

Legislative Action

NYSUT works on behalf of New York educators, students, health care professionals, municipal employees and retirees to improve public education and health care and to protect the rights of members to practice their profession. The union lobbies to promote state funding for public education and health care, to draw attention to social justice causes, and galvanizes members with action alerts and lobby days. Among the many bills it has successfully advocated for: Safe Schools legislation to reduce violence in schools; the Dignity for All Students Act, to curtail bullying in schools; a retiree Cost-of-Living Adjustment; and the elimination of mandatory overtime for hospital nurses.

Research and Educational Services

NYSUT always works to make sure the voice of the practitioner is heard on education issues. The union works closely with the Regents and State Education Department to influence policy based on sound education practice and research. Professional programs and resources, toolkits, research bulletins and the annual publication of *Educator's Voice* constantly keep members informed of proven trends and research. This is the best resource for the latest information on new testing requirements, certification issues, and economic trends that are useful for contract negotiations.

Communications

NYSUT works with the media to inform them of the union's position on public education, state funding and how legislative decisions will affect students, educators, retirees and health care and other public professionals. News and photos appear on www.nysut.org; ongoing coverage of issues, locals in their communities, and the essential work members do appears in *NYSUT United*. Stories about how NYSUT members help in their workplaces and communities also can be found at <http://itswhatwedo.nysut.org>. And, members can join the conversation at our social media site www.facebook.com/NYSUTUnited.

Did you know?

Union membership brings benefits beyond a good contract



Many people know that a union helps negotiate contracts. Many more bread-and-butter issues are handled by unions, too.

NYSUT, your parent union, helps to safeguard workers' rights, providing union representation and, in some cases, legal representation for work-related problems.

NYSUT advocates for workers' health and safety on the job through its own health and safety specialist and advocacy with state and federal organizations.

The statewide union also provides leadership development and practical, professional information, such as tracking and informing members about new testing requirements, becoming National Board Certified, or using electronic reporting in the health care field. NYSUT also can assist members in dealing with problems such as sickness or financial distress. These services are offered to individuals, through conferences and workshops, or to local unions.

Professional development

NYSUT's Education and Learning Trust offers professional development courses to improve the quality of teaching and meet certification requirements. Programs are scheduled to meet your needs, with classes available online, in classrooms and on CDs. They are based on best practices, classroom application and research-based strategies. ELT has courses for undergraduate, graduate and in-service credit; programs that lead to master's degrees; and professional development programs for teachers, SRPs and health care members. Visit www.nysut.org/elt.

Social services

NYSUT's Social Services department helps in-service and retiree members find help for problems ranging from financial distress to managing hospitalizations to finding help for an aging parent. The service is free to members and families and always confidential. Visit www.nysut.org and click on social services; email socsvcs@nysutmail.org; or call 800-342-9810 ext. 6206.

Committees

NYSUT uses special task forces and standing committees to initiate policy and position statements for consideration by the Board of Directors and the union's policy-making body, the Representative Assembly. Committees cover a host of education topic areas, as well as political action, retirees, health care professionals, health and safety, SRPs, small and rural locals, and BOCES. Members serve by appointment. If you'd like to get involved, contact your local president.

Member Benefits

NYSUT Member Benefits offers endorsed programs to help members save money. Member Benefits can provide rates and coverage for auto and homeowner insurance through Met Life. It also offers life insurance. The majority of endorsed programs can be paid for using payroll and pension deduction. Members can also save on some fun stuff, such as car rentals, ski tickets or movie tickets.