

EPEA News

Volume 4, Issue 3

October 2024



EPEA OFFICERS

President:

Donna Walters

Vice President:

Garth Merlino

Secretary:

Lisa Reidy

Treasurer:

Deb Gampietro

IMPORTANT

Please join us for
the

Annual Retirement
and Holiday Event

December 5th

Greetings EPEA Brothers and Sisters,

We have successfully completed 25% of the 2024-25 school year. So far we are off to a bumpy start with Erie 1 BOCES. There have been significant changes in the Human Resources and Pay-roll departments, causing some struggles for members. Thank you for your patience with the issues. We are slowly working through them with the district and we appreciate your patience and professionalism.

This week we held our EPEA Non-Tenured Social for our newer members. A good time was had by all. Thank you so much to Lisa Putrelo, our Membership Chairperson and her committee for all the hard work that went into this event. When speaking with new members they expressed their appreciation for the event and welcomed the opportunity to relax with others.

And speaking of hard-working committees, Elaine Rosina and the Social Committee are diligently planning our Annual Holiday and Retirement party. I strongly invite all members to come join your union brothers and sisters for an evening of common ground and comradery. We celebrate the upcoming holidays as well as our most recent retirees.

Next up, our new Community Outreach Chairperson Tina Wyant has hit the ground running! She organized a team to walk in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk and has now moved onto our annual event of helping out needy student families. Look for her emails and please send her a gift card or two to help support our students and their families during this holiday season.

Finally, a huge shout out to the EPEA members who helped make the Frontier Fall into Reading event a huge success. The Frontier Teacher's Association president often tells me that our stations are the most popular at this event!

As we enter into the holiday season, be sure to take some time for yourselves. This can be a joyous, but stressful, time of the year! I hope to see you all in December!

Yours in Solidarity,

Donna Walters

Erie 1 Professional Education Association President

Local 02055

Erie 1 Professional Education Association Calendar 2024-2025

Tuesday 9/10/24	EPEA General Membership Meeting, Polish Falcons Club in Depew
Tuesday 10/22/24	EPEA Executive Board Meeting, Edge Academy
Monday 11/4/24	EPEA Non-tenured Member Social,
Tuesday, 11/19/24	EPEA Board of Representatives Meeting, Edge Academy
→ Thursday 12/5/24	EPEA Holiday Party and Executive Board Meeting, Columns Banquet Hall, 5-8 ←
Tuesday 1/28/24	EPEA Board of Representatives Meeting & EPEA Training
Tuesday 2/11/24	EPEA Executive Board Meeting, Edge Academy
Tuesday 3/25/25	EPEA General Membership Meeting, Location TBD
Tuesday 4/29/25	EPEA Executive Board Meeting, Edge Academy
Tuesday 5/27/25	EPEA Board of Representatives Meeting, Edge Academy
June TBD	EPEA Picnic
Tuesday 6/24/25	EPEA Representative Meeting/End of Year Dinner



EPEA SOCIAL EVENTS

The **Annual Retirement and Holiday Event** is fast approaching-
Thursday, December 5th, 5:00—8:00 pm
at The Columns Banquet Hall.



Join us for incredible food, a silent auction to benefit Feedmore WNY, a 50/50 to benefit WNY Breast Cancer Walk.

Keep an eye out for an email from Elaine Rosina.

Don't miss out!



Follow on Facebook: [Erie 1 Professional Education Association](#)



Join us at: Erie1Educators.org for News and Resources



EPEA NIGHT OUT AT THE THEATER Saturday, September 14th



DO YOU KNOW YOUR CONTRACT?

First, do you know where your contract is? If you can't lay your hands on the hard copy, check out our website [Erie1Educators.org](https://erie1educators.org) - the current contract is available on the **Members Page**.

Now that you know where to access the contract, how well do you know your contract? We will be working under the current contract until August 2026. Teachers Rights and Duties (pages 2-13) lays out class assignments, seniority, APPR, and more. Salaries and Related Benefits are of interest to everyone (pages 21-42, Salary Schedule on pages 50-51). What happens when administration doesn't follow the contract? See the Grievance Procedure on pages 13—17 and the EPEA Grievance From on page 57. Does anyone have the contract memorized? Donna might, but the rest of us should at least know where it is, what is in it, and what to do if we have questions.



Questions about the contract?

See your EPEA building representative.

SUNSHINE CELEBRATIONS

Wedding Well Wishes

Cameron Wambganss

Theresa Tripi

Sara Paul

Richard LaCroix

Christine Taggart

Lysa Baker



New Bundles of Joy

Jessica Sawyer

Grace Hanlon

Nichole Kerner

Erin Cochrane

Molly Eberhard



The WNY Teacher Center *welcomes you*

Explore our Fall Course Catalog

Courses and Book Studies in:

- Teacher Wellnes
- Classroom/Behavior Management
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Engaging Technology
- Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom
- The Needs of English Language Learners
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Student Motivation
- and MORE

Use Our Equipment*

- Ellison Cut-Out Machine
- Color Poster Printer (up to 22" x 30")
- Hot laminator (up to 22" width)

*Limit of six (6) posters OR laminated items per visit.

Borrow from our Resource Library

- Up to 9 Yoga mats and blocks
- Books for book studies
- Manipulatives

Located in Building C (room 141) on the Erie 1 BOCES Education Campus, 355 Harlem Rd., West, Seneca, NY

Open for Teachers to use equipment and Resource Library - Tuesdays & Thursdays after school
(To avoid a line, email jerwin@e1b.org and arrange a time.)

Back to school can mean a lot of different things:

- Starting a new career
- Planning for the future
- Balancing work and home life
- Making difficult decisions
- Enjoying your final year before retirement
- Recalling memories of a proud career

Regardless of what you might be doing this fall, **NYSUT Member Benefits** offers a variety of endorsed programs and services that could help make you as prepared as possible for whatever the new school year may throw at you.



Whether you are looking to save money, protect your family, or plan for the future, **NYSUT Member Benefits** is a great place to start. With dozens of endorsed insurance, legal, financial, shopping, travel, and discount programs, you are certain to find something of interest that could benefit you or your loved ones.

And speaking of savings, the **Member Benefits Discounts & Deals** program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to offer all NYSUT members (both in-service and retiree) exclusive access to savings of up to 50% at 850,000 locations -- including more than 21,200 New York State deals. If you have not already done so, head over to mbdeals.enjoymydeals.com to create your account with your NYSUT ID number, preferred email address, and password.

You'll then be eligible to save on restaurant dine-in or take-out, flowers and gift baskets, Bose electronics, clothing and shoes, oil changes and vehicle maintenance, sporting events, hotels and flights, car rentals, theme parks, movie tickets, and much more. Members are encouraged to download the MB Discounts & Deals mobile app for the best user experience with this program.

Check out all your union membership has to offer!



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. 2023

CLASSROOM CORNER



Celebrating great things
happening in our classrooms

EDGE ACADEMY'S COMMUNITY NIGHT! – NOVEMBER 13TH

Students and families have the opportunity to immerse themselves in a vibrant showcase of our talented students as they dazzle us with music and art work. Explore the valuable resources offered by local mental health agencies, connecting with professionals dedicated to supporting our community. Our students have the chance to win big in our exciting basket raffles! Our students and families will enjoy a night filled with creativity, connection, and inspiration.

STUDENT AUTHORS

Sarah Fujiuchi shares that students in Kenton's Early Childhood program wrote and illustrated children's books and hosted a publishing party. Students from other programs visited our class and enjoyed hearing our stories and seeing student work.



WINCHESTER WILDCATS FOOTBALL



Our PE teachers at Winchester Academy, Mr. Andy Behm and Mr. Kyle Tirone have planned an exciting and active football skills program! Over seven weeks, our students have the chance to practice in various football-related skills like catching, throwing, kicking, punting, and participating in relay races, all with a no-contact rule to keep it safe. If you do not want to participate in the game, you'll still get to join in on the fun by cheering from the crowd, singing, chanting, and even performing a halftime dance. This setup creates a fun and inclusive environment for everyone, whether they're on the field or in the crowd!

Winchester PE teachers have put a lot of thought into making this skills-based program not only fun but also safe and supportive. They created a no-contact environment, they're giving everyone the opportunity to enjoy the excitement of a sporting event without the risks of a traditional football game. This familiar setting allows students to focus on learning and practicing new skills, building teamwork, and enjoying the thrill of friendly competition. Plus, being in a setting where students and staff can cheer each other on helps build a strong sense of community. It is a great way to experience the excitement of sports! Go Winchester Wildcats!

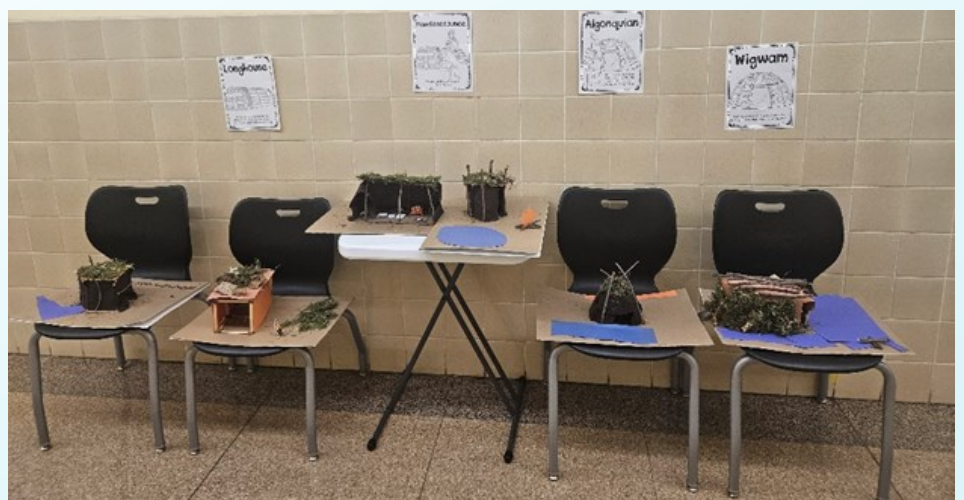
SPOOKY SCIENCE

A group of conservation students in Jennifer Kelly's class at EDGE utilized their science skills to create a living spooky Halloween terrarium out of recycled material. These individuals studied the structure of moss and the essential benefits these bryophytes contribute to our ecosystem, then created their own personal graveyard themed living biome. They learned how to properly grow, maintain, and care for an essential colony of non-vascular plants while harnessing materials that would have otherwise ended up in a landfill contributing to the ever-growing concern of pollution. The incorporation of a keystone species familiarized these students with a local colony of greenery while encompassing creativity to re-use waste products, thus decreasing their personal carbon footprint and becoming a part of the climate change solution, all while celebrating a fun and interactive Halloween design of their choice.

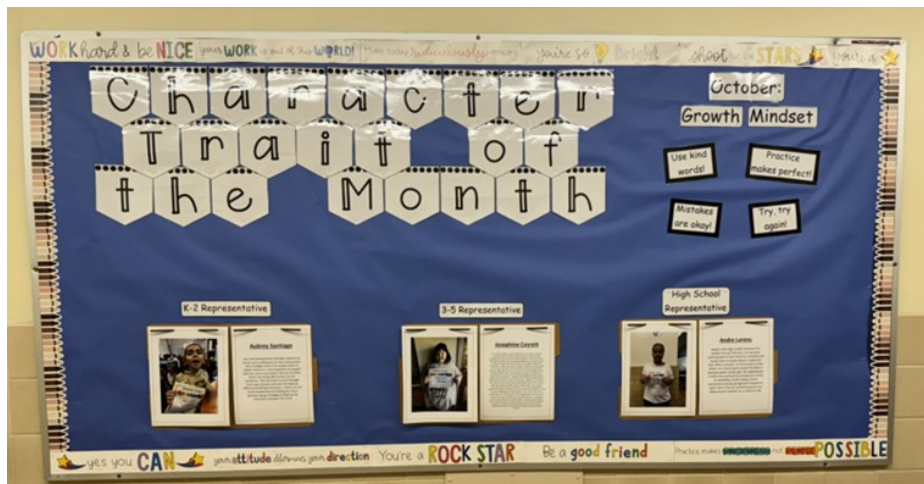


INDIGENOUS WESTERN NEW YORK

In Chelsea Pasucci's Class 108 at Winchester, we learned about the Native Americans of NYS and the students built their own wigwams and longhouses. They collected supplies from outside and created their miniature replicas.



WINCHESTER'S CHARACTER TRAIT OF THE MONTH



October's character trait is Growth Mindset.

The representatives for this month are as follows:

K-2: Aubrey Santiago

3-5: Josephine Covrett

Highschool: Andre Lorenc

Emily Bitka shares Winchester Academy started doing monthly character traits which align with the Second Step curriculum used for social emotional learning. The DEI team has paired with the Restorative team to roll this out and incorporate these traits and lessons into our weekly classroom circles. Every month, any staff member in the building can nominate a student they think exemplifies the character trait. We have this displayed outside our cafeteria for all students and staff to see!

JEFF HART DAY

Christina Knight shares that the Winchester staff declared September 18th Jeff Hart Day. We began the school year with Jeff as our interim principal and wanted to show our appreciation. Sixty staff members donned Jeff tattoos!



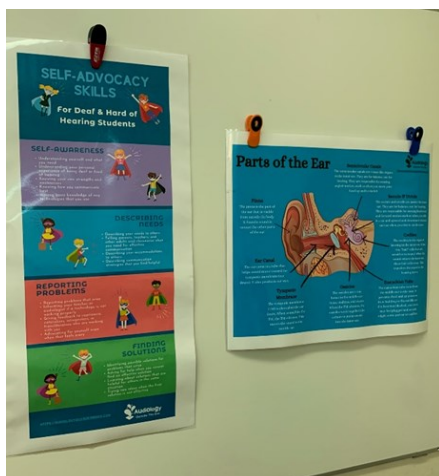
Mr. Manth's senior Criminal Justice Class at KenTon CTE conducted a mock trial. Mrs. Holler's Nursing class acted as witnesses for both the prosecution and defense and Mrs. O'Connors Nursing Class served as the Jury.

It was a great collaborative effort, and all the students had a positive experience and a lot of fun!

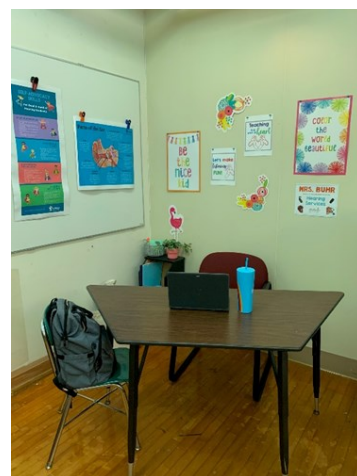


Nicole Buhr Teacher of Deaf/Hard of Hearing shares, Itinerant Teachers don't typically get spaces within our district buildings, but I'm lucky to have one within the Kenmore Tonawanda District. This year, I stopped by the WNY Teacher Center, and Jon Erwin helped me make large posters to display in my space. My space is usually my car, so it was fun to decorate a room!

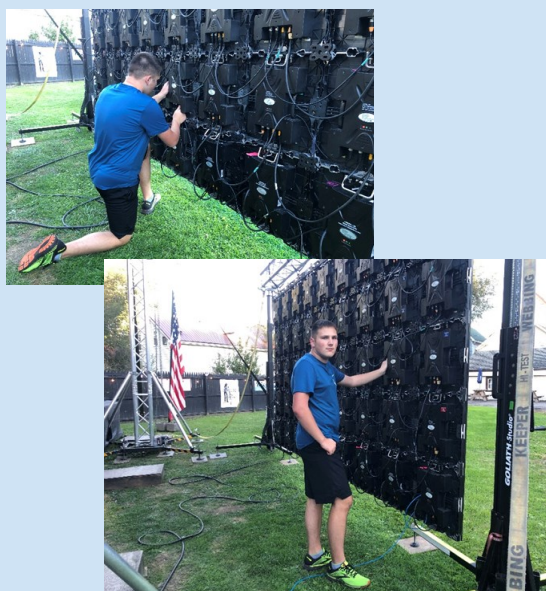
The posters look great and help me teach my Deaf and hard-of-hearing students about important self-advocacy topics. This is also a shared room, so it's also educating other staff members and students within my district.



CREATING SPACES FOR TEACHING & LEARNING



LED WALL



Patrick Ballard from the Virtual Production and Design II class at Calspan helped build an LED wall with Indigo Productions Buffalo for a Buffalo Bills watch party at Sportsmen's Americana Music Park on 10/5 and 10/6. Patrick will be joining Indigo after graduation as a stage tech.

Jen Low shares eAcademy Spirit Week pictures. The first is from our Decade Day. Everyone dressed according to their assigned decade: 80's, 90's or 2000's. The other is from Halloween!



SPIRIT

MARYVALE ACADEMY OPEN HOUSE



On September 25th, Maryvale Academy hosted its 1st Annual Family Fun Night Open House. Embracing a carnival theme, NYSSA, Academic, and Work Based Learning teams came together to celebrate the new school year. Families enjoyed classroom visits followed by carnival games, prizes, and tasty treats. In addition, student and family support organizations were available to speak with families including Workforce Development, ACCES-VR, 211, OPWDD, Parent Network, and ARC Erie County. Every one pitched in! Staff and therapists donated games. Laurie Sedita's Business classes developed game rules and a prize system. Tom Rojek's Art classes created beautiful posters that were displayed throughout. Student volunteers assisted with games and face painting. Principal Gina Dailey, dressed up as Master of Ceremonies, took a pie to the face to end the evening. Turnout was fantastic and everyone had a great time. Looking forward to next year!



Here at eAcademy we are having *School Spirit Week* once a month this year. We are hoping to increase student participation and lessen student anxiety by amping up our SEL activities. Our September Spirit Week was *Homecoming 2024*. Monday was 'Dress like your favorite school subject.'



Our teachers participated as well. Jen Low shares a photo of Heather Savoy and Michele Hovey. Heather has chosen Science and dressed as Ms. Frizzle, the Magic School Bus teacher. Michele has chosen Math and dressed as the Queen "Ruler" (get it?) of Math.

Jill Siradas's students had a great time celebrating school spirit week. Here they are showing off their favorite hats. Spirit week was part of getting the kids excited about our carnival open house at Maryvale Academy.



NOW THAT'S FUN!



Wonderful things are happening in our K-2 learning community at Winchester Academy! Judy Wallace, Michelle Strong, Caitlin Delmar, Grace Lawton, Bridget Roland and Julie Weingarden have dedicated time each week to come together and practice skills taught throughout the month which not only supports skill development, but also builds a sense of community and excitement. Their classes meet each Friday afternoon to end their week. They participate in hands-on learning centers which integrate music, art and life skills. These multisensory experiences provide students with opportunities for creativity and skill development/reinforcement. These amazing EPEA members have truly engaged and effectively helped their students thrive! Fun Friday is a great way to assist our young students to retain what they've learned while celebrating their progress!

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY



Jamie Lubs shares that the Potter Preschool is in its third week and is full of play, laughter, and lots of learning! We have learned about Fall, sports and we are celebrating Halloween this week! Some of our Early Childhood Education students are busy creating lesson plans for preschool while some are at internship at assorted elementary schools. We are learning through play, how about you?



ANIMAL HABITATS



Kammy Ciesielski's K-2 NYSSA classroom at Maryvale Primary learned about animal habitats. This unit took about 3 weeks. We used videos and songs to show the different animal habitats. They made a book about them by gluing animal pictures to the correct habitat. We learned what animals lived in a woodland habitat, sea habitat, desert habitat and grassland habitat. To end the unit, we did a science experiment to see if sand or dirt was easier to see animal tracks. We also experimented if it would change due to if the soil and sand were wet or dry. So fun!

NORTHTOWNS ACADEMY COMMUNICATION INITIATIVE

Northtowns Academy has expanded again this year, welcoming more kindergarten, elementary and intermediate students to our middle school building. Some of our students express themselves with communication devices and picture symbols in addition to words, gestures and other nonverbal behaviors. Lauren Holgate, Speech Language Pathologist, has obtained several “core words” posters to hang in classrooms and community spaces throughout the building. Launching this communication initiative will assure that students will always have a means to express their needs throughout the day. Join the Speech Department in celebration of AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) month this October.



Want to share EPEA news or
the exciting things happening
in your classroom?

Email: btowle@e1b.org

MONKEY MASCOT READING BUDDY



Gina Oldani at Northtowns shares that students have been taking turns over the weekends with our monkey mascot reading buddy. Students present on Monday about their weekend with monkey to their friends. This helps with recall and bridging that school and home gap.

Enclosed in this newsletter is information for Erie 1 Professional Education Association members pertaining to union related news and events. If you have a story idea or suggestion, please e-mail it to Brenna Towle at btowle@e1b.org.

Jae Bigler shares that Craig Walsh traveled from Australia to produce "Monuments" and did his production work at Calspan. The installation was at Artpark.

"Craig Walsh's Monuments is a site-responsive, outdoor video installation that has been realised across Australia and internationally. Since the first tree projection in 1993, Monuments installation have continued to evolve and captivate new audiences as they occupy new landscapes and engage with different communities. The video installations evoke a haunting synergy between the human form, natural environment, and the act of viewing. Night-time projections transform trees into sculptural monuments, surveying the immediate environment."

Monuments aims to challenge traditional expectations of public monuments and the selective history represented in our civic spaces. Cleverly deconstructing its own definition by humanising the monument, there is a temporary fusion of everyday individuals with other living species occupying shared areas. Undermining the permanent historical and public art models so often controlled by subjective motivations, Monuments recognises the infinite contributions which influence our understanding of place. Monument installations are customized for each site through the selection of the portraiture celebrated."



thank you!

For all your newsletter submissions.