



THE MEMBER SHIP

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

APPR and You in 2020

The 2019-2020 State Budget makes important changes to the student performance portion of the Annual Professional Performance Review, APPR (3012-c and 3012-d). The Board of Regents adopted emergency regulations on October 8, 2019. The new APPR language eliminates the requirement to use state tests and gives the local collective bargaining representative the right to negotiate the selection and use of an assessment in a teacher or principal's evaluation with the district. The following is an overview of the amended APPR language and how those amendments fit into the entire APPR process for teachers.



All decisions regarding the student performance category will be made locally through the collective bargaining process. The new language eliminates the two-tier system where teachers in “tested” subjects must have individual SLOs or growth scores and teachers in “non-tested” subjects individual or group SLO’s. It eliminates the calculation and use of the state provided growth model from APPR. The law also eliminates the **requirement** to use state tests in the APPR. This change allows locals to determine whether or not to use the state 3-8 ELA and Math, 4 & 8 Science, NYSESLAT, Alternative Assessment and Regents exams as either individual or group measures in the APPR at the bargaining table.

For the past few years, over half of our teachers received their Student Performance score, as part of a group measure, using the passing rates from five Regents Exams. Teachers of courses that culminate in a state exam, such as ELA and Math Grades 3-8, middle level science exams and high school Regents Exams were writing their own Student Learning Objectives. Currently, we are functioning under these APPR parameters, however, we will soon be entering negotiations to develop a plan which corresponds to the current law. Once we have an agreement, you will be the first to know.

~ John Mannion, WGTA President

Planning Periods for Teachers are Invaluable!

Summary provided by Mary Gotham



Kyleen Gray, believes daily planning time is “our lifeline to surviving the teaching day.” Below is a summary of her article “[Dear School Administrators, Please Stop Taking Away Teacher Planning Periods.](#)”

Kyleen laments administrators whittling away of the precious 30-40 minutes of planning periods provided teachers each day. She argues that planning periods

are necessary for quality: teaching, student assessment, professional development, communication, relationship building, experiential learning, and personal well-being.

“Planning periods have a big impact on the quality of our daily and long-term teaching practice:”

Good teaching requires a chunk of time set aside each day to plan lessons and units that motivate and engage students. Teachers need time to set up and break down instructional lessons, reflect on the student learning and implement any necessary tweaks to the next learning experience.

“Student assessment suffers when planning periods are limited:”

Providing formative feedback to students is crucial to ensuring student understanding and teachers’ ability to assess student outcomes and scaffold learning for difficult concepts. Planning time enables formative assessment. Teachers can determine if they should move on, reteach or review. Without planning time, teachers rely on summative assessment with fewer opportunities for students to demonstrate learning and get immediate feedback. Without planning periods assessment suffers.

“Planning periods are our self-driven PD sessions:”

More often than not, teachers’ professional development occurs during their planning time. Teachers investigate current and upcoming lessons and units by browsing the Internet, checking best practices, reading applicable articles and reaching out to colleagues. Without planning periods professional development and creativity is stymied.

“We use planning periods to build relationships:”

Planning time provides quality communication that builds strong relationships through thoughtful emails, phone calls to parents, one-to-one conversation with students and colleagues. Strong relationships improve student behavior, student motivation, parent by-in, and teachers’ pedagogy. Without planning, teachers must rely on class time to talk to students, monthly newsletters, report cards, open house and rushed emails to communicate with parents and fly by conversations with colleagues. Without planning periods relationships are not nurtured.

“Extracurricular activities and field trips require planning periods:”

Experiential learning increases understanding and improves student motivation. Field trips, extracurricular activities and clubs take planning, coordination and organization. Without planning periods the field trips and extras don’t happen.

“Most importantly, planning periods contribute to our personal health:”

Teacher burnout is a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism. Teacher’s basic physical and mental needs must be met. Teachers must rest, reflect and reenergize to meet the challenges the next instructional session will bring. Without planning periods teachers’ stress levels increase which takes a toll on their physical and mental health.



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We would like to welcome Superintendent Bills
to the West Genesee School District!

GETTING TO KNOW YOU GETTING TO KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU...



- Genre of books, favorite title, favorite author – **Mystery/Law, *White House, John Grisham***
- Genre of movie, favorite movie – **Comedy/ Inspirational, *Remember the Titans***
- Genre of music, favorite song or band – **Chicago, Panic at the Disco, “Vocalise” by Rachmaninoff**
- Favorite Food – **Vegan**
- Sweet or Salty Snacks – **Salty**
- Milk Chocolate or Dark Chocolate – **Dark (Now)**
- Favorite Sports Teams – **SU Basketball (lifelong), New York Yankees, Buffalo Bills**
- Favorite Musical – **Currently: *Hamilton, Hadestown, Dear Evan Hansen***
- Fun fact about you ... **My grandfather was a professional basketball player.**

SLC Meeting Notes

November 6, 2019

Attendance at meeting - David Bills, John Mannion, Allyson Stalter, Joelle Greer, Jeanine Stables, Mary Weaver, Mike Perkins, Dawn Personte, Matt Bolha, Michele Coonce

Question: Not all staff are proficient at using hyperdocs. Can additional training be provided?

Answer: Yes...Rob Leo said let's get some more training, Hyperdocs training will start on November 12, 2019 and continue into December break with another cohort starting after break

Question: Does the cart equal the class? Can this be an option at next PD day? PD offered after school?

Answer: Rob is available to offer PD on this during the school day and during PD on Staff Development Days.



Question: Why are the secondary teachers required to take a class to be able to use a chrome book cart and the elementary teachers have sole access to one in their classrooms? (Also, on any given day there are 4-5 unused chrome book carts in a secondary school during the entire day-- teachers are hesitant to use these unused carts because they did not take the class).

Answer: 1:1 initiative at the elementary school, Connection issues-WGMS, Split Rock.

Just ask for a cart they're usually available.

Question: Special Ed teachers were given training today in Heggerty, which looks like a very valuable reading program.

Currently, we are piloting this program, but there is only one manual

per building. We need a manual for each Special Ed. teacher, but Darlene told us there is no money to buy because we are only piloting the program. Can we please get more manuals?

Answer:

Materials needed, has anyone asked when we would be getting the manuals, similar to CKLA manuals

- East Hill has manuals for all classrooms-per Lisa Craig,
- Matt Kipland-trying to find resources to purchase the book
- Amanda Simmons-ordered for all kindergarten teachers

When changes are being made, might we be able to get the resources needed to do the programs?

Professional development budget needs to be addressed, initiatives need to match resources, equitable and consistent

- Ask principals to get resources and have time at the next faculty meeting for a few minutes for someone to provide information.

(Mike) -

Short term - manuals cost +- \$70, possible to use building money, Bring this to PLC principals can purchase this. Discuss at a future faculty meeting.

Long term - PD budget needs to be planned and shared with teachers going forward, sensitive to SPED teachers

Question: Stonehedge Elementary School is having problems getting students through the breakfast line in a timely manner. Is it possible to make breakfast more mobile? Bagged breakfast? Or open the other cafeteria to get students through more efficiently?

Answer: **(Mike)** - Tabled for January discussion

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT RETIRING IN THE NEXT 5, 10, 20, OR 30 YEARS?

No matter how far along in your teaching career, now is a good time to start planning for retirement. If your retirement is looming (within the next 5 years), you absolutely need to start planning. The NYS Teachers Retirement System is there for you!



1. The first step is to watch your mailbox. NYSTRS will be mailing your Annual Benefit Profile this month. **READ IT! SAVE IT!** Use your NYSTRS retirement account number, listed on the Benefit Profile, to go online to NYSTRS.org to create your myNYSTRS account.
2. Check out the fabulous NYSTRS.org website! Click on the user-friendly links to learn everything you need to know. Especially helpful are the links under the “Retirement Planning” tab and the “Video Library” (start with “NYSTRS Benefits Series” part 4).
3. If you have Active Duty Military service that precedes or interrupts your NYSTRS teaching time, be **SURE** to submit your DD-214 to earn more Service Credit toward your Pension Factor ASAP! See the NYSTRS.org video, “Claiming Veteran’s Service”. The same is true for other New York State, county, town, or village service credit for jobs you worked prior to your NYSTRS service see the NYSTRS.org Library video, “You Deserve the Credit”.
4. Members who have prior service credit should apply to buy back that credit as soon as possible, to save money, and to potentially be qualified for the pension benefits of the Tier on which they first worked as a public servant in New York State, County, or Local Government. E.g., Someone who was a Lifeguard at Jamesville Beach during high school, may qualify to be on the Tier that was in effect at that time!
5. There are several ways to get a pension estimate before you retire. The Benefits Profile you receive in the mail this month will have your estimated pension benefit. You can also find it online at NYSTRS.org. You may also schedule a 1:1 Benefits Consultation. There are 35 sites available across New York, or you can call 1 (800) 348-7298 x 6100 to schedule a personal benefits appointment. You can also attend a day-long PREP seminar. Your pension will be paid by direct deposit on the last business day of each month. The amount will depend on your Final Average Salary (the average of 3 highest consecutive years of full-time service), your Service Credit, and your Retirement Age.
6. When you are ready to retire, you will need to do **TWO** things: resign from your position in the District **AND** retire from the State. Our 2016-2020 WGTA contract says that in order to be eligible for a retirement award, you must write a letter of intent to resign your position “at least 3 months prior” to your retirement date. (This year, do it before March 24, 2020.) In order to retire from the State, you have to submit your intended retirement any time from 0 to 90 days prior to your date of retirement. (If you are about to reach a 20 or 30 year milestone, file with NYSTRS closer to the deadline.)
7. [Annual Delegates Meeting](#)

Through Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield, there are several great deals on items such as running watches and apparel. One example of these great deals on the Excellus website include 35% off new Garmin watches and 55% heart rate monitors. These offers are part of Blue365, which is a free health and wellness discount program offered to you as a member of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield System. Some of the offers include year-round discounts on gym memberships, fitness gear, healthy eating options and more.



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<https://www.blue365deals.com/>

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<http://www.wgta.net>

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Nov./Dec. '19

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