




THE MEMBERSHIP

The Newsletter of The West Genesee Teachers' Association <http://www.wgta.net>

UNION ENDORSED BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

Elizabeth Donaldson	Jennifer James	Aaron Ryder
		

President's Notes - Michael Perkins

Each year NYSUT brings union delegates from all over New York State to determine a focus for legislative actions. This year both Rob Manipole and I were the two association delegates to attend the RA. Being able to meet in person for the first time since the start of the pandemic, it was great to see so many educators working together to improve conditions for our members.

This year's Representative Assembly was upbeat and hopeful. I cannot remember a time in my teaching career that a sitting Governor addressed the NYSUT delegates at the RA. Governor Kathy Hochul announced that the era of teacher bashing was over and that her administration is focused on listening to teachers and improving schools in New York State. This was a pleasant surprise and quite a change in policy compared to the previous Governor.

On Saturday, April 2nd the RA voted on about 25 different proposed actions that NYSUT will work towards for our members. Here are the top legislative actions that Rob and I voted in support of:

- move tier 5-6 teachers to tier 4,
- end APPR and return the teacher evaluation process back to local school districts,
- increase school funding (return to pre-2008 formula),
- repeal the state's onerous receivership law, removing the punitive consequences of testing for students, teachers and schools alike,
- support public schools as local communities, advocating for additional funding and for hiring community school directors/coordinators to align community services with student and family needs,
- strengthen and diversify the educator pipeline; advocating for scholarships, career ladders for teaching assistants and other support staff; fellowship and residency opportunities; Grow Your Own programs and improving the educator certification process,
- advocate for resources to hire much-needed counseling and mental health staff; educators for English language learners and special education students; and at least one registered professional nurse in each school building,
- call on schools to address the digital divide,
- implement shorter, developmentally appropriate grades 3–8 assessments. The resolution urges NYSUT to work with NEA and AFT to support efforts at the federal level to allow grade span testing instead of grade-by-grade testing; and allowing local screenings and progress monitoring to be used to meet federal requirements rather than statewide assessments.

Union Wins APPR Reprieve (5/13/2022)

Gov. Kathy Hochul Friday signed a bill suspending, [for an additional year](#), the Annual Professional Performance Review process. Advanced through grassroots advocacy from NYSUT members and lobbying by union legislative staff, the bill recently passed both the state Senate and the Assembly.

"As we come to the end of another school year that has been anything but normal, we welcome the governor's decision to suspend the APPR process for another year," said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta. "We will continue working with the legislature and the governor to address the APPR process."

WGTA Building Leader and Representative Process - Conor Murphy

Building leaders and representatives serve a vital role in our association and are elected annually to single year terms. This year's elections will be held in each building via google forms, in early June. Below is the language from our Constitution regarding available positions:

Article VI - Building Officers and Representatives

- A. Each school building shall elect all Building Leader(s) and Representative(s).
- B. Each Elementary School shall elect one (1) Building Leader and one (1) Building Representative from East Hill Elementary School, Onondaga Road Elementary School, Split Rock Elementary School, three (3) Building Representatives from Stonehedge Elementary School for the Cabinet.
- C. Each Middle School shall elect one (1) Building Leader and two (2) Building Representatives for the Cabinet.
- D. The High School shall elect two (2) Building Leaders and five (5) Building Representatives for the Cabinet.

Per our By-Laws, "Each building shall by majority vote, elect, on/before June 15, a Building Leader(s), Building Representative(s), and Alternate(s) to take office on July 1." The elections will be conducted by individual building leaders. To support our building leaders the Executive Cabinet will create the ballot forms. If you would like to be a candidate for building leader or building representative please complete [this form](#) by Friday, May 20th.

For the reference of interested teachers, below is the language in our By-Laws explaining the responsibilities of leaders and representatives.

B. Duties of Building Leaders:

- 1. It shall be the duty of the Building Leaders to represent their respective schools on the Cabinet and to report back to their constituents regularly on the work of the Cabinet and all Association Committees.
- 2. It shall be the duty of the Building Leaders to be the Liaison between the Administration and Staff within their buildings on matters relating to Association business and the negotiated Agreement.
- 3. It shall be the duty of the Building Leaders to coordinate the handling of grievances within their respective buildings in conjunction with the Vice-President of Grievances.
- 4. It shall be the duty of the Building Leaders to represent their respective schools on the Negotiations Committee in preparation for negotiations.
- 5. It shall be the duty of Building Leaders to conduct WGTA elections in their buildings.

C. Duties of Building Representatives:

- 1. It shall be the duty of the Building Representatives to represent their respective schools on the Cabinet.
- 2. It shall be the duty of the Building Representatives to assist the Building Leader.
- 3. It shall be the duty of the Building Representatives to take on any added responsibilities assigned by the Building Leader, WGTA President or WGTA Cabinet.
- 4. Be a voting member of the Cabinet.

In addition to leadership elections, the June ballot will include **two** important initiatives:

- A Constitutional Amendment to add Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists to our membership. In order for this Amendment to be ratified it must be approved by a $\frac{2}{3}$ approval by those voting, a quorum.
- The WGTA and WGCSD are looking to enter into the **NYS Paid Family Leave Act**. We will provide the membership an opportunity to vote on this measure, a majority vote will be sufficient.

NYS Paid Family Leave

- Paid Family Leave can be taken to bond with your child within 12 months of your child's birth, adoption, or foster placement.
- Paid Family Leave can be taken to care for a family member with a serious health condition.
- Paid Family Leave can be taken to assist loved ones when a family member is deployed abroad.

Paid family leave is an *all or none* measure. Whereas the disability insurance policy was the decision of individual members, NYPFL, if adopted by a majority of our members, would include all teachers.

This legislation is funded by payroll contributions. In 2022, the employee contribution is 0.511% of an employee's gross wages each pay period. The **maximum** annual contribution is \$423.71. (This would be about \$19.26 *max* for our 22 pay periods.) Pursuant to the [Department of Tax Notice No. N-17-12 \[PDF\]](#), Paid Family Leave contributions are deducted from employees' after-tax wages.

<https://paidfamilyleave.ny.gov/benefits>

[Benefits Calculator](#) -

[Payroll Calculator](#)

[Relationship with other leaves](#)

[2022 Updates](#)

Our Union Strength Depends on UNITY - Conor Murphy

PLEASE STOP “teacher on teacher crime.” While we all benefit greatly from having a confidant and a place to vent, when members bring their concerns (gripes) beyond their teams, their lunch buddies, their meetings in the hallway, to their administration or the community, this creates animosity among our membership. It allows inequities to continue as those in authority watch us feud amongst ourselves. As professionals, we need to lean on each other for support, rather than push off of one another in resentment. Our strength in solidarity gives us leverage to negotiate with building administrators and the district, for equity, for better conditions, for more reasonable expectations, and to ensure respect of the contract and our efforts. Working in concert with building representatives and leaders to manage our concerns and issues within our own building gives us the greatest ability for a successful resolution to issues. Working through, and with your WGTA representatives is most beneficial for individual teachers as well as the entire membership.

Without the support, experience, guidance, assistance, and advice of the dedicated teachers in the high school there is no way I would be the professional I am today. I believe that my strength as a professional came from the collaborations within my department and from my building colleagues. As such, the strength of our membership comes from the solidarity we value as colleagues and professionals. Our jobs are difficult, and as educators our job has continually become more challenging, more criticized, more complicated, more burdensome, and more exhausting. Administration, legislators, parents, and others continue to ask more, more, and more of us. I have survived these challenges because of the support and shared strength of all of my colleagues.

Teaching at every grade level and content area has its own challenges and rewards. Teaching in another building, content area or grade level is not more or less, but differently, difficult. It's easy to say; “They have it so much easier.” “It isn't fair that I have to do this and they get to do that.” This not only devalues and vilifies the targeted colleagues, but weakens our membership as a whole. To reference a tired cliché, we only see the green side of the other roles in our district. The grass is never greener on the other side of the hill. It is greenest where we water it, where we tend to our own plot. Looking to another area with animosity for what another professional gets to do, or not do, misses completely what *they have* to do. We don't recognize the difficult tasks and responsibilities that our colleagues struggle with day in and day out, the same way our colleagues don't see all of the tedious ways our own jobs wear on us. Our jobs are challenging. Our profession is essential. We must build up, rather than tear down. Our strength is in our unity.

WGTA SPRING FLING



THURSDAY JUNE 2ND, 3 - 7PM

WGTA POWER PACKS CAMPAIGN - SPRING 2022



Our members are amazing! The Power Pack program provides needed food and educational resources for our students. It was in need of funds and we delivered. The WGTA three week, jean day fundraiser collected over \$2,107 for the Power Pack program. This will provide funding to the program for this year and through the first half of next year. Thank you for your continued support of our students.

Contact Your WGTA Executive Officers

<http://www.wgta.net>

Michael Perkins, President
Email: perkinsforwgta@gmail.com
School: WGMS (315) 487-4618

Mary Gotham, Treasurer
Email: megotham@gmail.com
School: WGHS (315) 487-4601

Dawn Personte, Vice President
Email: dpersonte@gmail.com
School: STG (315) 487-4631

Jeanine Stables, Secretary
Email: jstablesster@gmail.com
School: WGMS (315) 487-4618

Conor Murphy, VP Grievances
cdmurphy84@gmail.com
School: HS (315) 487-4592



It's never too early
(or too late) to make
plans!

Find out how NYSUT
Member Benefits can
help you make the
most of your summer.

Check out the **MB Discounts & Deals** program in the
Shopping, Travel & Personal section of our website to start
planning (and saving) today.

Thinking of your next big adventure? A family trip or summer vacation? Member Benefits Discounts & Deals offers great savings of up to 50% on flights, hotels, car rentals, attractions and more when planning a trip.

Whether you want to explore other countries or the United States, Member Benefits Discounts & Deals has you covered. From London to Miami to Las Vegas to Paris, there are an abundance of other savings available as well! Restaurants, museums, theme parks, walking or bike tours, ziplining, sightseeing cruises, city exploration activities ... the list goes on. You can access these deals either online or through the MB Deals mobile app.



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.

May/June 2022

The Back Page



Triple Crown Landscape Maintenance

Dallas Barton 315-857-6885

Triple Crown Landscape Maintenance
Trimming, Mulching, Edging, Weeding
Spring and Fall Clean up
Dallas Barton (Cell) 315-857-6885



BOUNCE PHYSICAL THERAPY
PRESENTS

**FREE
TUMMY
TIME CLASS**

Saturdays at Bounce PT in Liverpool NY
Email: MasteringmilestonesCNY@gmail.com with
any questions and to reserve your spot!

GOT KIDS?

Bounce Physical Therapy
Helping CNY kids get better since 2006



315-214-3431

babies.kids.teens
sports.handwriting.sensory.milestones
Liverpool.NY

Your guide to services, deals, and promotions for the
WG education community

We want to advertise for you! Are you an artist, a carpenter, a house painter looking to advertise your services? Advertisements in "The Member Ship" are provided free to West Genesee Teachers' Association Members and their family. Please contact Michael Perkins at perkinsforwgta@gmail.com

The Member Ship is published by the West Genesee Teachers' Association-3106, P.O. Box 417, Camillus, NY, 13031-0417.
Affiliated with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, NEA, AFL-CIO.