

Inside this issue:

Shared Success	2
Know Your Contract	3
Member Wellness	4

There are mixed emotions as the end of my tenure draws near. I am happy to have helped navigate the challenges that we have experienced since Covid. I believe that in many ways we have a stronger voice than we did before, and that we can use that voice to impact change moving forward. I am frustrated that some of the structural challenges that have plagued my time as president remain. They are a perennial reminder that true change is bigger than any one person, it takes all of us together.

But mostly I am grateful for the support that I have received and the experiences I have gained. It has been an honor to get to know you, learn more about our programs and see the amazing work that you do. I am grateful for those stepping up at this time to continue the work and encourage everyone to consider ways that you can contribute in the future.

I will be around supporting the new team, but it is truly with excitement that I return to focusing first and foremost on my classroom to rediscover the joy that can come with teaching. After all, that is the reason we are here doing what it is that we do.

In Solidarity,

Joal Bova, president, RCG BOCES Teachers' Association

Thank You!

November 24th will be my last day as president of our Teachers' Association. I became president in July 2020 after serving as VP of SPED. In those 6 and a half years much has changed. We dealt with the reality of hybrid learning, opened (and closed) several programs, worried about the impact of national politics on our schools, experienced staffing shortages, ratified two contracts, experienced disruptions in payroll and HR, survived brain rot, and now face the prospect of an educational landscape transformed by AI.

We want to make sure that you are getting all that you can out of your membership! Make sure you are receiving communications from us through a personal email. Check out our website at <http://rcgboces.ny.aft.org/>. Follow us on Twitter @BocesRcg. If you have not already created an online account, do so at www.NYSUT.org. Our Local is RCG BOCES Teachers' Association Local 10175. Once you log in, you will have access to a variety of membership benefits.



Unplugged: Educators, health experts and lawmakers consider responsible tech use in the classroom

Technology is transforming education faster than ever, but in our mad dash to adopt ever more innovative tools, have we paused to consider whether

these so-called advances are truly helping our students?

Click [here](#) for more information

At CTE summer camps, students get a snapshot of five careers

One day you're a mechanic.

The next day, you're a chef.

The day after that, you're a welder.

It may sound unbelievable, but that's the exact experience rising 8th-, 9th-, and 10th-graders are having at the Questar III BOCES CTE Summer Camp in Troy, a weeklong summer camp that lets students try out five different in-demand careers to see how they fit.



Here, they're in the culinary arts classroom at Robert H. Gibson Technical School in Troy, trying their hand at making homemade pizza. Students put on aprons and gather around stainless-steel tables in tight-knit groups, measuring, stirring, and kneading the pizza dough. "That's what CTE is about; hands-on," said Chef Mary Nescot, a culinary arts instructor and member of the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES Teachers Association. She strives for hyper-realism in her classes. "You are on your feet the whole entire time cooking, baking, and cleaning. It's just like if they were in a real restaurant."

In the construction unit, students learned to use chop saws and drills to build birdhouses, but construction technology instructor Mike McGillicuddy also mixes in a good dose of math and project management. McGillicuddy, a member of the Rensselaer-Columbia-Greene BOCES Teachers Association, said the end goal is to prepare students for high-paying jobs in fields they enjoy. "That's our goal, to get them out into the field," McGillicuddy said.

At the end of each day, students have a product they can take home, whether it be a chocolate dot cake or a birdhouse – and that's powerful. "They're leaving with something they made with their bare hands and that goes a long way," he said.

Usually, students don't have access to Career and Technical Education classes until their junior or senior year of high school, but educators hope that giving kids a quick taste of these popular trades might whet their appetites for more.

"When they're just in the traditional school setting, they might not know what else is out there," said Eric Papandrea, principal at Robert H. Gibson Technical School. "This is a great way to expose them to different careers that are out there, as well as things that may interest them in their junior and senior year."

Click [here](#) to read the full story on the NYSUT website!

Article 9- Leave

9.1 Sick Leave

A. In the first year of employment, an employee shall receive, effective on his or her first day of employment, five days of sick leave credits and shall accrue additional credits at the rate of one day for each two months of employment. After the first year of employment, employees shall earn additional sick leave credits at the rate of one and one-half days per month of service. Sick leave credits may be accumulated up to a total of 180 days. At the end of each school year if an employee has accumulated more than 180 sick leave credits, the employee will be paid up to five days in the payroll following the end of the school year. In the event an employee leaves Agency service before he or she has accumulated the number of such days he or she has taken, such excess will be deducted from his or her final paycheck.

B. An employee absent on sick leave shall notify the designee of the Executive Officer by 6:00 a.m. on the date of such absence and the right to use such leave shall be dependent upon the giving of such notice; provided, however, that in an emergency, notice by 6:00 a.m. shall not be required, provided that the employee gives notice as soon as he or she is able to do so.

C. The Executive Officer will not routinely require proof of illness for absences of three days or less due to illness; provided, however, that this shall not prevent the Executive Officer from requiring proof of illness in any specific case.

D. Sick leave, Personal Leave and Family Illness Leave as defined in Sections 9.2 and 9.3, respectively, may be used in units of one hour or more but not less than one hour, with prior notice and prior approval by their principal and immediate supervisor. Use of such leave is subject to the restrictions as defined in each section for such leave.



Access the full [contract here](#)

How to maximize your NYSUT membership

Your NYSUT membership offers special advantages unavailable to the general public. Make sure you're utilizing all the savings opportunities below provided by NYSUT Member Benefits.

Member-Only Pricing: Protect your loved ones with various life insurances. Plan for the future with quality long-term care insurance plans. Select from multiple highly rated auto and home insurance carriers. Receive reimbursement for eligible pet care through Nationwide.

Unbiased Advice: Ensure your financial and legal affairs are in order. Receive expert guidance on personal legal matters with unlimited advice from attorneys through our legal service plan. Obtain unbiased, objective phone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor with our financial counseling program.

Travel Savings: Bundle and save on flights, cruises, vehicle rentals, and over 850,000 hotels and resorts for the optimal travel experience with MB Discounts & Deals. Enjoy reduced pricing on over 80 explorations across 100 countries with Grand Circle Travel & Overseas Adventure Travel, including new "Immersion" options for more active travelers.

Free Benefits: Check out our free benefits! All in-service and retiree members receive unlimited access to the popular Calm app and can add up to five dependents (age 16 or older). Whether you have a specific matter or simply need an empathetic voice, the Peer Support Line can help. Other benefits include: \$5,000 accidental death & dismemberment insurance, travel assistance services, financial learning center, and more.



Feel confident knowing you have a trusted advocate on your side if you ever need us.

Find out all that's available from Member Benefits. Scan the QR code, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org, or call 800-626-8101.



**MEMBER
BENEFITS**
nysut
Working to Benefit You

September/October 2026