

**Volume 35 Issue 1
October/November
2021**

AFT Local 3037/ NYSUT Local 22-220

The BEES Beacon

BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk



*From the Lighthouse
in the East
to the Lighthouse
in the West*



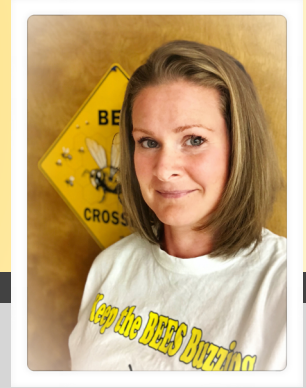
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President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

Union Strong

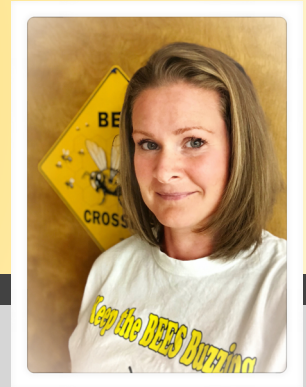


Greetings BEES members. I hope you are all healthy and well as this school year is in full swing. As we said our goodbyes in June, we anticipated that this school year would bring some normalcy. We hoped for a year without masks, a year without mandates, and a year with less stress. Unfortunately, we have gotten more of the same; it has been a difficult beginning to the school year. What we do have this time around that we did not have last year is experience. It may not be the exact same music, but we know the dance. Each of you have continued to show up and make amazing things happen at our schools each and every day. I know that you are tired, and I know that it has been stressful. Your union leaders recognize the value you bring to work with you everyday. Every position at this agency is valued and needed, and we thank you for your dedication and hard work.

As union leaders, we have continued to work on the issues that have arisen this year-- starting with the New York State testing mandate, which is a large-scale operation enforced by the New York State Department of Health. Back in September, I shared a video containing information about the mandate to inform our membership that the mandate was coming from the state, and not the agency and that participating would be mandatory. I also shared that I would be negotiating with the agency to obtain on-site testing for members, paid for by the agency. This is not something the agency had originally planned to do as there were free off-site testing areas available for employees to use. Ultimately, we were successful in negotiating the on-site testing, which is now in place in the buildings for those members who must participate in this state mandate. The agency had a major undertaking in getting that on-site testing set up, and there were several people involved in the process.

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Union Strong



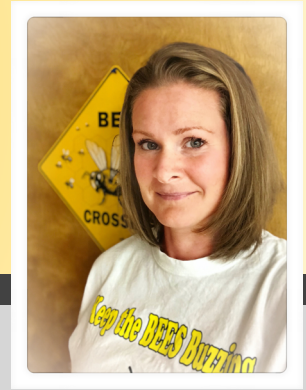
Many HR staff came together to work out the seemingly endless details that went into setting up the program and securing the contract with the testing company in time to meet the mandate. Many districts did not negotiate this option with their employees, and instead required them to be tested on their own time before or after school. I would like to thank those people who worked to organize the on-site testing project in order to make it happen for our members and those who came to the table with the BEES leadership and recognized the importance of having an on-site option for our membership.

Communication is vital for our members and for our union leaders to get information from you, our members. We have many lines of communication available to you, and we encourage you to use the one that is the most convenient for you. We have a very diverse staff with a geographically diverse membership, which has its challenges. If you have questions about your contract or building issues, please don't hesitate to reach out. Start with your building representative; if you are not sure who they are, you can find a list of building reps on our website at www.beesbeacon.org. If you are not comfortable sharing some information with your building representative, then you can email your Area Vice President directly from the website as well. If your building representative or Area Vice President feels that they need further assistance with anything, they will inform our Executive Vice Presidents and/or myself.

**UNION
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President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

Union Strong

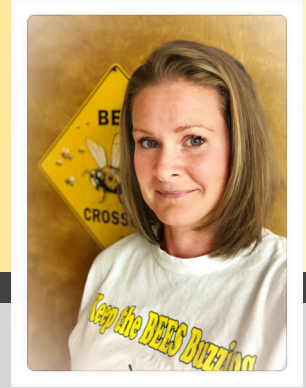


We also send out information via text blast and on our Facebook page. In order to join our private Facebook group, you must be a dues-paying member. This group is an extra benefit that members of the Executive Board provide as a way for BEES members to connect with one another and get quick answers to questions you might have. There have been some great conversations on the group page. I would like to remind everyone that the group page does have community rules for your own safety. It is important to always remember that even though it is a closed page, things that you post can be screen captured by anyone and sent to someone else. Please maintain a professional tone while posting and conversing on the page. This also goes for any texting or social media groups you are part of with colleagues. You never know who might share something you said about a supervisor, colleague or work to get themselves ahead (yes, this has happened). There are times that posts on the Facebook page contain sensitive topics, those may be answered by direct message from an Executive Board member, so keep an eye on your messenger if you don't see your post in the feed. If you haven't joined the group yet, I encourage you to; it's a great resource for members.

One of the topics that has come up on our Facebook page is the amount of vacancies that currently exist throughout the agency, particularly in our special ed. programs. We are aware of the shortages and have been working with the agency on various committees and by requesting specific meetings to address this issue. There are shortages countrywide in education, and while that doesn't fix our problem, we need to understand that this is not BOCES specific. As union leaders, we are meeting and discussing the best ways to maintain the health and safety of staff and students in our programs and get more employees to come to the agency. We are discussing ways to incentivize and increase wages for paraprofessionals, who we know are underpaid for the important work that they do. Unfortunately, these matters take some time to work out. There are multiple steps to the process, but please know, we are aware of the issues and we support and want more for our paraprofessionals.

President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

Union Strong

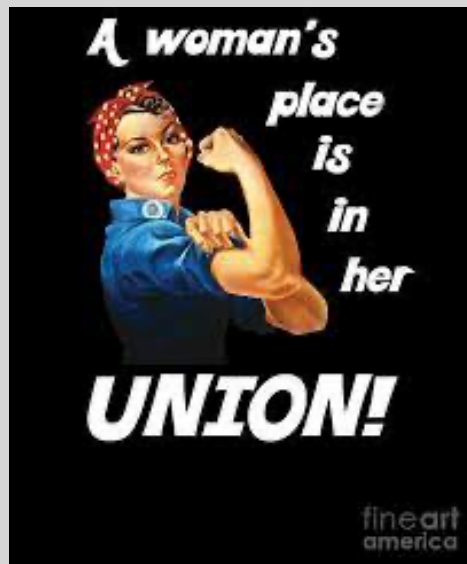


There have been some questions about the Article 7 BEES hours that must be completed by the end of every school year. These are the 15 professional development hours required by the agency for certificated staff only; not to be confused with the CTLE hours required by NYSED for teachers with Professional Certification and level 3 TA's. If you have not received your stipend from last year's Article 7 hours, it should be sent to you very soon. HR has also been short staffed, and they have been working overtime to process the stipends.

Please keep an eye out on our social media, website and text system for any upcoming workshops that we or NYSUT may be hosting. We hope to see you in person soon, but for now, most workshops are still on Zoom. I wish you all a happy Fall; may it be full of warmth and gratitude.

In Solidarity,

Asha



Executive Vice President - Al Rios

Getting to Know You



Greetings to all our BEES members.

Welcome back to all of our members from a most deserved and needed vacation after a challenging 2020-2021 school year. I would also like to welcome all the new BEES Members to The BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk and thank you for being a part of the union and realizing the benefits and strength there is in unity.

I know it has been a challenging start to the 2021-2022 school year with many questions and concerns that have been put upon us by the state. My hope is that all our members and their families are safe, healthy and managing the challenges that we face with optimism and hope.

As we start this New Year I would highly recommend that ALL members (new and seasoned) reach out and get to know your building reps. We have reps. for Yellow contract and Blue contract members in each of our programs, please look for your reps. And introduce yourselves to them. The reps. are there to help you with questions or concerns and if they are not sure of an answer, they will find someone who will be able to answer your questions.

This year along with the privilege of being your Executive Vice President, I am proud to assume a new responsibility as your NYSTRS (New York State Teachers Retirement System) delegate. Since becoming a delegate, I am learning more and more about the Teachers Retirement System. I thought I am so many years away from retirement that I will have plenty of time to educate myself about the retirement benefits that each one of us will be entitled to. I have since learned that it is never too soon to make informed decisions about your future at each stage of your teaching career.

Since becoming a NYSTRS delegate, members have asked me, "Am I a member of NYSTRS?" I thought I would share some information regarding NYSTRS and the benefits that working and vested NYSTRS members will benefit from belonging to this retirement system.

Executive Vice President - Al Rios

Getting to Know You



Our Members must join NYSTRS if they are employed under all of the following conditions:

- As a teacher, teaching assistant, guidance counselor, educational administrator, or any other title covered by this System, and
- By a New York State (excluding New York City) public school district or BOCES and
- Full-time every workday for the full day, as defined in the appropriate contract or job description, through the end of the school year.

New York State Teachers Retirement System (NYSTRS):

Vision: To be the model for pension fund excellence and exceptional customer service.

Mission: To provide our members with a secure pension.

· Its purpose is to manage the fund from which NYS public school teachers and administrators (excluding those in New York City) receive retirement benefits. Benefits are statutory and paid in accordance with the laws enacted by the Legislature

Funds to provide benefits are derived from:

· Investments — Funds are invested in equities, fixed income, real estate and other programs according to an asset allocation policy designed to maximize returns through diversification while limiting risks to the portfolio.

· Employer contributions — Each participating employer contributes a percentage of its member payroll.

· Member contributions — Each member's contribution is based on the individual tier levels.

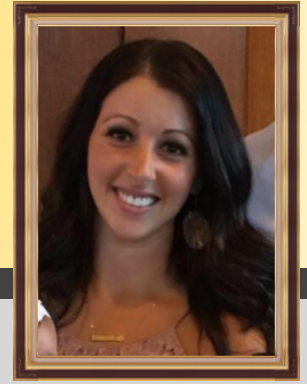
I hope introducing you to NYSTRS informed you and helped you learn a little more about YOUR retirement system. I also encourage you to register for a NYSTRS account and learn more about the benefits by visiting NYSTRS.org

I wish you all a safe, healthy and happy year and holiday season and hope that as the school year progresses we start to see things come back to normalcy.

All the best,

Al

Executive Vice President - Amanda Pica



Better Together

Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is the progress. Working together is success! – Henry Ford

I feel this quote is a true reflection of the last year and half. When the world was faced with such uncertainty we all turned to each other. As we approached each roadblock we continued down the same path all while trying to do our best. Now here we are, the 2021-2022 school year has begun and I know we will continue to have great success. I hope you were all able to enjoy some sunshine, recharge your batteries and spend time with your loved ones, after all that is the most important.

For those of you who don't know me, I am Amanda Pica, your new Executive Vice President. I have been with the agency for over 11 years, a building representative for 6 years and a member of the executive board for the last 3.5 years. Our Executive-Board has had many positive changes over the last year but our goal to advocate for our members is still our number one priority. I want to welcome back all of our members and I look forward to working with all of you.

I want to provide you with some resources that you can utilize throughout the year. Please visit www.beesbeacon.org to keep up with current information, text the word BEES to the number 33222 to receive informational text messages, www.NYSUT.ORG & www.AFT.ORG will help provide you with your state and national union benefit information. Please remember to familiarize yourself with your building representative as they will be providing each building with the most current and important information. If at any time you need to contact me please email me at picaparavp@gmail.com. I wish each and every one of you a great year!

- Amanda

Check out what your union membership has to offer!

Member Benefits Discounts & Deals

Below are the most popular vendors that NYSUT members have shopped with using MB Discounts & Deals this past year -- with a potential savings of almost \$900,000! Have you been missing out?

EAT

HelloFresh

Burger King

Subway

Domino's

Jersey Mike's Subs

PLAY

Six Flags Theme Parks

Hersheypark

Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Bronx Zoo

LEGOLAND New York

SHOP

Samsung

Apple

Dell

Lenovo

Advanced Auto Parts

TRAVEL

TripBeat

Great Wolf Lodge

Carnival Cruise Lines

Sandals Resorts

Norwegian Cruise Lines

MB Discounts & Deals offers NYSUT members exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on restaurants, groceries and food delivery, theme park tickets, hotels and flights, oil changes and vehicle maintenance -- with more than 21,000 New York State deals and thousands more nationwide.

You can even refer your favorite local business (restaurant, coffee shop, workout facility, etc.) to join the network and provide NYSUT members with a special discount. Don't miss out... register your account today!

Member Benefits is proud to endorse MB Discounts & Deals along with dozens of other programs and services that may be able to benefit you and your family members. Take some time to explore our website to find out how we can help you make every dollar count!

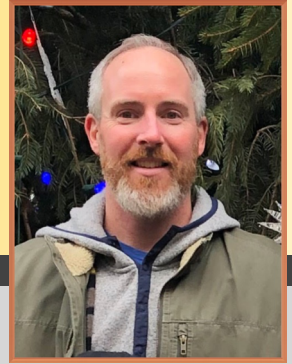


Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,
visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org
or calling 800-626-8101.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Sept/Oct 2021

First Vice President - Keith Flynn



Your Voice, Your Union

Hello... BEES Membership! It's amazing how every year that I get older, time goes by quicker. I can't fathom that Halloween is only a week away and the holiday season is quickly approaching. With all the uncertainties that came with the start of this school year: COVID concerns, mandatory weekly COVID testing for unvaccinated employees, vacancy positions throughout BOCES, nationwide labor shortages, inflation (is it transitory?) and the potential for big increases in heating costs this winter, there are a lot of heavy thoughts as we slowly emerge from the pandemic.

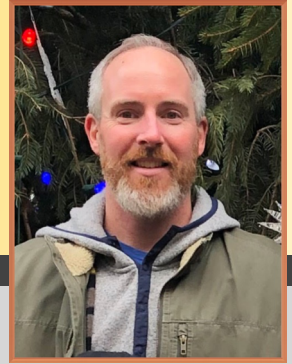
Although the Opening Day meeting was 2 months ago, I felt it was a big success. The efficacy of the format can always be debated, but member participation in the virtual format has been extremely successful the last 2 years. I want to thank all of you who were able to join the meeting and to participate with the updates.

Your voice, your union!

The Opening Day VOTECOPE Raffle was a big success as **your union** was able to give back a portion of VOTECOPE rebate (from NYSUT) back to our members. Your Union Leadership was able to stretch that money out an extra 20% in order to raffle off more gift cards to our members. VOTECOPE is NYSUT's non-partisan action fund that coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and supports NYSUT-endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public-education and pro-labor. Thank you for being a member of VOTECOPE!



First Vice President - Keith Flynn



Your Voice, Your Union

Advocacy Day- We should have a date and the format for Advocacy Day around the beginning of November. Last year, the event was held virtually due to COVID. It's an amazing event for our students and they continue to shine each and every year. As soon as we know whether it will be held virtually or in Albany, we will be seeking BEES members to meet with legislators and advocating for support on a variety of issues that pertain specifically to BOCES. Students participate with us, which affords them a unique opportunity to see how government works and to get involved in the process. It is truly a worthwhile and gratifying experience

Pension & Retirement Education Program (PREP)-Below is a link to PREP. If you are a teacher or teacher assistant and planning on retiring anytime within the next few years, it is strongly recommended that check out the link below. The Yellow Contract Retirement Workshop was held on Oct. 21 with much success and the Blue Contract Retirement Workshop will be 1/20/22.

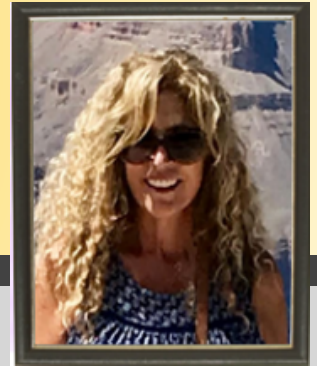
<https://nystrs.org/Retirement-Planning/Pension-Retirement-Education-Program>

Annual Salary Notice and Attendance Verification-Make sure you check your salary notice and that you are on the correct step and receiving the correct longevity increments. You can, and should, check your personal leave, sick leave and accrued sick leave days on WinCap. I highly recommend that you print out and save a copy of your attendance record.

I would like to wish you and your families a very happy and healthy holiday season!

Keith

Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



Amazing SRPs

Welcome Back!

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer and has adjusted to their building routines. It's hard to believe we are in full swing already and the holidays will be approaching before we know it.

Many of us are discouraged that masks are still necessary, and we were faced with some new restrictions. However, this seems to be the new norm and we are hopeful that things will improve and we will continue to work through the restrictions.

I have taken on the position of Area VP for Paras and with this comes the responsibility of representing our members and keeping you well informed of new and contractual information.

I would ask all the paraprofessionals to please get to know your building representatives and attend all the union meetings they hold during the year. Our building representatives are dedicated individuals who will provide you with accurate information and protection in regard to contractual issues. As an Executive Board we rely on their input, support and knowledge of our members' concerns as they are the liaisons between you and administration.

Please review your contract (yellow), which provides you with all the necessary information to your rights and obligations and be familiar with the retirement system you contribute to.

The building representatives will be distributing NYSUT calendar booklets to our members. This booklet provides you with some resources you may find useful. Please take advantage of the many programs and services your statewide union offers.

Level III Teaching Assistants are required by law to complete a minimum of 100 hours during each 5- year registration period.

If you do not anticipate completing the CTLE requirement during your registration period, you can request a conditional registration for any reason.

_This would provide you with an additional year to complete the necessary requirement.

This option gives educators the flexibility if you were unable to complete the CTLE requirement due to COVID-19.

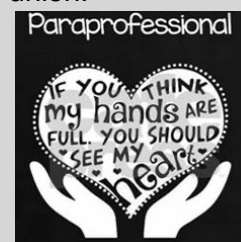
Here is the link to assist you with the re-registration:

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/resteachers/registration-reregister-cr-direct.html>

We value the work you do as professionals and the support and service you provide all our students.

Wishing all of you a successful and happy year and thank you for sticking with the union.

Angela Ritchie



Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards



Coming Together

Welcome back to the 2021-2022 school year. It continues to be an honor to serve as your area vice president for special education. During my tenure, I've had the opportunity to work closely with your elected building representatives. Their dedication to the union and advocacy for you should be commended and I look forward to another year working with them.

As you are all aware, we have been bound to follow numerous state mandates over this past year. This is not something we are able to negotiate out of. However, as a union we are very fortunate, because over the years we have created a productive partnership with the agency. This provides us with the opportunity to be a voice and attend numerous meetings where we engage in meaningful dialogue and provide positive member outcomes.

Your Executive Board is also aware of the many challenges that are faced daily within a classroom. We are not just union board members, but we all work in the various BOCES programs, where we see the ongoing concerns firsthand. One major concern that is voiced by members, are the vacancies throughout the many programs and limited substitutes to fill the positions. We have been working closely with the agency to address this problem and currently, buildings are holding interviews. Hopefully the lack of staffing throughout our programs will diminish.



Coming Together

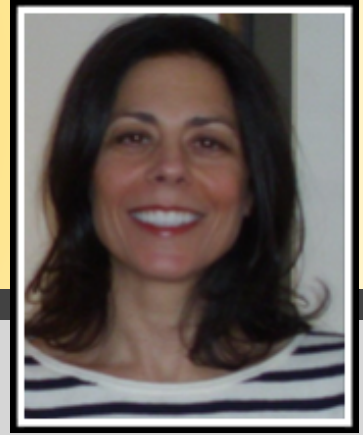
This year, my goal is to ensure that all blue contract members feel their voices are being heard. Our contract is your guide should you have questions or need assistance. Your first point of contact is your building union representative. If your union representative is unable to provide you an answer, they have an Executive Board at their disposal to assist them. If you are unable to reach your building rep, you may reach me at beesserep@gmail.com. Please use a non-BOCES email when corresponding.

Over the past 18+ months, I have seen everyone join together to help one another out. Whether it was sharing a fun lesson or having lunch on zoom with the kids to promote socialization and see friends not in our classrooms. With the never-ending challenges, we rose above to new heights that weren't even thought possible. We all had one goal in mind, keep learning fun! As we move through this year, I wish you all strength, endurance, and most of all patience as you deal with the challenges ahead.

Patti



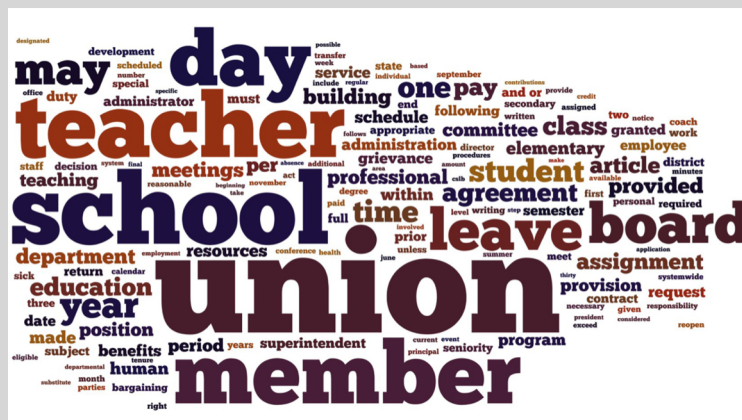
Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



Things to Remember

Welcome back and welcome to our new members. I hope everyone has had a great start to the school year; I hope you are settled in and of course, healthy. I want to say thank you to all members who were able to attend my first meeting on October 20, 2021, and just a heads up that the next meeting will be April 27, 2022 at 3:30 via Zoom. I know there was some confusion last year with the seniority lists however I do have the lists from 5/2021 and will probably not receive updated lists until the spring of 2022. We did have several members retire and for personal reasons leave earlier than expected so there will be some movement but again, I will not know that until the spring. Just a reminder, you must contact me directly for your seniority number and I can only provide you with your number, no one else's.

To address some issues which seem to have come up this year with several members who are split between a few buildings; it is important to know which building is considered your home building. Your home building is the building in which you provide the most services. This is important because you are responsible to attend your home building's faculty meetings and open house. For some reason this year many itinerants were told they needed to attend more than one open house and now I am hearing that members are being told they need to attend more than one faculty meeting. You only need to attend the open house and faculty meetings of your home building but you are still responsible to know what was discussed at the faculty meetings in the other buildings since you are an employee in that building and need to be aware of what's happening. Please reach out if you are having an issue with this so we can address it.



Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



Things to Remember

Unfortunately, I have to address some issues associated with COVID. I know I am so over hearing and using this word but... New York State has issued the mandate of either being vaccinated or compliant with weekly testing if you work in a school setting and ES BOCES has to comply with this mandate. I am only making a prediction but I don't think anybody that is affected by this mandate is happy about it, however we must all comply if you want to remain part of the ES BOCES family. Please make sure you are testing each week if you are not vaccinated. It is HR's responsibility to keep track of this and it will be addressed if you do not test. If you initially reported to School Front that you were not fully vaccinated but you have chosen to get fully vaccinated, you need to let HR know this so they can open your School front account and you can download a copy of your vaccination card. If you choose to get vaccinated you can go during work time however you do need to let HR know about this and you will also have to provide proof that you went for the vaccination. Lastly, I know I have not reminded licensed members in a while, but when you have to update your license please send a copy of the new license by April 1st to HR or you will not receive the stipend as per our contract. I encourage all members to have an ES BOCES folder to put all important information in. I know a little old fashioned, actual papers not online, but I often refer to that file to make sure I have received the correct pay, I have my tenure letter, any medical letters or correspondence with HR, etc. Hope you have a great Fall.

My contact information is beesvpitin@gmail.com located at Sequoya HS 631-622-1240.

Kristin

Know Your Contract



One of the most powerful things our BEES Union Executive Board does is bargain with the agency over everything from wages to workload. By speaking together with a strong, collective voice we're able to maintain our standards, defend our profession, and protect the learning environment for our students. The fruits of our work together are represented in the contracts for professional educators. Perhaps the most important aspect of union membership is the ability to negotiate a contract, which is a written guarantee backed by federal law involving every aspect of your work life including practice issues, pay, insurance benefits, vacation and leave policies, hours of work and much more.

Take this quiz to see how well you know some items in your contract;

1. IF AN EMPLOYEE WAS HIRED ON OF AFTER JANUARY 1, 1995 BUT BEFORE JULY 1, 2005, HOW MANY YEARS OF SERVICE WITH ES BOCES MUST THEY HAVE TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR FULLY PAID HEALTH INSURANCE INTO RETIREMENT?
2. HOW MANY SAVED DAYS MUST AN EMPLOYEE HAVE IN THE SICK BANK IN ORDER TO SELL THEM BACK?
3. WHAT IS THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF HOURS A CTE TEACHER CAN WORK IN THE COURSE OF A DAY?
4. HOW MANY PREP PERIODS PER WEEK ARE GUARANTEED?
5. HOW MANY OBSERVATIONS CAN A PROBATIONARY TEACHER BE SUBJECT TO PER SCHOOL YEAR?
6. CAN A TEACHER TAKE A PERSONAL DAY WITH NO REASON ATTACHED TO A HOLIDAY?

Answers: 1. 10 years, 2.90, 3. 7, 4. 4, 5. 5, 6. Yes

THERE ARE A LOT OF THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR CONTRACT BECAUSE THE BEST WAY FOR THE UNION TO PROTECT YOUR CONTRACT IS FOR YOU TO KNOW THE UNION — AND THE PROVISIONS AND PROTECTIONS THAT ARE NEGOTIATED ON YOUR BEHALF.

Remember, you should contact a union representative immediately whenever something doesn't seem right or you have a concern, problem, or question about any aspect of your work.

ATTEND YOUR UNION MEETINGS! GET INVOLVED BECAUSE YOU ARE THE UNION!

Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



It Benefits You to Know

Happy harvest members.

With the pandemic still weighing on everyone's mind and the rising prices that we are seeing on the news each day, it's a good time to take advantage of the benefits of being a union member.

Heating costs are expected to be higher than normal this year. And being a member of such a strong union has a few options to help out in such tough times. One of those is the NYSUT home heating oil program for members. I've included a link here that will help you determine if this program is right for you. <https://heatusa.com/nysut/>. The buying power of such a large membership affords us opportunities that others do not have.

NYSUT also offers shopping discounts to all current members. By clicking on the link below and signing in with your NYSUT credentials, you can browse local and national purchasing discounts. <https://mbdeals.enjomydeals.com> Discounts on food, auto repair and purchase, travel and even local restaurants can be had by just being a member! The mobile app, when downloaded, lets you receive promotions on discounts in the area. Browse the options and see if you can save some money!

The time is approaching for open enrollment. If you're thinking of adjusting your Health plan or making changes to which plan you have, the window will open shortly. Please keep in mind you may have made some adjustments to some of your plans in the past few years due to the pandemic. Take some time to review your current needs and adjust them accordingly with your families' requirements. Pay attention to the email from the agency alerting you that this period is open.

Please enjoy the fall season as we all prepare for family time the holidays bring.

Thank you for being a member, our large numbers benefit all of us.

- Nick

**UNION
STRONG
UNION
PROUD**

Membership Secretary - Lisa Mongiello



A Happy Hive

I want to welcome all our members back to the 2020-21 school year! I know we ended last year and began this one like no other, but I have to say that I am incredibly proud to be a part of our union executive board as we have navigated many changes. Throughout the summer we met weekly and have diligently tried to keep information readily available. We hope that our members recognize that we are working tirelessly to respond to questions and concerns. Together, we are union strong!

There have been many changes in membership, and I have to thank our executive board, building representatives and members for your patience as I work to navigate them. As many of you know, last year we piloted the new online enrollment system for NYSUT to assist with signing newly hired staff members, changing from the traditional paper-based enrollment forms. It took a lot of work to set up and get it working well, and we had the system functioning very well prior to our closure in March. Unfortunately, NYSUT made changes to their online enrollment right before the school year started in September and we are not able to enroll members in the same manner. To allow our newest employees access to membership we have reverted to paper enrollment forms. There is an online option, though as with any new system there are challenges to navigate. I cannot begin to express my appreciation for everyone who has been patient as I continue to navigate this process again, in what we all know is a very different school year for all of us.

Once the new NYSUT online enrollment is up and running as it is intended, all new employees hired by Eastern Suffolk BOCES who fall under the Blue or Yellow contracts will receive an e-mail invite from NYSUT to their personal e-mail that will allow them to enroll electronically, which allows for his/her membership to be instant. I receive new hire lists from the payroll department, usually following pay-periods, which enables me to upload potential members and place them in the NYSUT system. NYSUT will then send the new member an e-mail to their personal e-mail address. I will then send an e-mail to inform the new hires of how to enroll online and access other union resources. Once a new hire enrolls online, their membership is immediate, and payroll will be notified for dues deductions. While the system is not currently perfected, I am hopeful this will make membership easily accessible for all staff that would like to join the union as we move forward. Until this system works as intended, all new hires can enroll using paper forms through their building union representatives.

Membership Secretary - Lisa Mongiello



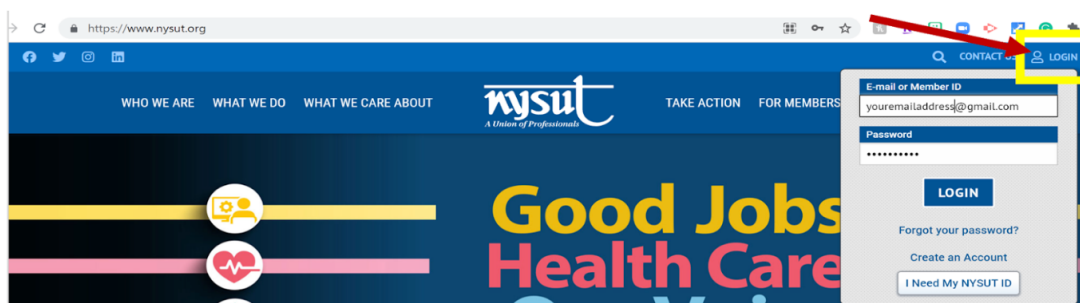
A Happy Hive

Hey fellow BEES members! The school year is moving quickly, and I am happy to have the chance to connect with you here. Membership is the foundation of our union and your participation and input are incredibly valuable. I hope that you continue your involvement or become more involved as you see the immense value and benefits of your union.

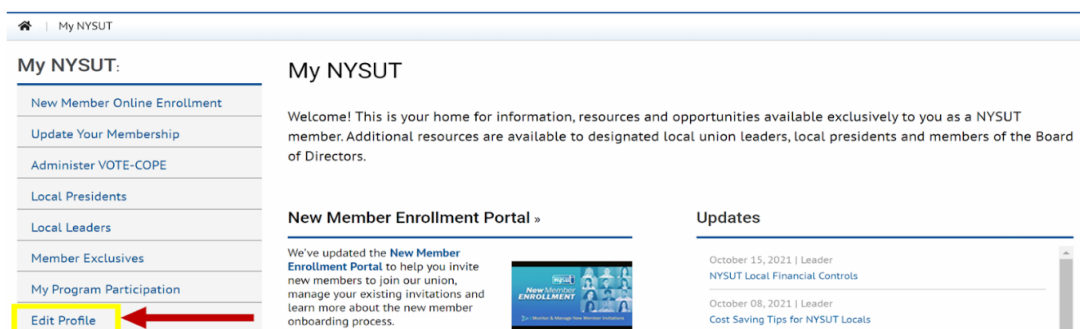
When staff are hired, they are not automatically enrolled in the union, or entitled to union benefits. As membership coordinator, I send new hires an electronic invitation to enroll in the union. Our building union representatives have been an incredible help in assisting new hires in navigating this process. I would encourage all our members to share the benefits of being in the union with newly hired staff because together, we are stronger.

An important tip: Please remember to keep your address and contact information up to date! Did you know you can update your information in your My NYSUT account? I am placing a guide to access your NYSUT profile and update any information below.

To update your contact information, go to: <https://www.nysut.org/>



Click on “Edit Profile” on the toolbar on the left side of your screen:

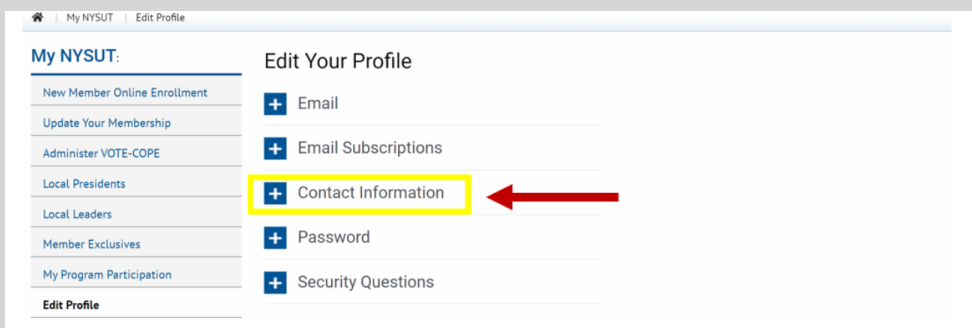


Membership Secretary - Lisa Mongiello



A Happy Hive

Then click the “+” sign next to “Contact Information” to update you address or phone number:



Please remember to notify our building and Human Resources of any changes also!

As we enter the Fall and Winter months, I hope everyone stays safe and healthy. Don't forget to take care of yourself and enjoy time with your loved ones. In addition to our Employee Assistance Program, union members can access NYSUT Social Services at 518-732-6239 or email socialservices@nysut.org. All calls are confidential.

Thank you for your membership and for sticking with our union!

In Solidarity,
Lisa Mongiello

**OUR UNION IS
STRONG
BECAUSE OUR MEMBERS ARE
STRONG**

Treasurer - Michelle Tinter



Budgeting the BEES

Welcome everyone, to our fall issue of the BEES Beacon and hope this article finds you all off to a successful new school year. There are minor adjustments to the dues schedule for all categories this year with a slight increase in the full dues category for local dues and for all dues paying members an increase from our national affiliate AFT. Please remember to access your dues schedule for any payroll deduction questions, as well as your personal tax purposes. As a reminder, the dues deductions are withdrawn on the 3rd pay period which took place in October, and will deduct for 18 consecutive pay periods ending in June. Please refer to this beacon edition on page 23 for a copy of your dues schedule, as well as posted on our BEESBEACON.org webpage.

On a personal note, I am honored to continue to serve and represent all of you, our constituents as the senior member on the Executive Board. Although this is my last year on the board as I prepare to retire early in the fall of 2022, I will continue to support and mentor your new treasurer throughout the next year and am looking forward to doing so.

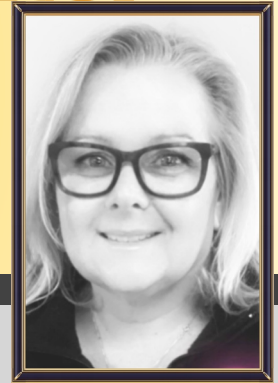
As I have learned throughout my 21 years of tenure at Eastern Suffolk Boces, the opportunities are endless as a group, and most certainly as a team that “sticks” together. As a dues-paying member who stuck with their union, I THANK YOU for sticking with yours!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy holiday season to come. See you in the Spring!

In Solidarity,

Michelle

Treasurer - Michelle Tinter



Budgeting the BEES

NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL Dues Schedule for 2021-2022 Membership Year

NYSUT (Codes)	Memberships Category By Salary Range	NYSUT Annual Per Capital	AFT Annual Per Capital	LOCAL DUES	TOTAL NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL DUES	AMOUNT Deducted per Pay Period (18 Pay Periods)	INCREASE Per Pay Period
(1) Full	\$34,000 and higher	\$378.00	\$239.76	\$362.24	\$980.00	\$54.44	\$.46
(7) $\frac{3}{4}$	\$25,500 to 33,999	\$283.50	\$119.88	\$220.32	\$623.70	\$34.65	\$.13
(2) $\frac{1}{2}$	\$17,000 to \$25,499	\$189.00	\$119.88	\$168.12	\$477.00	\$26.50	\$.13
(5) $\frac{1}{4}$	\$8,500 to \$16,999	\$94.50	\$59.94	\$115.56	\$269.73	\$15.00	\$.08
(8) 1/8	Under \$8,499	\$47.25	\$29.97	\$33.83	\$111.05	\$6.17	\$.03
(6)	Unpaid leave Laid-off	\$10.00	\$12.00		\$22.00	\$1.22	-0-
(9) **	Per-Diem Substitute	---	---	---	---	\$.70/day	-0-
(3)	Retirees (pre-funded)	---	---	\$35.00	---	---	-0-
*	Full/Split	\$378.00	\$119.88	\$272.00	\$769.88	\$42.77	\$.13

Note:* A special split NYSUT/AFT category within Code 1 (Full Dues) exists only if members are earning more than \$34,000 but less than the basic teacher's salary.

**Per-Diem Substitutes dues are \$.70 per day for NYSUT/AFT up to a maximum of $\frac{1}{2}$ dues. Refer to Membership Reporting & Dues Transmittal Handbook for additional information.

Full Dues Paying Member	2020-2021	2021-2022	Increase
NYSUT	\$378.00	\$378.00	0
AFT	\$234.96	\$239.76	\$4.80
LOCAL	\$354.04	\$362.24	\$8.20
TOTAL	\$967.00	\$980.00	\$13.00

Proposed income for the 2021-2022 budget is based on an estimated (full)625, (Split) 37,(3/4),155(1/2),700 (1/4) 37 dues contributions and interest from savings. Active Members + Leave = 1,526 Total Members. Dues schedule and budget is submitted by the **BEES Budget Committee**: Asha Mazza Shaw, President, Michelle Tinter, Treasurer, Adrian Grube & Rachel Kahn, Active Member & Chairperson.

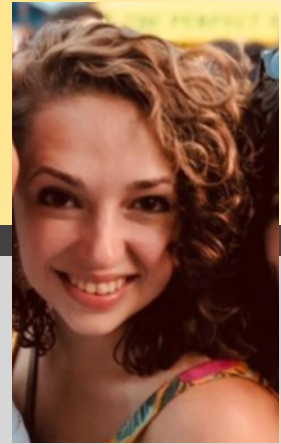
Dues deductions begin the 3rd pay period for (18) consecutive pay periods.

VOTE/COPE
If you are not a vote cope member, please fill out a card this morning for automatic payroll deduction one time a year of \$12.00(aide) \$25.00(TA) \$50.00(Teacher) donation.

Reminder Retirees must join the B.E.E.S retiree Chapter in order to retain any insurance you may have through NYSUT.

Treasurer Intern- Rachael Klahn

Learning the Ropes



Hello BEES members! I hope you are doing well as the 2021-2022 school year is now in full swing. I am Rachael Klahn, the new treasurer intern. This year I will be training under our current treasurer, Michelle, in hopes to take on the role. Michelle is a wealth of knowledge and I plan to soak up as much of it as I can!

In my time with ESBOCES I have worked as a substitute, an individual aide, a teaching assistant and I now teach at Tecumseh Elementary School. The people that I have been lucky to work alongside and learn from are truly inspiring and why I decided to take on this new role. We all work hard every day to make a difference to our students whom we care about so deeply. One of the great things about this union is that it makes sure that each of you feels supported and that your interests are being represented. I wanted to make a difference to all our members who give their all each day. As a former math major who found her way into teaching, I couldn't think of a better way to put my mathematical skills to work while making sure your voices are heard. I look forward to learning the position. Have a wonderful school year – stay safe and healthy!

Rachael



Grievance Officer - Deirdre Pettit

Paying it Forward



Welcome Back everyone! My name is Deirdre Pettit (Kroupa) and I have recently become the new Grievance Chairperson. My BOCES career started as a Certified Nurse Assisting teacher at BTC, where I stayed from 2008-2012. I became a building rep many years ago after I had 2 experiences where I needed the union to represent me at HR. The first issue really did not involve me but my name was linked to an incident that was being investigated. I remember walking into HR actually shaking and terrified I was about to lose my livelihood and career. The union President was there waiting for me and spoke with me before going in and helped me to understand the process of this meeting. To be honest I really didn't say much. The union President spoke for me and in the end the "truth was revealed", I walked out that day with my eyes wide open. If I did not have representation at that meeting it may not have gone the way it did.

The second time I was called to HR was in 2012. I was told that I may be excessed to a ½ day position and I was moving from BTC to HBW. I was given representation and within a few weeks a position was created in the Jail Ed. program so that I could remain full time.

These are just 2 examples of why the union is so important; I needed protection and the union I chose to be a member of, came through for me. Life changes in an instant. On both of those occasions I went to work and had no idea that by the end of the day my job could be in jeopardy.

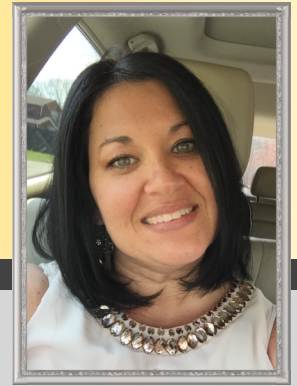
I am excited to have the chance to pay it forward and be there to help others from the role of grievance officer if needed.

I do ask that you look at your contract and highlight the area that you are questioning if you feel you may have a grievance. Afterwards, speak to your union representative and once it is brought to my attention I will be in contact with you. My email is dkroupa222@gmail.com

Thank you and Have a great year.

Deirdre

Social Chair - Danielle Ibba-Morabito



Let's be Social(ly Distanced)

Hi everyone,

I can't believe we are in November already. It has been such a challenging time for everyone, but I must say I am honored to work alongside all of you. You are all heroes in my eyes. We are all trying our best to keep ourselves and everyone around us safe. We have been thinking out of the box the last couple of months and have some fun things planned.

We are excited to have some giveaway raffles at your building union meetings. You might be a lucky winner! Stay tuned for more information to come about the 2021 end of the year honorarium.

* The loss of a loved one is an emotional time, and one of the worst things we may go through in life. It is with that thought that we would like to reach out to our families in need in a timely manner. There are guidelines for sending out cards or a small token to the family of a member. In the past, I have gotten several requests that I was not able to send out in a timely manner because the guidelines below were not adhered to. Please make sure that you include all of the information listed below so that we may pay our respects to the families in their time of need. Thank you.

Guidelines for Welfare:

A bereavement card will be sent in the event of a member's spouse, parent, child, or sibling's death. In the case of a member passing, special circumstances will then apply.

The procedure for a sympathy card to be sent is as follows: Members should contact their building representative as soon as they believe a member meets the above guidelines and a bereavement card should be sent. The building representative then should contact me via email: daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com with the member's name and address and the name and relation to the deceased.

In the event it is a member who has passed, I still need their name, and address and also a home or cell number of a member of their family so that we can acknowledge their service with us in a special way.

If you need more info, please see your building rep. check out our Bees website or feel free to send an email.

Danielle

Recording Secretary - Tiffany Robinson

Nice Notes



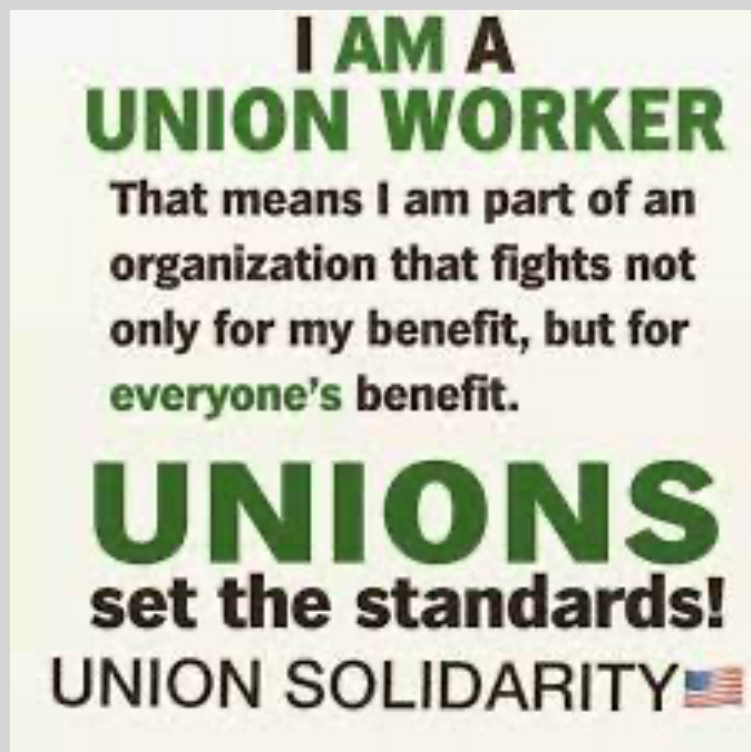
Welcome Back!

I am excited to take on the role of recording secretary for the BEES. It has been great getting to know and work with the Executive Board and to see how the union process works on a bigger scale.

Please take advantage of all the information provided on the BEES Beacon website and reach out to your building reps. who will keep you informed on all union matters.

I wish everyone a safe and healthy school year, and remember we are here for you. Thank you for sticking with the union!

Tiffany



Retiree Chapter Chairperson - Terry Kalb



Nice Notes

Hello BEES Retirees

We had hoped to be preparing for a Fall meeting in person this year, but given the issue of the Delta variant, we have decided to gather on Zoom. Our meeting will be held on Oct 27th at 2PM. All dues paid retiree members and our new retirees will be sent a link to join the Zoom via email. If you have not yet sent me your personal email, please do this ASAP. It has been very gratifying to open our PO Box and see it overflowing with your dues checks every September through October. Our power as retirees within our union, and in the legislative arena, is through use of our collective voices. Your participation through sending in dues, contribution to VOTE-COPE, and attending meetings is essential to keeping our voices and concerns heard! The main topic for our Fall Meeting will be understanding Medicare issues, options, and reimbursement procedures. All are welcome to bring up new business items, suggestions for Chapter activities, and general retiree concerns.

If you are on FaceBook, please search for BEES Retirees and join our private group. It's a great place to get timely information, ask and get questions answered, and stay connected to retiree colleagues.

Stay well, and stay connected!

Terry Kalb

BEES Retiree Chapter President

Spotlight on Our BEES Community

See a Need, Fill a Need - Mary Longo

Welcome back to our Spotlight on our Bees Community member segment.

This issue of Spotlight on our BEES community is on none other than The secretary of the BEES union and Sequoya High School para educator Mary Longo.

When the pandemic hit last year, food pantries were negatively impacted and supplies diminished. Food drives were struggling to provide for the community as they did in the past. It was also during this time that Island harvest experienced a decline in their donations and deliveries to families in need became scarce.

Mary realized that there was a tremendous need for food assistance in our school community and through a partnership with Island Harvest she came up with the idea to have a food pantry right here at Sequoya High School. The pantry would be available to help out our students and their families who are experiencing food insecurity.

It is through the generous donations of staff and fellow BEES members of Sequoya High School as well as the generosity of staff at ISC that the SHS food pantry has been able to provide our students and their families in need with food items from the pantry.

Mary commented, "The generosity of everyone donating food, personal care items as well as additional needed items has been wonderful!" She went on to talk about the added benefit of student volunteers that assist with the stocking and organizing the shelves in the pantry are able to earn community service credit.

It has been a team effort, Counselors have taken the responsibility of collecting the names of students who are in need. Staff members have assisted in making deliveries as well as putting food on buses for students to take home. As well as the school nurse, Jill F., who assists Mary with maintaining the pantry.

Through delivering food to these families, I can see first hand how appreciative they are of the food they are receiving.

Bravo Mary Longo and all the staff at ISC and all our BEES members who have truly made a difference in our students' lives.

Spotlight on Our BEES Community

See a Need Fill a Need - Mary Longo





BEES

BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk

Union Strong

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Angela Ritchi - Area Vice President Para Educators
Patti Richards - Area Vice President Special Education
Kristin Ericson-Abbruzzese - Area Vice President Itinerants/SAS
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Lisa Mongiello - Membership Secretary
Deirdre Pettit - Grievance Officer
Danielle Ibba-Morabito - Social Chair
Tiffany Robinson - Recording Secretary
Dennis Charaton - Webmaster
Terry Kalb - Retiree Chapter Chairperson
Mary Longo - BEES Office Secretary
Asha Mazza-Shaw - BEES Beacon Publisher
Rachael Klahn - Treasurer Intern

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