



THE ADVOCATE

CAYUGA-ONONDAGA BOCES
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL RELATIONS
1879 WEST GENESEE STREET ROAD
AUBURN, NEW YORK 13021-9430

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Office of Personnel Relations

Randy J. Ray
Director of Personnel Relations

Brent D. Cooley
Senior Labor Relations Specialist

Emily Brown
Labor Relations Specialist

Mark W. Snyder
Safety Coordinator

Linda M. Brown
Kelly M. Walsh
Administrative Support

Telephone: (315) 255-7683 or (315) 253-0361
FAX (315) 255-7625
Email: lbrown@cayboces.org

*Providing comprehensive
employment and personnel
relations services to local
school districts for over
40 years.*

IN THIS ISSUE

- **WELCOME NEW CHIEF SCHOOL OFFICER**
- **THE OPR WELCOMES EMILY BROWN**
- **8TH GRADE REGENTS SCORES NOT INCLUDED IN APPR GROWTH SCORES**
- **AFFORDABLE CARE ACT UPDATE**
- **AREA UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR DECEMBER 2013**
- **CPI FOR JANUARY 2014**

Welcome New Chief School Officer



The Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES Office of Personnel Relations welcomes and wishes much success to:

BEN HALSEY

the recently appointed Chief School Officer at the

OSWEGO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Best wishes!

THE OPR WELCOMES EMILY BROWN



The Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES OPR is pleased to announce the recent appointment of ***Emily Brown*** as ***Labor Relations Specialist***.

Emily graduated from University of Wisconsin-Madison with a bachelor's degree in Political Science. After receiving her undergraduate degree, Emily worked in politics and government for a number of years, including serving as a campaign manager for state and federal political campaigns.

Following her political work, Emily attended Syracuse University College of Law, where she graduated at the top of her law school class. During law school, Emily worked as a research assistant at the College of Law and interned for two federal court judges. After law school, Emily worked as a litigation associate at Bond, Schoeneck and King. At Bond, Emily worked on a wide variety of legal issues, including education and labor law.

Emily is very excited about joining the OPR team and looks forward to meeting all of you.

8th GRADE REGENTS SCORES NOT INCLUDED IN APPR GROWTH SCORES

The Office of Personnel Relations has, in recent weeks, received several questions regarding how 8th grade students' scores on the Algebra I Regents will be used in the calculation of growth, SLO and local scores for APPR purposes.

As most readers now know, the New York State Education Department received a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education regarding 8th grade math assessments. "Advanced" or "accelerated" 8th graders, those who enrolled in a Regents level math class, most likely Algebra I, have been exempted from the 8th grade math assessment to eliminate double testing. On its face, this would appear to be the wise decision. However, it has prompted questions regarding how these Regents scores will be used for determining teacher and principal APPR scores.

Growth Scores

The State Education Department has recently offered its position on the matter. Simply stated, Algebra I Regents scores for 8th grade students will not be used by the State when calculating growth scores for teachers or principals at any grade or building level. For the 8th grade teacher or middle school principal, the student will not have a student growth percentile calculated because he/she did not take the 8th grade math assessment. For the high school teacher or principal, there will be no impact on the state provided growth score, since the State-provided growth score only takes into account the

academic history of students in grades 9-12. As such, the scores of an 8th grade student on the 2014 Algebra I Regents examination could not be factored into the growth score for the high school teacher or principal.

Local Scores

School districts and BOCES will be required to calculate the local 20 score based on their SED-approved APPR plan for the 2013-2014 school year. Whether or not the Algebra I scores for 8th graders will be included will depend on the exact wording of the APPR plan and the grade configuration of the school district's buildings. If a school building consists of grades 7-12 or 8-12 and the APPR plan includes Algebra I Regents examination scores in the calculation or formula for determining the local 20 subcomponent, then the 8th grade Algebra I Regents scores can be used. However, if the school buildings' grade configurations are the more typical 7-8 and 9-12, then the 8th grade Algebra I Regents scores cannot be used in the 9-12 building. Furthermore, they could only be used in a 7-8 building if the APPR plan specifically included Algebra I Regents examination scores for 8th graders.

SLOs

Nearly all 8th grade math teachers will receive a State-provided growth score. However, in the unlikely event that fewer than 50% of the teacher's students take the 8th grade Math assessment or the number of students for the teacher do not reach the minimum "n" size, then an SLO will have to be used. For those 8th grade students who took the Algebra I Regents, an SLO will have to be created during the school year, before the examination scores are completed, that use the Algebra I Regents scores as the final assessment. If baseline measure was not administered or identified for these students at the beginning of the school year, one must be adopted. A suggestion would be to use the 7th grade Math assessment. The superintendent of school must determine this SLO to be rigorous.

Conclusion

As more guidance in this area is released by SED, it will be forwarded to school districts. In the meantime, if you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office.



AFFORDABLE CARE ACT UPDATE

The Treasury Department and the IRS recently issued final regulations addressing "employer shared responsibility" under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The final regulations delay implementation of certain provisions of the ACA until 2016. Although these delays have been widely publicized, school districts should be aware that many of the provisions of the ACA, including potential penalties, have not been delayed. This article summarizes the changes that were made to the final "employer shared responsibility" regulations and also highlights provisions that will go into effect in 2015.

Failure to Offer Healthcare Coverage

Under the final regulations governing employer shared responsibility, employers with 50 to 99 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs) will not be penalized for failing to offer healthcare coverage in 2015. This change will not likely impact school districts as most, if not all school districts, will have

more than 99 employees. In addition, employers with 100 or more FTEs will not be penalized under Section 4980H(a), if they offer minimum essential coverage to at least 70% of their full-time employees in 2015. The 95% threshold for minimum essential coverage (which was previously included in the proposed regulations) will not be implemented until 2016. At that time, the 95% threshold will apply to all employers with 50 or more FTEs.

Penalties for Lack of Affordable Coverage

The delay in penalizing employers for failure to offer minimum essential coverage does not impact implementation of potential penalties for failure to provide affordable coverage for employers with 100 or more FTEs. Pursuant to Section 4980H(b), an employer with 100 or more FTEs can be penalized up to \$3,000 per year for each full-time employee who receives a premium tax credit or cost-sharing reduction for coverage purchased through the NY State of Health Marketplace if the employer's offered coverage did not meet the minimum value requirement of the ACA or was unaffordable for an individual employee.

A plan does not meet minimum value requirement if the plan does not pay for 60% or more of the covered claimed costs. A plan is not affordable if the employee's share of the premium exceeds 9.5% of the employee's household income. There are a few "safe harbor" provisions that are available for an employer to determine whether a plan is affordable for an individual employee, including cross-referencing the employee's premium contribution with the wage's listed on the employee's W-2.

Even when a plan does not meet the minimum value requirement (which is highly unlikely for the plans offered by school districts), or a plan is unaffordable for an individual employee, the Section 4980H(b) penalty will not be imposed unless the

employee receives a premium tax credit or cost-sharing reduction for coverage purchased through NY State of Health.

Practically speaking, it is unlikely that many school district employees will opt to buy health insurance through the NY State of Health Marketplace because those plans are generally more expensive or provide significantly less benefits than health insurance plans typically provided by school districts. Nevertheless, school districts should monitor whether their plans could be deemed unaffordable for some of their employees and, therefore, could potentially subject the school district to penalties if the impacted employees purchase health insurance through the NY State of Health Marketplace.

Non-Calendar Year Plans

Employers with non-calendar year plans will not have to comply with the employer shared responsibility regulations until the first day of the plan year that begins after January 1, 2015. This rule applies to non-calendar year plans that were in effect as of December 27, 2012, and have not been modified to begin at a later calendar date.

Next Steps: Employer Reporting Requirements

In its "Fact Sheet" accompanying the release of the final regulations governing employer shared responsibility, the Treasury Department indicated that final employer reporting regulations will be released "shortly." The Treasury Department also indicated that the aim of the final regulations is to "substantially simplify and streamline the employer reporting process." When these final regulations become available, the Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES will provide an update regarding how to comply with the employer reporting process.

AREA UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

New York State Rate

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.3%	8.8%	8.0%	7.3%	7.4%	7.6%	7.6%	7.5%	7.4%	7.5%	6.9%	6.6%	
2012	9.1%	9.1%	8.7%	8.1%	8.4%	8.7%	8.9%	8.5%	8.1%	8.1%	7.9%	8.2%	8.5%

Syracuse, NY Metropolitan Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.7%	9.3%	8.5%	7.6%	7.4%	7.5%	7.3%	7.2%	7.2%	7.0%	6.6%	6.5%	
2012	9.5%	9.5%	9.0%	8.2%	8.5%	8.8%	8.9%	8.3%	8.2%	8.0%	7.8%	8.5%	8.6%

Auburn, NY Micropolitan Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.8%	9.7%	8.7%	7.6%	6.9%	6.9%	6.8%	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%	6.3%	6.2%	
2012	9.4%	9.5%	8.8%	7.9%	7.9%	8.1%	8.1%	7.6%	7.3%	7.4%	7.4%	8.3%	8.1%

Cayuga County Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.8%	9.7%	8.7%	7.6%	6.9%	6.9%	6.8%	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%	6.3%	6.2%	
2012	9.4%	9.5%	8.8%	7.9%	7.9%	8.1%	8.1%	7.6%	7.3%	7.4%	7.4%	8.3%	8.1%

Broome County Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	10.1%	9.5%	8.7%	7.8%	7.5%	7.8%	7.7%	7.6%	7.6%	7.4%	7.1%	7.0%	
2012	9.8%	9.6%	9.1%	8.3%	8.6%	9.0%	9.3%	8.7%	8.4%	8.3%	8.1%	8.9%	8.8%

Ithaca, NY Metropolitan Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	6.7%	5.8%	5.3%	4.8%	5.1%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	4.9%	4.8%	4.4%	4.1%	
2012	6.6%	6.2%	5.7%	5.4%	6.0%	7.0%	6.9%	6.4%	5.6%	5.5%	5.3%	5.5%	6.0%

Ontario/Seneca/Wayne/Yates Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.6%	9.4%	8.5%	7.5%	6.7%	6.5%	6.2%	6.0%	6.0%	5.8%	5.9%	6.0%	
2012	9.2%	9.3%	8.9%	7.6%	7.9%	7.9%	7.7%	7.2%	7.0%	7.0%	7.1%	8.0%	7.9%

Rochester, NY Metropolitan Statistical Area

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ann. Avg.
2013	9.1%	8.7%	7.9%	7.3%	7.0%	7.0%	7.1%	6.9%	6.9%	6.7%	6.3%	6.1%	
2012	9.5%	9.5%	9.0%	8.2%	8.5%	8.8%	8.9%	8.3%	8.2%	8.0%	7.8%	8.5%	8.6%

*Source: New York State Department of Labor
Labor Statistics
www.labor.state.ny.us*

CONSUMER PRICE INDICES

	INDEX 1982-84 BASE YEAR=100	% INCREASE FROM PRIOR YEAR	% INCREASE FROM PRIOR MONTH
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November 2013

NY-Northeastern New Jersey Area

1. All Urban Consumers	257.377	1.2	0.1
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	253.013	1.0	0.0

U.S. City Average

1. All Urban Consumers	233.069	1.2	-0.2
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	229.133	1.1	-0.3

December 2013

NY-Northeastern New Jersey Area

1. All Urban Consumers	257.284	0.0	1.5
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	253.088	0.0	1.4

U.S. City Average

1. All Urban Consumers	233.049	0.0	1.5
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	229.174	0.0	1.5

January 2014

NY-Northeastern New Jersey Area

1. All Urban Consumers	259.596	0.9	1.9
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	255.477	0.9	1.8

U.S. City Average

1. All Urban Consumers	233.916	0.4	1.6
2. Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers	230.040	0.4	1.6

COST OF LIVING UPDATE

ALL CITIES

NY - NORTHEASTERN NEW JERSEY

Month	Revised Wage Earner Index	%	All Urban Consumers Index	%	Revised Wage Earner Index	%	All Urban Consumers Index	%
Jan-12	223.2	3.1	226.7	2.9	245.5	3.0	249.3	2.8
Feb-12	224.3	3.1	227.7	2.9	246.5	2.8	250.3	2.6
Mar-12	226.3	2.9	229.4	2.7	248.2	2.7	245.1	2.5
Apr-12	227.0	2.4	230.1	2.3	248.7	2.5	245.9	2.3
May-12	226.6	1.6	229.8	1.7	249.0	1.9	252.7	1.8
Jun-12	226.0	1.6	229.5	1.7	248.5	1.6	252.4	1.6
Jul-12	225.6	1.3	229.1	1.4	248.2	1.2	252.0	1.1
Aug-12	227.1	1.7	230.4	1.7	249.7	1.5	253.5	1.4
Sep-12	228.2	2.0	231.4	2.0	251.0	1.7	254.6	1.6
Oct-12	228.0	2.2	231.3	2.2	250.5	1.7	254.3	1.7
Nov-12	226.6	1.7	230.2	1.8	250.6	2.1	254.3	2.0
Dec-12	225.9	1.7	229.6	1.7	249.5	2.0	253.6	2.1
Jan-13	226.5	1.5	230.3	1.6	250.8	2.2	254.8	2.2
Feb-13	228.7	1.9	232.2	2.0	252.3	2.3	256.2	2.4
Mar-13	229.3	1.3	232.8	1.5	252.7	1.8	256.6	1.9
Apr-13	228.9	0.9	232.5	1.1	252.0	1.3	256.0	1.4
May-13	229.4	1.2	232.9	1.4	252.3	1.3	256.3	1.4
Jun-13	230.0	1.8	233.5	1.8	252.9	1.8	256.9	1.8
Jul-13	230.1	2.0	233.6	2.0	253.3	2.1	257.3	2.1
Aug-13	230.4	1.5	233.9	1.5	253.6	1.6	257.7	1.7
Sep-13	230.5	1.0	234.1	1.2	254.4	1.4	258.5	1.6
Oct-13	229.7	0.8	233.5	1.0	252.9	0.9	257.1	1.1
Nov-13	229.1	1.1	233.1	1.2	253.0	1.0	257.4	1.2
Dec-13	229.2	0.0	233.0	0.0	253.1	0.0	257.3	0.0
Jan-14	230.0	0.4	233.9	0.4	255.5	0.9	259.6	0.9
Feb-14								
Mar-14								
Apr-14								
May-14								
Jun-14								
Jul-14								
Aug-14								
Sep-14								
Oct-14								
Nov-14								
Dec-14								

THE ADVOCATE STAFF

Editorial Assistant & Desktop Publisher:

Linda M. Brown

Contributors:

Randy J. Ray
Brent D. Cooley
Emily Brown
Mark W. Snyder
Linda M. Brown

Published by:

Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES
Office of Personnel Relations
1879 West Genesee Street Road
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