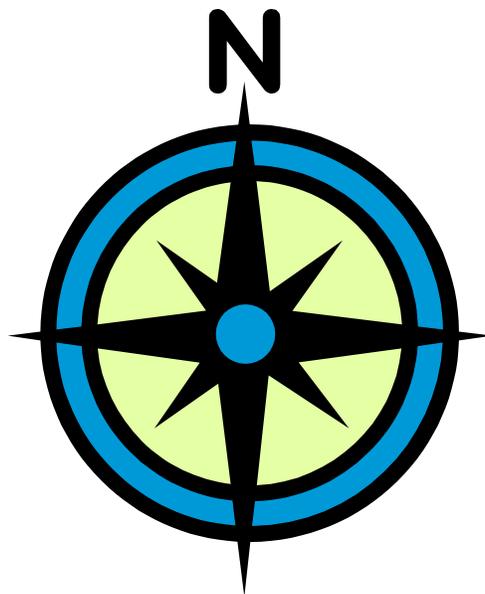


# Community

# Compass

2021-22



The mission of the Orleans/Niagara Board of Cooperative Educational Services is to be the premier provider of the innovative and effective solutions for the evolving needs of our component districts and other learning collaboratives.

This resource booklet is designed to provide information to Orleans Niagara BOCES Special Education students and their families. It contains information about useful web sites, community resources, and who to contact if you have questions about your child's educational program. It also contains a list of terminology commonly used in Special Education programs.

Also, important information is provided about issues such as planning your child's transition from school to adult programs, Care Coordination, and guardianship.

If you need any additional help locating resources in your community, please contact:

Debbie Branch  
716-731-6800, ext. 3718

BOCES Classes located at:

Newfane Learning Center  
Niagara Falls Learning Center  
LaSalle Prep Learning Center  
North Tonawanda Learning Center  
North Tonawanda High School  
Orleans Learning Center  
Roy-Hart Learning Center

Your child's school counselor

Niagara Academy

*Have a great year!*



# Who should I call if I have a question about my child's BOCES program?

*Call your child's teacher or send in a note if you have any questions regarding his/her progress or program. For other questions or concerns, contact the building coordinator.*

## **Supervisor/Coordinator**

## **Class Locations**

Ann Logel  
716-807-3576

North Tonawanda Learning Center  
North Tonawanda High School

Michael Mann  
716-731-6800, ext. 2230

Orleans Career & Technical Education Center

Lorrina Kostuk-Madonia  
716-731-6800, ext. 3713

Placement Coordinator

Scott Bindemann  
716-731-6800, ext. 4442

Niagara Career & Technical Education Center

Paulette Hamilton-Koehler  
716-731-6800, ext. 4269

Roy-Hart Learning Center

Krista Macomber  
716-778-6455

Newfane Learning Center  
Orleans Learning Center

Amanda Bennett  
716-731-6800, ext. 4480

Niagara Academy

Brenda Good

Niagara Falls Learning Center (286-4138)  
LaSalle Prep Learning Center (286-4141)



## Committee on Special Education

Each school district has a Committee on Special Education (CSE). The CSE is a multi-disciplinary team that reviews progress and makes recommendations concerning your child's educational program. It is very important to maintain contact with your CSE, attend all meetings concerning your child, and take an active part in the decision making process.

Here is an updated list of area CSE chairpersons for the 2020-21 school year:

Albion	Jessica Beal	585-589-2057
Barker	Mariah Kramer	716-795-3350
Lew-Port	Melissa Laun	716-286-7250
Lockport	Debra Bramson	716-478-4843
Lyndonville	Sharon Smith	585-765-2251, ext. 3158
Medina	Alexandra DiLaura	585-798-4032
Newfane	Jennifer Bower Lisa Stack	716-778-6468 716-778-6456
Niagara Falls	Cheryl Meter Frank Coney Ashley Chambers	716-286-4293 716-286-4274 716- 286-4284
Niagara Wheatfield	Mary Sellers Stephen Metzger	716-215-3011 716-215-3016
North Tonawanda	Michael Hiller Elizabeth Bittar	716-807-3560 716-807-3537
Roy-Hart	Douglas King	716-735-2025
Starpoint	Brian Farrell	716-210-2321
Wilson	Amanda Schaus	716-751-9341, ext. 162

# TRANSITION

The goal of transition planning is to prepare students with disabilities for a smooth transition from school to post-school life which may include post-secondary school (college or adult training programs), employment, adult services, independent living or community participation. In other words, we need to consider and plan for how the student will live, learn, work and play after completing school. Effective transition planning is both individualized and collaborative and involves the student, parents, educators and service providers. Beginning at age 12, a Level I Assessment is done with each student and includes a student survey, parent survey and teacher survey which are all updated annually. In addition, a career inventory is completed by the student.

The transition plan is then developed and provides a framework for identifying, planning, and carrying out a coordinated set of activities that will help a student make a smooth and successful transition to adult life. This becomes part of the IEP and is coordinated by the school district, with participation by the student, parent and appropriate community agencies. Goals and activities take into account the student's preferences, abilities, interests and potential. This may include instruction, community experiences, development of employment and post school living objectives.

There is a monthly newsletter available called **ACCESS** which is collaboration of Parent Network of WNY, Starbridge (Rochester) and INCLUDEnyc. This provides helpful transition related news and resources for young people with disabilities in New York State. Each issue provides information on employment, education and the rapidly changing NYS service systems that affect our community. *To sign up to receive ACCESS each month, log onto <http://www.starbridgeinc.org/about-us/contact-us/>, fill in and select "ACCESS Transition newsletter"*

Contact the following person(s)  
for more information:

Debbie Branch  
716-731-6800, ext. 3718

BOCES Classes located at:

Newfane Learning Center  
Niagara Falls Learning Center  
North Tonawanda High School  
North Tonawanda Learning Center  
Orleans Learning Center  
Roy-Hart Learning Center  
LaSalle Prep Learning Center

Your child's school counselor

Niagara Academy

# CARE COORDINATION

**Care Coordinators (formerly referred to as Service Coordinators or Medicaid Service Coordinators)** work with children and adults who are deemed eligible to receive services through OPWDD due to a developmental disability. They coordinate care, combining developmental disability services and supports with health and wellness services such as medical, dental and behavioral health. A Life Plan is developed based on needs and wants and is reviewed and updated regularly.

**Care Coordination** is usually covered under Medicaid. If an individual does not have Medicaid, a Care Coordinator can help the family apply for a waiver. (For students under the age of 18 who live with their parents and have a developmental disability). This waiver program eliminates parental income when determining Medicaid eligibility and only considers the resources of the child. Once a student is 18 years old, parental income is not a factor in determining eligibility for Medicaid.

*Note to Parents and Guardians: Care Coordination can be very beneficial to children of all ages. However, if your son or daughter will be transitioning from school to the world of adult services within the next few years, it is suggested that you begin to work with a Care Coordinator as soon as possible. A Care Coordinator is able to help with important information such as SSI, guardianship, supportive decision-making, provide linkages and referrals to an array of adult agencies in the community. Care Coordinators can also help with paperwork, which sometimes make accessing the world of adult service providers a challenging task. Determining OPWDD Eligibility comes before receiving care coordination services. Assistance to start this process is available through OPWDD's Front Door, Parent Network, and Care Coordination admission departments.*

**Care Coordination is available in our region through two providers:**

**Person Centered Services:** [www.personcenteredservices.com](http://www.personcenteredservices.com)

Phone number: 1-888-977-7030

**Prime Care:** <http://primecareny.org>

Phone number: 1-844-347-3168

**OPWDD Front Door:** 800-487-6310

# Legal Guardianship or Supportive Decision-Making

Once your child reaches age 18, he or she is presumed to have legal control over his or her personal, medical and financial decisions, regardless of his or her mental or physical capabilities. Support for individuals over 18 with intellectual/developmental disabilities can be provided through legal guardianship or Supportive Decision-Making. The route to obtaining guardianship is through the Surrogate Court Clerk's Office. The fee is minimal. Necessary forms can be obtained from:

**Niagara County Surrogate Court Clerk**

**716-280-6460**

**Orleans County Surrogate Court Clerk**

**585-283-6658**



Supportive Decision-Making (SDM) is an emerging practice that allows people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to retain their rights while providing support in areas where needed. Supported Decision-Making Agreements (SDMAs) are contracts entered into by persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities after a facilitation process, which can provide support by designating individuals in various ways. SDMAs can provide support through healthcare proxies, trusts and special needs trusts and through setting up a Social Security representative payee. **For more information about SDM, contact Supported Decision Making NY at: [sdmny.hunter.cuny.edu](http://sdmny.hunter.cuny.edu)**

*For information regarding guardianship or supportive decision-making, contact: Debbie Branch, BOCES Transition Specialist, 716-731-6800, ext. 3718*



## **24 Hour Crisis Hotlines**

Crisis hotlines are available through our local mental health departments. This service provides free and confidential support to individuals during crisis situations. Hotline staff can guide individuals to the most appropriate resources and treatments available during crisis situations.

Niagara County-Call 716-285-3515

Orleans County-Call 585-283-5200 or text: 741741

Erie County: Call 716-834-3131, Kids Help Line-718-834-1144



## **COVID-19 Resources:**

### **Catholic Charities COVID-19 Hotline**

Catholic Charities staff are available to discuss mental health and substance abuse counseling services. They can also offer assistance with information regarding food pantries, housing, utilities, and basic living needs.

Hotline phone number is 716-218-1419, between the hours of 8:45 am- 4:45 pm.

# Feed More WNY

Feed More WNY can assist with locating food pantries in your area and dining sites through WNY. Also, this website provides the mobile food pantry schedule, which delivers fresh, perishable food items for distribution throughout our WNY region. (Must be eligible to meet the Emergency Food Assistance Program eligibility requirement). This program also offers nutrition education programs for all ages, please check their website for more information: [hello@feedmorewny.org](mailto:hello@feedmorewny.org).  
Phone number: 716-822-2002.



## Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara

The Community Child Care Clearinghouse of Niagara can help parents locate child care that meets their individual needs. The Clearinghouse provides information regarding licensed day care centers, licensed group family day care homes, registered family child care homes and registered school-age child care programs. For more information, call 716- 285-8572.

# Common Acronyms

Are you confused with all the jargon you read or hear about every time you deal with your child's school? Maybe this will help...

<b>ABAS</b>	Adaptive Behavior Assessment Scale
<b>ACCES-VR</b>	Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
<b>ADL</b>	Activities of Daily Living
<b>ALC</b>	Alternative Learning Center
<b>ASD</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorders
<b>APE</b>	Adaptive Physical Education
<b>AT</b>	Assistive Technology
<b>AUT</b>	Autistic
<b>BIP</b>	Behavior Intervention Plan
<b>BOCES</b>	Board of Cooperative Educational Services
<b>CBVH</b>	Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped
<b>CDOS</b>	Career Development and Occupational Studies
<b>CPS</b>	Child Protective Services
<b>CSE</b>	Committee on Special Education
<b>CTE</b>	Career and Technical Education
<b>D</b>	Deaf
<b>DD</b>	Developmental Disabilities
<b>DDRO</b>	Developmental Disabilities Regional Office
<b>DFY</b>	Division for Youth
<b>DSS</b>	Department of Social Services
<b>ED/EH</b>	Emotionally Disabled/Emotionally Handicapped
<b>FAPE</b>	Free and Appropriate Public Education
<b>FBA</b>	Functional Behavioral Assessment
<b>HOH</b>	Hard of hearing
<b>HI</b>	Hearing Impaired
<b>IA</b>	Instructional Associate/Aide
<b>ID</b>	Intellectual Disability
<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
<b>IEP</b>	Individual Education Plan
<b>LEP</b>	Limited English Proficiency
<b>LOP</b>	Loss of Privileges
<b>LRE</b>	Least Restrictive Environment
<b>MH</b>	Multiply Handicapped
<b>MSC</b>	Medicaid Service Coordinator (through OPWDD)
<b>Multi-Occ</b>	Multi-Occupations, a vocational experience in multiple trade areas
<b>NYSAA</b>	New York State Alternate Assessment
<b>NYSED</b>	New York State Education Department
<b>OHI</b>	Other Health Impaired
<b>OMH</b>	Office of Mental Health
<b>OPWDD</b>	Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (formerly OMRDD)
<b>O/N BOCES</b>	Orleans Niagara Board of Cooperative Educational Services
<b>OT/PT</b>	Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy
<b>PBIS</b>	Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports
<b>PCA</b>	Personal Care Aide
<b>PINS</b>	Person in Need of Supervision-a Family Court action towards children under 16 for non-criminal behavior such as chronic truancy

<b>PLEP</b>	Present Levels of Educational Performance
<b>RCT</b>	Regents Competency Test.
<b>RtI</b>	Response to Intervention
<b>RSE-TASC</b>	Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Technical Support Center
<b>RTT</b>	Race to the Top
<b>SDM</b>	Supported Decision-Making
<b>SI</b>	Speech impaired
<b>SSA</b>	Social Security Administration
<b>SSI</b>	Supplemental Security Income
<b>S/ST</b>	Speech/Speech Therapy
<b>TASC</b>	Test Assessing Secondary Skills (formerly GED)
<b>TTD/TTY</b>	Telephone Devices for Deaf/Typewrite Device
<b>VI</b>	Visually Impaired
<b>VIP</b>	Vocational Individually Paced
<b>VIS</b>	Video interpreting service
<b>VRS</b>	Video Relay Service
<b>15:1</b>	A classroom with a Special Education Teacher and up to 15 students
<b>12:1</b>	A classroom with a Special Education Teacher and up to 12 students
<b>12:1:1</b>	A classroom with a Special Education Teacher, plus an instructional associate, and up to 12 students
<b>6:1:1</b>	A classroom with a Special Education Teacher, plus an instructional associate, and up to 6 students
<b>12:1:4</b>	A classroom with a Special Education Teacher, and a ratio of one instructional associate for every 3 students

## Community Supports and Services

### 1. Access Pass in NYS

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE OF  
**Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation**



An **Access Pass** permits residents of New York State with permanent disabilities, as defined in the application, free or discounted use of the parks, historic sites, and recreational facilities operated by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (State Parks) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The pass holder may have free or discounted use of facilities operated by State Parks and DEC for which there is normally a charge.

Call 518-474-2324 for more information.

### 2. ACCES-VR

ACCES-VR helps to ensure that all youth with disabilities are prepared for employment, post-secondary education and community living when they leave school. ACCES-VR can provide a range of services to help eligible individuals reach an employment goal. To be eligible, the student must have a disability that creates an impediment to employment and benefit from rehab services. ACCES-VR can also provide services for adults with disabilities as well.

Services may include: job placement assistance, funding for training, on the job training, testing evaluations for accommodations and rehab technology, adaptive driving training, etc. for those eligible. ACCES-VR also offers Pre- Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), offered through school districts. This program is for students who are age 14 and/or more than two years prior to anticipated exit from high school.



School Counselors and Social Workers have more information about services and eligibility and can assist with the application process. Applications are currently being accepted. Meetings with VR counselors will be available via telephone or virtual meetings at this time.

The local office serves the eight counties in WNY and is located at 508 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14203 or 1-888-652-7062.



and assessments. Vocational rehabilitation services are also available, such as summer youth/employment, work experiences and job coaching. For more information contact Rebekah Elliott at 716-847-4687 or [Rebekah.Elliott@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:Rebekah.Elliott@ocfs.ny.gov).

## 6. Families Together in New York State



This is a non-profit, family-run organization that strives to establish a unified voice for families of children and youth with *emotional, behavioral, social and cross-system challenges*. Their mission is to ensure that every family has access to needed information, support, and services. Each region has a Regional Parent Advisor whose role is to build a relationship with all of the family support services within their region. Parent Advisors provide a forum for local family support services to network with one another. They serve as liaisons, facilitating communication between the New York State Office of Mental Health and the families in the community. More info can be found at <http://www.ftnys.org>.

## 7. Health Homes

A Health Home is not a physical place; it is a group of health care and service providers working together to make sure individuals receive the care and services they need to stay healthy. In this comprehensive care management program, a care manager works with the individual to manage medical needs, follow up appointments and appropriate access to community services. The goal is to maintain good health.

To be eligible for a Health Home, an individual must be enrolled in Medicaid and have either:

- Two or more chronic conditions or
- One single qualifying condition (HIV/AIDS) or
- Serious mental illness (adults) or
- Serious emotional disturbance or complex trauma (children)

This program is available in each county through various agencies. A list of provider agencies can be found on the NYS Department of Health website at [https://www.health.ny.gov/health\\_care/medicaid/program/medicaid\\_health\\_homes/](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/medicaid_health_homes/)

## 8. Mental Health Association of Niagara County

MHANC is non-for-profit organization that provides services that promote wellness through advocacy, education and community service programs. This includes information and referral, self-help, respite, Compeer Niagara, community education, support groups, and legal advocacy. Focus of the various groups includes bereavement, eating disorders, depression and anxiety, gambling, anger management, LGBTQ, domestic violence, literacy, etc. Peer advocates can assist individuals admitted to the Behavioral Health Service Unit at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center



MHANC also provide a Help Line for information and referrals. The Help Book, a directory of community services, can also be accessed through the web site. Contact [www.mhanc.com](http://www.mhanc.com) or call 716- 433-5432, **24 hours a day**.

## 9. Mental Health Association of Genessee & Orleans Counties

This is a nonprofit organization to promote mental wellness and improve the quality of life for participants through peer support, advocacy and education for **individuals over 18 years of age**. The MHA of Genessee and Orleans Counties provide a variety of supports and services such as Drop-In Centers for individuals to get together in a safe environment for recreational, educational, skill building activities and support. MHA also provides a variety of workshops trainings and support groups. For more information call (585) 589-1158 or more information can be found at <http://mhago.org/>.

This organization also provides a peer to peer phone service that offers support and encouragement to callers from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. The Warm Line phone number: 585-813-0072.



## **10. NY Connects**

NY Connects provides free and unbiased information about long term services and supports in New York State for people of all ages or with any type of disability. Long term services and supports include medical and non-medical services a person needs to improve or maintain health and independence. These services can be provided in the individual's home or other community-based settings.

Niagara County NY Connects:

Email: [nyconnects@niagaracounty.com](mailto:nyconnects@niagaracounty.com)

Telephone: (716) 438-3030

Orleans County NY Connects

Telephone: (585) 589-3191

## **11. Niagara County Children's Single Point of ACCESS (CSPOA)**

CSPOA assists Niagara County's youth with serious emotional disabilities and are at risk; to supports and services so they are able to maintain in their communities. CSPOA staff will develop strategies for youth based on their strengths. Recommendations are provided to the families for appropriate services. Parents or service providers can refer a child. This program is for ages 5 through 20 years old.

For more information call Niagara County CSPOA Practitioner: 716-438-3071

Orleans County CSPOA: Call Orleans County Mental Health- 585-589-7066

## 12. OPWDD

The NYS Office for Persons with a Developmental Disability (OPWDD) can offer a broad range of services and supports to individuals with an intellectual/developmental disability (I/DD). Services and supports can include assistance with living in the community, care coordination, family supports, employment training, residential and day services. A wealth of information is available on their website at <http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/>.

OPWDD offers programs for younger children through adulthood. It is important for I/DD students to be linked with OPWDD services before they exit school. OPWDD programs need a Care Coordinator referral, and eligibility must be approved first.

People new to the OPWDD system can start the eligibility process by contacting the Front Door liaisons through OPWDD.

**Front Door** (WNY area): 800-487-6310

## 13. Parent Network of WNY

Parent Network is a not-for-profit agency that provides education and is a great source for families of individuals with special needs (birth through adulthood) and for professionals. Their website also contains links to newsletters, a recreation directory for individuals with special needs and support group information as well. They also provide workshop series and transition resources. The majority of staff members are parents of children with special needs which provide a unique perspective.



Parent Network also has a Behavior Support and Advocacy Program for families residing in all WNY counties. This program is for all school-aged youth living at home who are eligible for OPWDD services.

The office is located at 1000 Main St., Buffalo 14202, 716-332-4170 or toll free 866-277-4762. Visit [www.parentnetworkwny.org](http://www.parentnetworkwny.org) for more information or to sign up for their newsletter and check out their numerous resources.

## 14. Parent to Parent of New York State



This is a place where families of individuals with developmental disabilities and special health care needs and the professionals who serve them can meet and share information. Log onto [www.parenttoparentnys.org](http://www.parenttoparentnys.org). The local office is located in West Seneca, 1-516-406-8617.

Parent to Parent of New York State has a **Parent Matching Program** that matches parents, upon request, with a trained Support Parent who also has a child with a similar disability, chronic illness, health care concern, or to help with parenting issues. This provides the opportunity to connect one-to-one with someone who has “been there”. You can request a match through the website or contact the regional office at 1-800-305-8813.

Parent to Parent also has a **Medically Fragile Families Network E-mail List**. The purpose of this group is to disseminate and share information regarding children who have complex medical needs, are considered medically fragile, and require skilled nursing care. This e-group is a place where parents can connect and support each other by posting questions, sharing resources, comments and stories. It is interactive and parents are able to receive feedback from other parents across New York State.

For information on joining the Medically Fragile Families Network e-group, refer to <http://www.parenttoparentnys.org/index.php/site/form-email-list-mffn>

## **15. University at Buffalo Center for Assistive Technology**

UB for Assistive Technology promotes independence in the lives of individuals with disabilities of all ages by utilizing assistive technology. They assist individuals through education and training to improve everyday abilities. Their services can be beneficial within education, employment, and community living.

For more information call 716-836-1350 or email [ksnaus@buffalo.edu](mailto:ksnaus@buffalo.edu)

## **16. Western New York 211**

**Western New York 211**, Inc. provides information on health and human service programs available in Western New York including Erie, Niagara and Orleans Counties. The service is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

This simple 3 digit number connects people to services such as: basic human needs resources, health and wellness, mental health resources, support for persons with disabilities, substance abuse and legal services.



Simply dial **2-1-1** or **1-888-696-9211**, **24 hours per day** to speak with a trained information and referral specialist who can identify services in the community that can provide help or log onto [www.211wny.org](http://www.211wny.org).

**WNY 2-1-1** can be reached through text Monday through Friday, 8:30 am- 3:30 pm. Text your zip code to 898-211.

## **17. WNY Independent Living Inc (WNYIL)**

WNYIL has a variety of programs and services available to enhance the quality of life for persons with disabilities and promoting choices and alternatives for independent living in our society. For more information: <http://www.wnyil.org/>

Independent Living for Niagara County: 716-284-4131  
Independent Living of the Genessee Region: 585-815-8501 ext 400

## **18. Yellow Pages for Kids with Disabilities**

**[www.yellowpagesforkids.com](http://www.yellowpagesforkids.com)**

Find educational consultants, psychologists, educational diagnosticians, health care providers, academic therapists, tutors, speech language therapists, occupational therapists, coaches, advocates and attorneys for children with disabilities on the Yellow Pages for Kids for your state.



## **ORLEANS/NIAGARA BOCES NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The Orleans/Niagara Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment on the basis of gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, religion or creed, age, national origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, military or veteran status, domestic violence victim status, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or any other classification that is recognized by law as a protected classification.

The Orleans/Niagara Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) is an equal opportunity educational system and does not discriminate against any student or candidate for enrollment on the basis of actual or perceived race, creed, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, gender, gender identity or expression, sex, or any other classification that is recognized by law as a protected classification.

Any person wishing to obtain information about the BOCES procedures for grieving alleged civil rights violations may obtain information by contacting Wayne M. Van Vleet, Director of Labor Relations/Civil Rights Compliance Officer, 4232 Shelby Basin Road, Medina, New York 14103, telephone number (716) 731-6800, extension 2206, e-mail address [wvanvleet@onboces.org](mailto:wvanvleet@onboces.org).

