term personal illness (more than 15 consecutive school days), have nearly exhausted their personal leave benefits and would be otherwise subject to a significant loss of income. Each current unit member of the PDTA who works 0.5 or more may join the Sick Leave Bank. By contributing four days of accumulated sick leave the member is eligible for up to 30 days annually from the SLB. Unit members that have not completed 2 years of service may enroll on a prorated basis. Only persons who have contributed to the Sick Leave Bank may make a request for SLB days. You will receive an email from the PDTA office with the necessary documentation prior to the open enrollment period, Oct 1st – 31st. The SLB Documents can be found on [our website](#).

Follow us on social media!



@pdtaunion



@ Pittsford
District
Teachers
Association
- PDTA



@PDTAunion

Member Spotlight

Allen Creek Elementary Alyson Jacobs



Years in the district: 8
Current Subject: 4th Grade
Favorite PCSD memory: Becoming life-long friends with many colleagues

Fun fact: I got married this summer!

Jefferson Road Elementary Bret Burrows



Years in the district: This is my 29th year.
Current Subject: K-5 Physical Education
Favorite PCSD memory: Working with great

colleagues and students over the years will stick with me forever.

Fun fact: I was dunked in the dunk tank at Jefferson Road last year as part of the PTSA fun run - good times!

Mendon Center Elementary Nina Dezio



Years in the district: 9
Current Subject: English as a New Language K-5
Favorite PCSD memory: Participating in the district wide

Kickball tournament to support students going to camp (at the YMCA I think) with my colleagues.

Fun fact: I drive with my hands and not my feet. (I use hand controls to drive).

Park Road Elementary Jackie Bowser



Years in the district: 7.5 total: 1.5 in tech and 6 in the classroom
Current Subject: 5th Grade
Favorite PCSD memory: Working with Standards

leaders, tech teachers, and classroom teachers together to create lessons.

Fun fact: I sing in an a cappella group!

Thornell Road Elementary Greg Bischooping



Years in the district: 26
Current Subject: PE
Favorite PCSD memory: The love that TRE showed me upon my return from a 6-week medical leave.

I received cards, gift cards, and love during my time away from school, but the best part was the greeting I received from students and staff at morning arrival when I returned! It was amazing.

Fun fact: I taught at West Point.

Barker Road Middle School Kristen Dolan



Years in the district: This is my 25th!
Current Subject: 6th Grade Special Education
Favorite PCSD memory: Two highlights are our

Barker Road Bowling Nights or the Kicks for Campers kickball tournaments.

Fun fact: My family and I once got stuck in an elevator with Otto the Orange from SU and was rescued by the NYFD.

Calkins Road Middle School Melissa Althouse



Years in the district: 25 at PCSD, 32 total!
Current Subject: 8th Grade Social Studies
Favorite PCSD memory: Every first day of school.

Fun fact: I am an ordained minister. I have had the privilege of performing 15 weddings for family and friends. My husband has also played guitar and sung at most of these weddings. We call our service "Vows and Verses".

Mendon High School Samantha Hyde



Years in the district: 5
Current Subject: Special Education - CT Chemistry and Geometry
Favorite PCSD memory: I have loved all of the

first-year teacher meetings in my building both as a new teacher and as a building rep supporting new teachers. It is a great way to connect with everyone and talk about struggles and successes.

Fun fact: I was born on Friday the 13th!

Sutherland High School Amanda Marshall



Years in the district: I started here in the Fall of 2006
Current Subject: English!
Favorite PCSD memory: For a few years, we did

a building-wide bowling party during midterm week. It was a great way for everyone to come together and have fun!

Fun fact: I once tried out for Jeopardy!

Would you like to be featured in the spotlight next issue? Would you like to nominate someone else?

Email murie_gillett@pittsford.monroe.edu so we can get to know our members!

EMBROIDERED PDTA SWAG



15% of all sales go directly to our PDTA Student Scholarship Fund. We've raised over \$345 since the program began!

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 Information and Dates:

- AFLAC Zoom Presentations- October 1 @ 11:30 am or 3:30 pm (two times offered for member convenience, sessions are 30 minutes long)
- Benefits Fair/Flu Shot Clinic- Thursday, October 23 @ 2:30 – 5:00 pm (CRMS Commons/Gym)
- NYSERS (SRPs) Pre-Retirement Workshop- October 29 @ 3:30- 5:00 pm (SHS LGI)
- SRP Recognition Day- Tuesday, November 18
- NYSTERS Pre-Retirement Workshop- November 20 @ 3:30-5:00 pm (SHS LGI)



Speak Out! is been edited and compiled by Murie Gillett. Feel free to contact me with any questions at 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.



**GET
FREE
ACCESS**

TO THE PREMIUM CALM APP, PEER SUPPORT LINE & MORE!

NYSUT Member Benefits understands the importance of providing support, resources, and tools to help NYSUT members with all aspects of their lives. In light of that, we have negotiated with our endorsed program providers to offer members several benefits free of charge.

SCAN ME



Learn more about these along with several other free benefits by scanning the QR code, visiting mb-nysut.org/nocostbenefits, or calling 800-626-8101.



Premium Calm Service –

All in-service and retiree members receive unlimited access to the full Calm library of sleep, meditation, and relaxation content. The popular Calm app includes specialized playlists dealing with stress and focus, mindful movement video and audio, nature scenes and sounds, children's content, and more. Members can add up to five dependents (age 16 or older) to receive their own premium Calm subscription. Note: You will need your NYSUT ID number (which can

be found at nysut.org/memberid) to create your Calm account.

Peer Support

Line – Life can throw lots of curveballs at us, and sometimes we don't readily know where to turn for help. The Peer Support Line is a confidential helpline that is available to all NYSUT members and their loved ones for answers, resources, and support when it's needed most. Chat, email, or call toll-free **844-444-0152** to connect with a peer today.



AD&D Insurance & Travel Assistance Services –

All in-service and retiree members are automatically provided with a \$5,000 accidental death & dismemberment insurance benefit, along with free travel assistance services.

New Member Life Insurance

– All new NYSUT members are eligible to receive a free term life insurance policy providing coverage for up to \$25,000 for one year, guaranteed renewable at the end of the year.

September/October 2025

Your PDTA Representative Assembly 2025-2026:

President: Stephanie Warchol * (CRMS)

Executive Vice President: Kim Chesko * (JRES)

Vice President for Negotiations: Dennise Zobel * (BRE)

Secretary: Alyson Jacobs * (ACE)

Treasurer: Ryan Domina * (SHS)

Resolution Specialist (non-voting): Jennifer Villareale * (MCE)

Allen Creek Elementary

Michele Riedl, Building Representative *

Emily Odhiambo, Assistant Building Representative

Susan Benson, Assistant SRP Representative

Jefferson Road Elementary

Bret Burrows, Building Representative *

Patty Steeley, Assistant Building Rep.

Heather White, Assistant SRP Representative

Mendon Center Elementary

Nina Dezio, Building Representative *

Erin Ciccone, Assistant Building Representative

Erin Cregan, Assistant Building Representative

Deborah Ricketts, Assistant SRP Representative

Rebecca Tan, Assistant SRP Representative

Park Road Elementary

Jackie Bowser, Building Representative *

Kelly Jordan, Assistant Building Representative

Thornell Road Elementary

Greg Bischooping, Building Representative *

Lindsay Stephens, Assistant Building Representative

Radhika Ramesh, Assistant SRP Representative

Barker Road Middle School

Kristen Dolan, Building Representative *

Jennifer Robinson, Assistant Building Representative

Ellen Fox, Assistant Building Representative

Karen Grace, Assistant Building Representative

Connie Maust, SRP Representative *

Calkins Road Middle School

Jessica Wojcik, Building Representative *

Jaclyn Anderson, Assistant Building Representative

Jessica Bonadio, Assistant Building Representative

Farida Patrawala, Assistant SRP Representative

Mendon High School

Samantha Hyde, Building Representative *

Brandon Mauks, Assistant Building Representative

Erin Moses, Assistant Building Representative

Jake Thompson, Assistant Building Representative

LaShanda Clark McCadney, Assistant SRP Representative

Sutherland High School

Amanda Marshall, Building Representative *

Marc Hellems, Assistant Building Representative

Brian Shafer, Assistant Building Representative

Jeff Wing, Assistant Building Representative

Kelly Nanavati, Assistant SRP Representative

Non-voting:

Irene Hopp, Retiree Representative & Whitney Sienkiewicz, Ancillary Representative

Standing Committee Chairs:

Communications: Murie Gillett, SHS

Extracurricular: Katie Shea, SHS

Membership: Paul LeVan, SHS

Political Action: Karen Grace, BRMS

Professional Advancement: Dennise Zobel, BRE

Professional Growth: Nicole Barry, BRE

Public Relations: Kelly Jordan, PRE

Safety and Wellness: Robyn Paino, PRE

Special Events: Erica Bonin, MHS

Delegates:

1. Stephanie Warchol

2. Kimberly Chesko

3. Katie Shea

4. Karen Grace

5. Alyson Jacobs

6. Jennifer Simons

7. Jennifer Birdsong-ng



***Indicates Executive Committee Member**

PD TA FUNDRAISER



RETRACTABLE BADGE HOLDER

\$5.00

READY TO PURCHASE
NO ORDERING NECESSARY



CARABINER BADGE
REEL WITH BELT CLIP

ATTACH TO YOUR
PD TA LANYARD FOR
LONGER REACH

HOT/COLD TUMBLER

\$20.00

READY TO PURCHASE
NO ORDERING NECESSARY
LIMITED QUANTITY

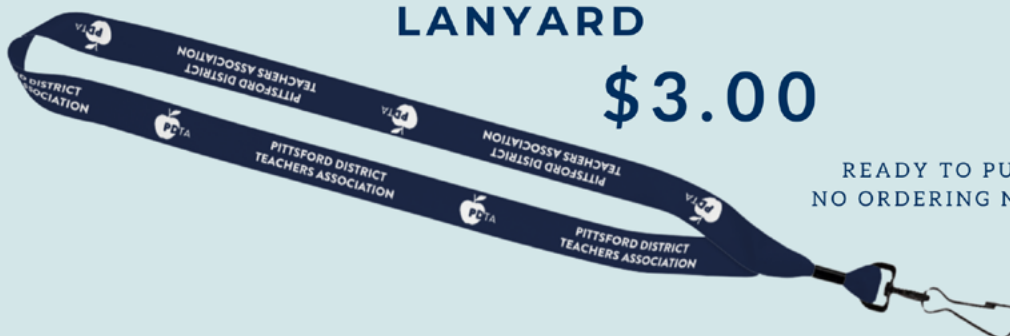


20 OZ.
NAVY BLUE
HOT/COLD TUMBLER WITH
A SNAP LID
ENGRAVED PD TA LOGO

LANYARD

\$3.00

READY TO PURCHASE
NO ORDERING NECESSARY



**AVAILABLE AT THE
PD TA BENEFITS FAIR**

CASH OR CHECK MADE OUT TO: PD TA

OCTOBER 23 @ CRMS

PDТА APPAREL SALE ORDER FORM

NEW!!!

**BOTH T SHIRT
STYLES WILL
HAVE OUR NEW
CATCHPHRASE
PRINTED
ON THE BACK:**

**WE EDUCATE.
WE ADVOCATE.
WE COLLABORATE.**

**SHORT SLEEVE- \$15
V-NECK SHORT SLEEVE- \$15**



**1/4 ZIP PULL OVER - \$22
FULL ZIP HOODIE - \$28**



**CHECK PAYABLE TO PDТА
OR CASH**

DUE NOVEMBER 6, 2025

CUT THIS PORTION OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT TO YOUR BUILDING PR COMMITTEE REP

NAME: _____ BUILDING: _____

SHORT SLEEVE QUANTITY (\$15) : _____

SIZE (CIRCLE): XS S M L XL 2X 3X 4X

V-NECK SHORT SLEEVE QUANTITY (\$15): _____

SIZE (CIRCLE): XS S M L XL 2X

1/4 ZIP PULL OVER (NAVY) QUANTITY (\$22): _____

SIZE (CIRCLE): S M L XL 2X 3X

FULL ZIP HOODIE (HEATHER BLUE) QUANTITY (\$28): _____

SIZE (CIRCLE): XS S M L XL 2X 3X

TOTAL AMOUNT PAID: _____

CIRCLE ONE: CASH CHECK