

work that our union does every day. Below is the email message I originally sent last week. If you haven't already, please give it a read. There's some important information in there.

I wish you all a fun, restful summer!

In Solidarity,
Rob Allen

June 17th Email Message:

Budget Vote: As you are probably aware, our revised school budget passed last night overwhelmingly, and a major reason for its success was our STA members' phone banking. I even got a text this morning from NYSUT President Melinda Person congratulating us on its passage!

I want to personally thank the following STA members for taking time out of their busy schedules to come out to NYSUT headquarters to phone bank: Sue Chatterton (and her husband, Tim), Sara Stocker (who came BOTH nights and was also at our STA Book Giveaway!), Laurie Palmateer, Dave Szmania, Jackie Johnson, Mike Warner, Colleen Wiggs, Kristan Marsh, Emily Leone, Stacey Tribol, and Dana Young. We even had the president of the Brighton Teachers Association, Jamie Porta, show solidarity by coming out to make calls on our behalf!

You may have also seen some chatter on Facebook regarding text messages that I sent supporting the budget (Yes, I was THE Robert in question). In the comments section of the post, about 95% of the people who responded understood that as a union, we *are* allowed to campaign to support candidates and budget votes. However, they rightfully pointed out that we *cannot* use school email addresses, computers, or district funds to do so. We are also not allowed to use union dues for such campaigning. That's why I want to thank everyone who increased their donations to VOTE-COPE during our recent drive; these donations are how we are able to finance political actions like these.

If you would like to support future school budget and Board of Education votes, please consider phone banking with us next year. It was actually a lot of fun; you can ask anybody who came out to make calls, and they'll confirm it (and, no, it's not one of those things where you say it's fun, but it actually is kind of lame; IT REALLY WAS FUN!).

Updated Constitution and Bylaws: This past spring, a committee of STA members got together to update our Constitution and Bylaws. We didn't make any major changes; we basically just updated it to reflect our current online voting practices as well as some other minor revisions. According to our current Constitution and Bylaws, we can only make changes to these documents with an in-person vote, so we plan to vote on opening day during our all-STA meeting. I have attached the updated Constitution and Bylaws with revisions to this email along with a description of the changes. Please review these documents before opening day (I will also send them out one more time prior to September). Since they are long documents, we don't plan to print them out, but feel free to print copies for yourself if you would like.

NYSUT Advocacy: NYSUT has been heavily advocating for placing limits on screen time in schools, as well as stopping Governor Kathy Hochul from signing on to a federal school voucher program that would funnel taxpayer funds away from our public schools. Below is some more information on each action:

Screen Limits: NYSUT's Board of Directors [passed a resolution](#) calling for developmentally appropriate limits on screen time and student-facing artificial intelligence in New York schools. The resolution recommends specific guardrails, including no one-to-one device use or student-facing AI for pre-K through second grade, no non-educational AI for grades three through eight, and a ban on so-called "social companion" chatbots for children under 16. It also calls for paper-and-pencil testing options for all students. The action aligns with AFT President Randi Weingarten's recently released 10-point framework for public education and builds on New York's bell-to-bell cellphone ban enacted last year.


Federal Voucher Scheme (this is a little long, but it's important):

On Jan. 1, 2027, the federal school voucher tax credit program goes live. It's the first national school voucher program in U.S. history, and the largest effort ever to reroute public tax dollars to private schools – all dressed up as charitable giving. Governors decide whether their states participate, and Gov. Hochul has signaled she intends to opt New York in.


Here's how it works: Donors get a dollar-for-dollar federal tax credit, up to \$1,700 a year, for giving to "scholarship-granting organizations" (SGOs) – private groups that hand out vouchers, most of which are expected to flow to private and religious schools. Unlike public schools, which educate 90% of our students and welcome every child, private schools answer to no one and can reject any student who doesn't fit their business model.

This program is another transfer of wealth from working people to the wealthy. It's a tax shelter, paid for by the rest of us.


The evidence from other states should end the debate:

 **Arizona:** Costs exploded from a projected \$65 million to \$864 million, helping to blow a \$1.4 billion hole in the state budget.

 **Arkansas:** 95% of voucher recipients were already in private school.

 **Florida:** An audit of the statewide voucher program found that the state couldn't account for \$270 million in funds and may have made overpayments for roughly 30,000 students.

The pressure is building: 15 of New York's Democratic members of Congress have urged the governor to opt out, and union leaders from 24 states have called on all Democratic governors to say no. Governor Hochul needs to hear from you next.

 **[TAKE ACTION: Click here to sign our petition calling on Governor Hochul to opt New York OUT of this federal voucher scam!](#)**

It took us 30 years to fully fund Foundation Aid. It would take one governor to start undoing it.

Discounted Amusement Park Tickets for NYSUT Members:

- **Six Flags at Darien Lake:** Valid for admission on any Public Operating Day July 4 through August 31 (*you can purchase them now, but cannot use them until July 4*)

Click [HERE](#) to purchase tickets

Username: SFDL-NYSUT26

Password: NYSUT26

Attached is a [FLYER](#) with the link embedded, along with the username and password

- **Seabreeze:** Valid all summer - tickets must be purchased online from their website. No discounts are available at the gate.

Visit [SEABREEZE WEBSITE](#), click on BUY TICKETS, choose Ride & Slide Ticket. At checkout, use promo code “NYSUT.”



STA News

STA Food Drive, May 4th – 13th

An entire carload of donations from all buildings, DO, the BOE, and transportation were donated to the Spencerport Ecumenical Food Shelf. Thank you to all that donated! A special thank you to Julie Churnetski at Transportation, Kerry Geedy at DO, and Leah Brown with the BOE for coordinating the collections with their respective groups.



STA Book Give-Away at the Spencerport Fireman's Carnival

The STA gave away hundreds of books again at the Fireman's Carnival this year! Thank you to the following volunteers that helped make the event an outstanding success:

MaryJean McQuilkin and her husband Rich with the Fireman's Exempts, Amanda Van Huben, Nancy Laistner, Danielle Blossom, Jackie Johnson, Marlene Benson, Hannah Hill, Nicole Galbraith, Sara Stocker, Maddie Shaw, and Rob Allen.



Retiree Happy Hour

The STA held our annual Retiree Happy Hour on June 1st . Current STA officers along with the retiree officers celebrated the newest class of retirees and made introductions all around. It was a great afternoon, thank you to all that were able to join us!

STA Scholarship Winners

Each year the Spencerport Teachers Association conducts a scholarship drive to raise money for deserving seniors who have chosen to continue their studies. Overall, this year's campaign raised more than \$4,800. Scholarship recipients are chosen by a committee composed of STA members from all buildings within the district. They are assisted by members representing administration, the Board of Education, the Spencerport community, and the Spencerport Central Retirees' Association.



This year the STA was able to give away 4 scholarships to students whose names will be announced at graduation on June 26th. Be on the lookout for our lawn signs this summer! Thank you to all that contributed.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacquelyn Lanpher

First Vice-President

Congratulations & Happy Trails, Retirees!



Christine Demitrovic

When did you join the district? In what role?

I joined the district in 1996 as a second-grade teacher at Munn. I moved to Taylor the following year when we redistricted. Then, on to Canal View when it opened.

Do you have a “favorite” to share?

My favorite part of my time here is without question the wonderful coworkers who became true friends. The laughter, the support, the shared chaos – those relationships are what I’ll carry with me forever.

I could honestly write a whole book of field trip stories. Some were hilarious, some were chaotic, and a few were downright *horrific* – but every single one became a memory I’ll never forget.

And my very first class – all 24 of them – will always hold a special place in my heart. I used to think I was seeing them through rose-colored glasses, but three of those students went on to graduate in the top 10 of their class.

What are you looking forward to in retirement

I’m looking forward to finally shutting down my mind a bit – not having to answer hundreds of questions a day. I can’t wait to relax in the morning with coffee, read, stretch, and enjoy a slower pace.

We have beach trips planned, and I’ll be getting a knee replacement, which I’m excited about because it means walking without hobbling.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

Know that you are doing enough. You are making a difference, even on the days when it doesn’t feel like it. You are at least *one* of your students’ “everything.”

Be a good listener – to kids and colleagues. Some of us old-timers really do know a thing or two.

Protect your time. Take care of yourself. A healthy, rested teacher is the best gift you can give your students.



Vincent Falbo

When did you join the district? In what role?

I joined the district in 2002 after teaching in Penfield for 9 years. The technology department here was only teaching three classes, and the Computer Science program was outdated. They asked me if I would update the Computer Science program and implement the Project Lead the Way engineering program.

I was already teaching two different AP Computer Science classes in Penfield, and we had fully implemented the engineering program there; therefore, it was fun to be able to come here to introduce so many new courses and to give kids exposure to topics and technology they never saw before.

Do you have a "favorite" to share?

It's difficult to choose just one moment. What's always amazing is when students reach out after graduation to share all the great things that they're doing. I've seen so many students go on to work for the largest tech companies. One very special moment was when I was preparing for class one day searching for an example of a programming concept I needed for class, and an ad popped up with a young woman talking about a new Microsoft product. She was one of my former students, and she was doing amazing things.

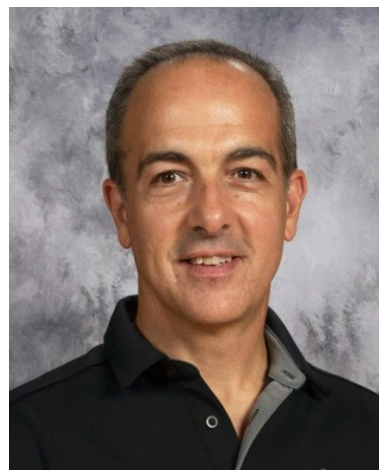
What are you looking forward to in retirement?

There are many things I'm looking forward to in retirement, but I'm most excited to have the opportunity to reconnect with family and friends. I'm going to focus on the simple things first, so I'm setting aside time to go for a walk and have a meal with people that helped me throughout my career. I'm reaching out to the people in an effort to connect and be grateful.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

There are two things that are very important. First, It's important to always have a mentor and to always be a mentor. It enriches our lives. I'm going to reach out to my mentors that helped me start teaching over 30 years ago. There are many people that made space for me to talk and observe their classrooms on a regular basis. If there were one thing that I would change about school cultures now, I would open up all the doors and have all the teachers walking in each other's classrooms on a regular basis. There is so much we could learn from each other, and I'm grateful for the people that helped me. Don't be afraid to ask for help and find a great mentor.

The second thing that's important is to remember that we are planting the seeds, and we rarely see the harvest. It gets discouraging when we don't see the results of our work, but we have to keep the faith that what we are doing is impacting our children's lives. The kids go on to do great things. I've taught so many students that have gone on to work for large tech companies and started up small technical companies, and it's an honor to be a part of their experience. Seeds grow. Just keep planting the seeds!



Matt Fink

When did you join the district? In what role?

I joined the district in 1995 as a 25-year-old kid stepping into an 8:1:1 Special Education classroom at Munn. After two years in that role, I transferred into a fifth-grade general education classroom, where I've spent the majority of this wonderful career. When I left the 8:1:1 position, we hired a young teacher to take my place – an extraordinary educator who would later become my wife. Two children and a lifetime of memories later, we are still happily married, 23 years and counting.



Do you have a "favorite" to share?

Being part of this district has given me a lifetime of memories. I've stayed connected with so many students and families over the years, and those relationships have meant the world to me. I've made countless friends here who I sincerely cherish. Some have passed on, some are just starting their careers, and some are busy planning my retirement party. One of them even stood beside me as the best man at my wedding. This place has shaped my life in ways I never could have imagined.



What are you looking forward to in retirement?

In retirement I look forward to spending quality time with my family and the friends I've made along the way. There's some much-needed traveling in my future, and more than a few rounds of golf. I wish all of you a long, successful, and happy career. It goes by faster than you think.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

Friendships, memories, and connections are the cornerstone of a successful career. Take the time to cultivate those relationships – with students, families, and colleagues – and your work life will be both meaningful and joyful. Teaching is demanding, but when you build strong connections, the rewards are immeasurable.

Suellan Morton

When did you join the district? In what role?

I started my teaching career at Mercy High School in 1994, teaching 7th and 8th grade math. I came to Cosgrove in September 1999. I was hired as a 7th grade math teacher and taught 7th and 8th grade (7th accelerated) math. After a few years, I moved to 8th grade, teaching the 8th grade and Algebra courses. I have always taught 7th and 8th grade students throughout my career, and while it can be challenging at times, I truly enjoyed it!

Do you have a "favorite" to share?

My favorite memories include people, staff and students, that I have worked with. I have made some great friends over the years and look forward to keeping in touch with them. I am proud to have worked with so many students, helping them build not only their math skills but also helping them build life skills. Being a math teacher, I was curious to know how many students I have worked with. I estimated about 3000 students. I hope that I have been a positive influence in their lives.

What are you looking forward to in retirement?

I am looking forward to spending time with my granddaughters, newborn Hazel and almost 2-year-old Autumn. Babysitting them when needed. Gardening. Going for long walks. Enjoying the fall season while not having to work. Not getting up at 5:30 am. Traveling with my husband. He travels across the United States for work. I went with him to Puerto Rico during one spring break, but now I can go with him anytime!

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

Don't let work overwhelm you. Be supportive of your colleagues and ask for their support when needed. Join your peers during lunch or after school, just to share a laugh or to relieve some stress. Make time for your family, they are your priority. You decided to become a teacher. Even though it can be hard at times, you made the right decision. You got this! Best wishes!



Lia Napierala

When did you join the district? In what role?

I started my teaching career in Spencerport in 2002. I was hired as a Special Education teacher for a new program the district was creating, the Academy. The program was created to help students who were at-risk of not earning a high school diploma. The first year in the program, I was not only the Special Education teacher, but also taught math, English and Spanish. It is crazy to think I did all that. The following year, I only taught math, and provided special education services in the core classes. After my second year, my role shifted to providing consultant teacher services in the core classes, and teaching several elective courses.



Do you have a "favorite" to share?

I have so many memories of my tenure at Spencerport. I have had a lot of good times and laughs with my co-workers both inside and outside of school. Even on the worst days, we could always find something to laugh about.

Some of my colleagues have become my close friends! I have worked with a variety of different students over the years. My favorite memories are of the students who were far behind in credits and with the help of the program were able to graduate! I enjoy seeing them years later, and they still talk about how much the program helped them.

What are you looking forward to in retirement?

Travel!! We have a trip planned to Alaska in August, a trip to Punta Cana in January and another trip to Mexico in March. It's going to be great to travel outside of school breaks! Garden on a Monday or Tuesday morning. I also plan on spending more time with my family, especially my younger grandchildren. At times it will be great to have nothing on my calendar.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

Be flexible! What works for some students may not work for others. What works one day may not work the next. Celebrate your accomplishments often, even if they are small. Seek out those who will support you, people who you can laugh with and vent to. Always remember you chose to become a teacher because you believe all children can be positively impacted by their teachers.

Kristen Pettis

When did you join the district? In what role?

After 20 wonderful years in the Spencerport community, it is hard to put into words just how much this journey has meant to me. I have spent all of those years at Taylor Elementary, where I've had the privilege of teaching first grade, fifth grade, and now fourth grade—each grade bringing its own unique joys, lessons, and unforgettable moments.



Do you have a "favorite" to share?

One of my favorite parts of my career has been serving as a team leader and working alongside the most amazing group of teachers. The support, collaboration, and friendships we've built over the years have truly made Taylor feel like a second home.

There are so many special memories, but one that has always stayed with me was when I ran into a former student outside of school. She was graduating from college and stopped to talk with me. She shared that she remembered our classroom as a warm and caring place—and then asked if I still read Chicken Soup for the Soul stories. I was so touched that something so simple had stayed with her all those years. That moment reminded me that the little things we do every day matter more than we realize.

What are you looking forward to in retirement?

As I look ahead to retirement, I am excited for new adventures—visiting my son in Omaha, drinking my coffee while it's actually hot, using the bathroom whenever I want (no explanations needed!), and leaving behind copier jams once and for all. Most importantly, I look forward to reflecting on all those small, everyday moments that added up to something much bigger.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

To the new teachers beginning their journey, here are a few words of wisdom:

If it's quiet... be suspicious.

Never underestimate the power of a sticker, a smile, or two extra minutes of recess.

Someone will cry. Sometimes it will be a student. Sometimes it might be you. Both are okay.

The days feel long, but the school years fly by.

And always remember...
To your students, you are magic.



Thank you, Spencerport and Taylor Elementary, for 20 years of memories, laughter, and purpose. This has been the honor of a lifetime.

Heather Shaw

When did you join the district? In what role?

In September 1995, I was hired as a long-term special education substitute in a 4th grade blended classroom at Bernabi. When the year ended, I was hired as a 5th grade general education teacher at Terry Taylor, where I taught until Canal View opened in 2003. During my 31 years in Spencerport, I have taught every grade K-5.

Do you have a "favorite" to share?

I have many great memories of students and colleagues, but I have to say that my biggest "favorite" has been working with my daughter for the last two years. Maddie graduated from Spencerport in 2020 and was hired as a 2nd grade teacher at Canal View in 2024. Not only am I proud of her, being able to work together is such a unique and special experience.



What are you looking forward to in retirement?

I am looking forward to slowing down and relaxing. I am especially excited to not worry about the school calendar when scheduling vacations, appointments, and plans with friends.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

My advice to new teachers is to focus on the positive things that are happening in your classroom. There will be so many positives, but sometimes the negative things can really get to you. I also hope you find a friend group that you connect with at school. Teaching is hard work full of ups and downs. Having a person or a group of people that you can laugh (and cry) with makes a big difference!



Dori Swarthout

When did you join the district? In what role?

I was a music sub for the district while working part time as a band teacher in Kendall in 1994, and then the district hired me as a music teacher in 1995.

Do you have a "favorite" to share?

One of the favorite parts about my job is working with thousands of students through the years and hearing how they are doing while seeing the excitement in their face as they tell me about it. It's also fun to teach children of former students and even more fun to work with former students who now work in the district. It's definitely a circle of life, just like in the Lion King movie.



What are you looking forward to in retirement?

Having time to do things I want to do like read, bake, gardening, and having more time to devote to my studio.

What words of wisdom do you have for new teachers?

I know there are a lot of stressful times, but try to enjoy the kids' smiling faces, take time to listen to how their day is going, or what they did over the weekend. Kids say a lot of funny things, and it's hard to remember them. Keep a book where you can write down all the funny things they say and look back at them when you need a good laugh.



Congratulations to STA retirees

Chris Crowell

Laura Slusarenco

2025/2026 Executive Council Meeting Dates

Meetings will begin at 4:00 in Cosgrove, Room 626

~~September 24~~

~~February 12~~

~~October 9~~

~~March 12~~

~~November 13~~

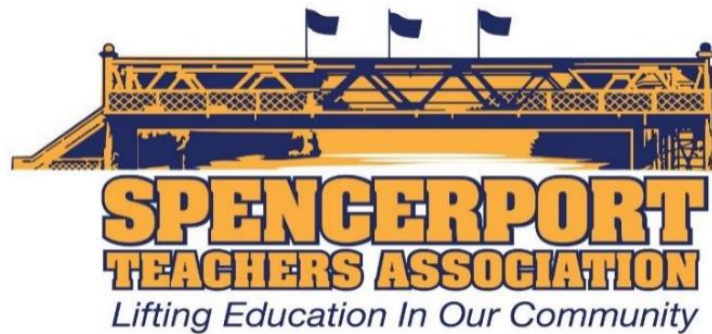
~~April 16~~

~~December 11~~

~~May 14~~

~~January 15~~

~~June 5~~



Executive Council 2025-2026

Officers:

- President Rob Allen
- 1st VP Jacquelyn Lanpher
- 2nd VP Bridget Herrmann
- PAC Chair Sue Chatterton
- Secretary Amanda Van Huben
- Treasurer Frank Cafarella

PAC Representatives:

- Bernabi Laurie Palmateer
- Canal View Sara Stocker
- Munn Stacy Lonardo
- Taylor Danielle Blossom
- Cosgrove Theresa Dils
- Wilson Dan Pincelli

Delegates to the NYSUT Representative Assembly:

- Rob Allen
- Sue Chatterton
- Jacquelyn Lanpher
- Laurie Palmateer

Building Representatives:

Bernabi:

- Tammy Lopatka
- Jaclyn Neusatz

Canal View:

- Erin Fredereksen
- Deanna Mendoza

Munn:

- Matt Fink
- Jackie Johnson

Taylor:

- Danielle Blossom
- Rob Pursel

Cosgrove:

- Theresa Dils
- Robin Hondorf
- Elissa Kingsbury
- Anita Miller

Wilson:

- Kristin Cocchiara
- Steve Kelley
- Dan Pincelli
- Rachel Sherman
- Open

Nurses:

- Mike Steinman

TAs:

- Tina Pocock

Building Planning Team Representatives:

Bernabi:

- Laurie Palmateer

Canal View:

- Sue Chatterton

Munn:

- Matt Fink

Terry Taylor:

- Danielle Blossom

Cosgrove:

- Anita Miller

Wilson:

- Steve Kelley

Social Media Coordinator:

- Bridget Herrmann

Newsletter Editor:

- Emmy Thevanesan

Webmaster:

- Bryan Swanson

Political Action:

- Stacy Lonardo

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