



Retirement Information and Resources

The information in this document is provided for the use of members of the PDTA. Though the information is believed to be accurate at the time of this revision, the Association and its leaders can assume no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this document. Members are advised to consult legal and/or financial advisors as needed.

Revised August 2024

It is important to be prepared and knowledgeable when planning for your retirement. Pittsford documentation is only one retirement process, while New York State Teachers Retirement System (NYSTRS) or New York State Employee Retirement System (NYSERS) is another. Make sure you understand each as they apply to your personal and unique scenario.

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If you have additional questions, please contact:

PDTA Office:

Contact Tracy Castleberry, PDTA Administrative Assistant to schedule an appointment with the PDTA President.

Tracy.Castleberry@pittsford.monroe.edu

Phone: 585-267-1035

PDTA President Dwayne Cerbone:

Dwayne.Cerbone@pittsford.monroe.edu

Phone: (585) 267-3420

New York State Teachers Retirement System (All Certificated Staff Members)

<https://www.nystrs.org/>

Phone 1-800-348-7298

New York State Employee Retirement System

(All Paraprofessionals, School Nurses <not teacher certificated>, SRPs, Auxiliary Staff)

<https://www.osc.state.ny.us/retire>

Phone: 1-866-805-0990

NYSUT In-Service Member Representatives :

Names and Contact Information found here: [Teachers' Retirement System \(nysut.org\)](http://nysut.org)

1. Retirement Dates

2 Systems/2 Processes/2 Timelines/2 Retirement Dates

- a. Your date for filing retirement with the district and with the Pension are different and are each dictated by each entities own policies and procedures. You must complete each process separately and according to the correlated terms and conditions. The date for retirement through the pension system must be at least one day beyond the last date you earned salary under contract. It is almost always advantageous to retire from the system on the first day you are eligible and are no longer employed. Most members retire from PCSD on June 30th and use July 1st to file for retirement through the retirement system.
- b. Retirement letters to PCSD are non-rescindable and must be submitted by the deadlines provided to qualify for the Career Award.
- c. If you are planning to retire soon, you should give careful consideration to your filing date and actual date of retirement. In some cases, the date(s) you choose could impact your benefits and pension distribution.
- d. Most NYSTRS members are contracted to work through June 30 . The Career Awards are structured to encourage retirement at the end of the school year. **Historically, most PDTA members retire from PCSD using June 30 as the official retirement date.** Though most members retire using the June 30th date to secure contractual provisions and to receive the first pension allotment in a timely manner, there may be certain personal or situational factors that would deem another date to be in a member’s best interests. One potential interest could be a significant birthdate during the months of July or August. Another could be a benefit improvement/incentive through legislation (see below). You should speak with your NYSTRS Representative(s) if you have any questions regarding timelines for retirement relative to this provision

Here is why: Chapter 497 of the Laws of 2005 provides that any legislation affecting benefits provided by NYSTRS will take effect no later than June 30 of the year in which the legislation is enacted (unless the legislation specifically states it does not take effect June 30). Typically, such legislation affects only active members, which, is an important distinction. Therefore, if you retire July 1 and a law improving System benefits is passed any time after that, but before Dec. 31, you may be eligible for the improvement. Although the law may be enacted as late as Dec. 31, it may be considered “in effect” as of July 1 – or the last day of your active member status. It thus seems possible, if you retired on or before June 30, you would not be considered an active member as of July 1. Thus, as a result, you would not qualify for the benefit improvement. This is just one unique situation that is impacted by factors we are not able to predict nor advise about.

- e. **One additional caveat regarding your date of retirement:** It is important to remember that you retire under the contract that is in place on the date of your retirement. If any contractual changes are scheduled to be implemented the ‘following year’, the differential between a June 30th and July 1st retirement date could be significant. If a new settlement has not been reached at the time your letter is due, you must make your decision based on your best estimation of the potential outcomes relative to your own best interests. Unless received in writing from a union or district representative, please do not assume any rumors are valid. Nothing is confirmed until negotiations are closed.

2. Pension

Only representatives from TRS or ERS can provide you with guidance on the calculation of the final average salary (FAS) for pension purposes. PCSD administrators and office staff as well as PDTA leaders and office staff should not be consulted on this topic as they have no authority nor enough knowledge regarding these matters to make these determinations. Members are reminded to direct all questions regarding the calculation of final average salaries to the proper TRS or ERS representatives. Caution is also recommended relative to guidance and advice provided by well-meaning colleagues who may or may not understand the specific details of pension calculations and distributions nor your unique scenario.

a. New York State Teachers Retirement System (NYSTRS) (Certificated Staff)

As a teacher or certificated staff member, you are a member of the NYSTRS, a defined-benefit pension program. You will be eligible for a pension based on the Tier you are in, your age, years of service and final average salary (FAS).

NYSTRS provides excellent service and information about the potential monthly pension benefit, various payment options, application process, payment schedule, etc. through their office in Albany. They also offer free full day pre-retirement planning sessions through their Pension & Retirement Education Program (PREP), as well as personal consultations by appointment. It is to your advantage to set up your personal NYSTRS account, which can be accomplished by logging onto their website www.nystrs.org

Or you can download the mobile app (MYNYSTRS) to your device.

NYSTRS can be contacted by calling 1-800-348-7298

There is an informative video available on the NYSTRS website entitled Retirement Countdown, which has a timeline planning guide leading to your NYSTRS pension.

<https://www.nystrs.org/Library/Videos/Member-Information>

Members nearing retirement are urged to discuss the matter with a NYSTRS information representative at a 1:1 consultation. You may call (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6250 to set up an appointment. The following link from the website will help:

<http://www.nystrs.org/main/retirement-planning/preplan-seminars.htm>

b. New York State Employee Retirement System (NYSERS)

(All Paraprofessionals, School Nurses <not-teacher certificated>, SRPs, Auxiliary Staff)

As a Paraprofessional, non-certificated Nurse, SRP and/or Auxiliary Staff you are a member of the NYSERS a defined-benefit pension program. You will be eligible for a pension based on the Tier you are in, your age, years of service and final average salary (FAS).

NYSERS provides excellent service and information about the potential monthly pension benefit, various payment options, application process, payment schedule, etc. through their office in Albany. They also offer free full day pre-retirement planning sessions through their Pension & Retirement Education Program (PREP), as well as personal consultations by appointment. It is to your advantage to set up your personal NYSERS account, which can be accomplished by logging onto their website www.osc.state.ny.us/retire NYSERS can be contacted by calling 1-866-805-0990

3. Pittsford Central School District

The PDTA Contract that is in place on the date you retire will determine the benefits that apply to you. *Keep this in mind when choosing a date for your retirement, especially during a contract negotiation year or when a significant change of provisions is known to be forthcoming. It is important to inform Excellus and the District of any significant changes in those covered or your residency. It is vital that your plan's status be adjusted to address the impact of these changes.*

Health Insurance

The District shall provide hospital, surgical and major medical insurance for all retirees as defined below. Employees shall not be eligible for duplicate District provided insurance. The District includes retirees as members of the district's plan(s) for health insurance purposes, provides a contribution toward their health insurance premium, and facilitates the plan management through the Business Office. They also organize the Open Enrollment period (with information on current health plans and rates) to which current and announced retirees should remain informed. If you plan to relocate out of state, your insurance options will be impacted. Contact Payroll/Benefits for more information.

Related Contract Provisions:

4-1-6, 30-1-6, 50-1-6 Provision of Health Insurance for Deceased Retiree

The District shall continue coverage for 3 years to the spouse/domestic partner as referred to in Section 30-1-2 and/or dependent children of the deceased full-time or part-time eligible employee unless remarriage or becoming otherwise insured. Employees who retire July 1, 2019 or later are eligible for this provision as referred to in 30-1

4-1-10 , 30-1-10, 50-1-10 Temporary Suspension of Insurance in Retirement

When deemed permissible by the plan and in accordance with all governing laws/regulations, a temporary suspension of payments and coverage for health insurance shall be granted to a retiree, retiring on or after July 1, 2023 if such request is made in writing to the District prior to the termination of District coverage.

Note: It is imperative that you fully understand the applicable guidelines/regulations and/or potential impact of this clause if you choose to take advantage of the provision.

4-1-11, 30-1-11, 50-1-11 PCSD Spouse Retirement Insurance

Spouses or domestic partners, having both been employed by the District, each independently qualifying for the District provided health care provision at retirement, shall be individually entitled to a single payer plan or a single payer plan paired with a sponsor/family plan at their retiree rate sharing costs. If the cost of these individual plans exceeds the cost of the equivalent shared plan, the member's combined contribution shall not exceed the amount of the comparative shared plan. In the event the members retire with different rate sharing costs, the average of the two rates shall be used to calculate the corresponding cost of the shared plan. (This essentially allows both members to acquire single payer medical insurance plans prior to retirement (during open-enrollment) with the protection that it will not cost more than if they elected the two person sponsor plan under one employee. Though we cannot provide guidance based on your personal scenario(s) nor predict all potential outcomes, we do believe this would be the best option for most members with a spouse also working for PCSD as a PDTA member.)

Certificated Staff Retiree Insurance (Section 4-1-4)

For employees retiring on or after July 1, 1995 through the New York State Teachers' Retirement System or the New York State Employees' Retirement System, provided the employee has a minimum of 10 years of service preceding the normal retirement date, the Board will continue to pay the premium cost for the retiree as paid for current employees. For employees retiring between September 1, 2010 through July 1, 2011 with twenty-five (25) or more years of continuous service, the District shall pay 100% of the premium for Blue Point II Value. For all part-time staff of .5 or more, years of service shall be awarded on a prorated basis.

Paraprofessional SRP (Section 30-1-4) and Auxiliary (Section 50-1-4) Retiree Insurance

For employees retiring on or after July 1, 1995 through the New York State Employees' Retirement System and/or Social Security Retirement, provided the employee has a minimum of 10 years of service preceding the normal retirement date, the Board will continue to pay the premium cost for the retiree as paid for current employees. For employees retiring between September 1, 2010 through July 1, 2011 with twenty five (25) or more years of continuous service, the District shall pay 100% of the premium for Blue Point II Value. For all part-time staff of .5 or more, years of service shall be awarded on a prorated basis.

b. Dental Insurance, Certificated Staff (Sections 4-4), Paraprofessional/SRP (Section 30-4) Auxiliary (Section 50-4)

The District does not contribute toward retiree dental insurance, but retirees are eligible to enroll in that insurance as members of the "group" and the District will facilitate the paperwork and payments.

Some members pursue optional supplemental dental insurance through other entities.

c. Health Fund

Certificated Staff (Section 4-6)

Paraprofessional and SRP (Section 31)

Auxiliary (Section 55)

Retirees receive no additional contributions to the health fund (HSA), but unused balances remain available even after retirement. Administrative fees are deducted annually from the account.

d. FSA Contributions

A Flexible Spending Account allows active employees to put aside money through payroll deduction, tax-free, to cover health, dental and childcare expenses not covered under other insurance plans. If you choose to participate in the program the year of your retirement, it is essential that you budget very carefully and understand the timelines for usage relative to your retirement date as the plans run January -December.

e. Career Award

Certificated Staff (Section 1-7-1)

Teachers who retire from their employment with the Pittsford Central School District under the following conditions shall be eligible for the benefits specified: (Note: Career award is not considered when calculating FAS)

- a. The date of retirement must be between the end of the second semester and August 31, during the summer recess.
- b. The teacher must submit a written letter of retirement to the Human Resources Office no later than January 15 preceding the date of retirement.
- c. The teacher must be eligible to retire through the New York State Teachers' Retirement System on the date of retirement.
- d. Full-time and part-time teachers who meet the above requirements and who have been employed an equivalent of 10 full-time years or more immediately preceding retirement shall be eligible for this benefit.
- e. A teacher satisfying the conditions set forth above shall receive a payment of \$60 per day of accumulated personal and family sick leave to a maximum of 200 days plus \$600 per year of service. Payment will be made in one lump sum payment during the month of July to a qualified 403(b) plan as allowed by law and outlined in the District's Plan document to a maximum of \$30,000.
- f. The District will pay the reasonable cost of the dinner for the retiree, those individuals entering the 20-year club, and their guest at the annual PDTA sponsored retirement party.

Paraprofessional and SRP (Section 27-1, 27-2)

Employees who have 10 years of full-time, continuous service or 12,000 continuous contract hours of service, shall be eligible upon retirement through the NYS Employees' Retirement System and/or the Social Security System, to be paid an allowance of \$50/day for each unused personal and family illness day AND \$350.00 for each year of service to a maximum of \$18,000. To be eligible for the Career Award employees can retire anytime between November 1 and March 31. Otherwise notice of retirement is required by April 1 of the year of retirement.

The District will pay the reasonable cost of the dinner for the retiree, those individuals entering the 20-year club, and their guest at the annual PDTA sponsored retirement party.

Auxiliary (Section 58-1, 58-2)

Employees who have 10 years of full-time, continuous service or 12,000 continuous contract hours of service, shall be eligible upon retirement through the NYS Employees' Retirement System and/or the Social Security System, to be paid an allowance of \$50/day for each unused personal and family illness day AND \$350 for each year of service to a maximum of \$18,000 for 10-month employees, \$19,000 for 11-month employees and \$20,000 for 12 month employees.

The District will pay the reasonable cost of the dinner for the retiree, those individuals entering the 20-year club, and their guest at the annual PDTA sponsored retirement party.

4. Social Security

Barring extenuating circumstances, such as disability, the majority of workers are eligible to draw a partial pension from the Social Security Administration starting at age 62 and a full pension at age 65 or higher. You should contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or through their website www.socialsecurity.gov for more information on the current procedures for application. You should contact them six months in advance of the

appropriate birthday. You may also automatically receive a packet in the mail with important information from the Social Security Administration. You will need to review this information and take action to begin your benefits.

5. Medicare

At age 65, you MUST enroll in Medicare, basic health insurance for people ages 65 and older through the federal government, regardless of your health insurance status. Your district plan will then change to supplement this coverage. **Please call the Business Office (585) 267-1044 to discuss plan options available to you. Then if desired, the Business Office can arrange a meeting for you with a representative.** You may also desire to have your spouse and/or an adult child attend this meeting. For more information on Medicare coverage contact the Social Security Administration Medicare section by calling 1-800-633-4227 or through the websites www.medicare.gov or www.socialsecurity.gov If you are receiving Social Security, you should automatically be enrolled in Medicare, otherwise make sure to contact them six months in advance since there are specific timelines to apply.

Note: Once you and/or your spouse turns 65 during retirement, the covered individual(s) is/are transitioned to an over 65 AETNA Medicare plan (Contact PCSD payroll/benefits for plan and coverage information). This coverage provides what is commonly referred to as the “wrap around coverage” for medical expenses that Medicare does not cover. Medicare will become the "primary" insurance and the district’s over 65 coverage (AETNA) will become the "secondary." Medicare covers approximately 80% of your medical expenses while the District plan covers the other 20% (Part D included). You will still pay some co-pays as part of this coverage but the premium cost to the retired employee and spouse is substantially reduced. One caveat to this situation exists if you are still working for PCSD prior to retirement when you or your spouse turn 65. The individual who aged up must apply for a Medicare part B card but would remain on your current PCSD plan, not having to migrate to an over 65 AETNA plan. When you retire, any individual of Medicare age at that time would then be moved to the over 65 AETNA plan and the other would remain on your current plan until they too reach the age of 65. Keep in mind once you are on Medicare, they will deduct an amount from your monthly social security checks, if you are taking social security, otherwise you will receive a quarterly bill for the Medicare coverage.

Finally

- Keeping your address and contact information up to date with the District Human Resource Office, Payroll Department and TRS or ERS is always a good idea and will best ensure your benefits continue uninterrupted.
- You may want to keep a copy of the contract that is in place when you retire so that you and your family will have the information about your retirement benefits.
- Attached is a Pre- Retirement Checklist, a sample Retirement Letter and a FAQ for your benefit.

Retirement is a significant career decision. Planning will make the transition smoother. Hopefully, this information will help get you started.

A PRE-RETIREMENT CHECKLIST

- _____ 1. Obtain an estimate of your retirement allowance online or using a retirement system app (as available)
- _____ 2. Review the PCSD/PDTA retirement incentives offered by the district. A meeting with the PDTA President is recommended.
- _____ 3. File the paperwork with TRS/ERS to claim all allowable prior service and/or military service well before your effective date of retirement. This can be a lengthy process
- _____ 4. Submit satisfactory proof of date of birth for your beneficiary to TRS/ERS, if you have chosen a joint-life option.
- _____ 5. Consult with a NYSTRS or NYSERS Representative. Verify that you are “eligible to retire” and have the years of service you expect. Caution: unpaid leaves reduce time of service.
- _____ 6. Contact Payroll/Benefits Office (585-267-1044) to discuss your health insurance coverage in retirement and verify dates for Open Enrollment. It is important that you have the coverage and the family members enrolled that you desire going into retirement. Some aspects can't be changed such as you cannot add individuals after retirement. These enrollment/change dates are established by the district yearly and changes can only be made at other times for a Qualifying Event.
- _____ 7. Review portability of your health insurance if you plan to move out of state. This can be changed during a future open enrollment if the move is not immediate.
- _____ 8. Review current contract language or employer contributions to retiree health insurance. Keep in mind that when you turn 65 you must enroll in Medicare.
- _____ 9. Review state tax structure if you plan to move to another state. Your retirement allowance may be subject to a state income tax if you move out of New York.
- _____ 10. Review your Social Security status. This is especially important if you are near age 62 or older. You may contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213.
- _____ 11. Submit of Retirement letter to Human Resource Office (PCSD)
Letter must be signed and either hand delivered or scanned/emailed
Letters due to Human Resource office by:
Certificated Staff: To be eligible for the Career Award the letter of intent submitted by January 15 for end of school year retirement, or at least 30 days if not eligible or desired.
Paraprofessional and SRP Staff: To be eligible for the Career Award the letter of intent submitted by April 1st for end of the school year retirement or at least 30 days is requested by PCSD prior to a retirement date between November 1 and March 31. If not eligible or Career Award is not desired, a minimum of 30 days is requested by PCSD.
Auxiliary Staff: No date, a minimum 30 days prior to retirement is requested by PCSD

- _____ 12. Submit your retirement application to the TRS/ERS 30-90 days prior to your effective retirement date to be included in the first available payroll after retiring. This form must be notarized and should be sent by certified mail. Use of an online process may be simpler and more convenient based on the availability within your system.

- _____ 13. Review the PCSD/PDTA retirement incentives offered by the district. A meeting with the PDTA President is recommended.

- _____ 14. Review your life insurance coverage and make adjustments as needed/possible.

- _____ 15. Make plans for what you would like to do in retirement!

A SAMPLE RETIREMENT LETTER

<Date>

<insert Name of HR Director/Asst. Supt.>

Pittsford Central School District
75 Barker Road - East Offices
Pittsford, NY 14534

Dear <Insert Name of HR Director/Asst. Supt.>,

In accordance with the current negotiated Agreement between the Pittsford Central School District and the Pittsford District Teachers Association, I will retire from my position as <Insert job title> for the Pittsford Central School District as of <Insert date>.

While this notice is provided so that I may qualify for the retirement incentive Career Award offered in the Agreement <Enter the section that applies: Certificated Staff Section 1-7, Para/Nurse/Tutor Section 27-1, or Auxiliary Section 58-1>, I wish to be considered for a New York State retirement incentive should one be enacted and offered by the District prior to my actual date of retirement.

If Eligible/Desired

I further request continuation of District Health Insurance as provided by the Agreement <Enter the section that applies: Certificated Staff Section 4, Para/Nurse/Tutor Section 30, or Auxiliary Section 50>

Optional

<The BOE and Central Office team do enjoy reading these letters. Feel free to add details on your personal experience and employment in the PCSD.>

Please send acknowledgement of the disposition of this retirement notice.

Sincerely,

(Signature - required)

<Insert Full Legal Name>

c: Mike Pero; Pittsford Central School District Superintendent
<Insert Principal's Name>
Dwayne Cerbone; Pittsford District Teachers Association President

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do “overages” apply to your accrued years of service?

Regulations indicate you cannot gain more than 1 year [of service] within any cycle. Though the increased compensation may apply (subject to limits) you do not accrue additional service.

2. Do additional stipends count toward my pension?

The financial amount of stipends and additional work may apply for a final average salary. This should be discussed directly with a NYSTRS or NYSERS representative. It is not safe to assume all income, even if contractually provided, is FAS eligible.

3. Do I need a 403(b) account to receive the Career Award?

Yes, Career Award funds can only be deposited into a 403(b) account. Information on opening a 403(b) may be found on the district website on the Business and Finance Page click Payroll/Benefits or the PDTA “Partners” page. It is recommended you begin the process to establish an account at least a few months prior to retirement as to not delay the contribution timeline

4. Why are my years of service different for the District and the Pension?

This is a very important distinction as the requirements for the benefits of each entities’ years of service must be met relative to their own recorded data. They may differ as years of service in the District, as shown on seniority reports, is only accrued within the district and/or specific unit. However, pension accrual includes other qualifying jobs held during your employment career. Any need for correction must be addressed to the specific entity responsible for those calculation.

5. How do I buy back service credit before retiring?

To buy back previous service credit you should contact a NYSTRS/NYSERS representative. This should be done 2-years prior to retirement when possible, (to allow for processing. There is no ability to buy back time relative to PCSD seniority or accrual of years/hours.

6. Does my dental coverage carry over into retirement, how can I continue if needed?

Dental Insurance does not roll over into retirement. However, some retirees purchase dental coverage such as AFLAC.

7. Will my spouse and/or family have health insurance in my retirement should I predecease them?

Yes, they may be eligible for up to three years of continued coverage. Please see Contract:

Certificated Staff (Section 4-1-6)

Paraprofessional Staff (Section 30-1-6)

Auxiliary Staff (Section 50-1-6)

8. What happens with my school files and documents

Any/All information or documents you desire and are legally permitted to retain should be transferred to a personal device or account, as appropriate, prior to last day of employment. After that date all information may be purged as legally permitted.

9. How do I make sure any current payroll deductions for insurance (auto, life) thru NYSUT are transferred to personal financial accounts and continued?

When a member retires, the local (Membership Chair) removes the individual from active to retiree in the NYSUT membership list. Once that occurs the member is contacted and given a choice to move the insurance premiums from payroll deduction to either pension deduction or direct pay. During the transition period if a member has a question and wishes to contact NYSUT Member Benefits, they may call 1-800-626-8101