

The Member Ship



The Newsletter of The West Genesee Teachers' Association

I'm Not A

John Mannion, President

Some people call it a hash tag. Some people call it a pound sign. I call it a number. Data has always been an important part of education. However, many teachers, administrators, students, and parents have expressed that there is too great of an emphasis on data and numbers in today's educational world. Acquiring and analyzing data is important, but it is also time consuming. It negatively impacts the amount of instructional time we have with students. Additionally, it eats up planning time which could be used for collaboration amongst teachers. The counter-argument will always be that we can use this data to drive future instruction. I believe that we need to find a balance.

For me, as I step away from the data and into my classroom, I remember why I am in education: to help children. We must remember that we are people, not numbers (or hash tags), that the students are people, and most certainly not a number, and that we were drawn to this profession for a reason beyond getting a number—to have a positive impact on the future of our community. The only way to do this is to know our students, and knowing them takes time. We will never know to what extent we have influenced our students, but what we do know is that it goes far beyond any test score. The impact that we have helps develop citizenship, morality, thoughtfulness, and character. We help direct children toward careers and inspire them to seek knowledge outside of the classroom. Teachers have so much to do each day that, in the world of data and evaluations, it is easy to lose sight of what is important. We have to strive to remember that justification and try to never get caught up in the numbers.

Getting Back to What Matters

I had an opportunity to see the great humanity in my students during one of our many new initiatives last year, OLWEUS training. The sessions I had with my students forced me to step away from the content and assessment and gave me a quick reminder of what I love about my job. I had the opportunity to see the personalities, vulnerabilities, and concerns of my students, and after speaking with many of my colleagues, they had the same experience.

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THE MEMBER SHIP IS GOING VIRTUAL!

Starting with the January/February edition, The Member Ship will be posted to the Union website (<http://www.wgta.net>) and a notification sent to all staff. If you would like to get the newsletter via hard copy, please email konewvine@gmail.com with your name and building.

Also, please like our Facebook page @ West Genesee Teachers' Association and follow us on twitter @wildcatteachers!



Spotlight...

The WGTA Goes Exploring

Ellen Miller, Assistant Editor

Space camp isn't just for science teachers anymore. That's the message Carol Glor, Home and Careers teacher at CMS and WGMS, hopes to convey to colleagues. It's for anyone and everyone.

Glor traveled to Huntsville, Ala., in June after garnering one of West Genesee's three scholarships to the Honeywell Educators @ Space Academy program at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center. She and colleagues Scott Macomber, CMS Math teacher, and Brian Ramsden, WGMS Science teacher, spent a week collaborating with some 110 educators from all over the world.

Glor decided to apply after Dan Howard, retired WGMS Technology teacher, urged her to try it. "Since I focus so much on careers, I thought I could really use this to highlight different types of space careers," Glor said.

The week was a blast. As special area teachers know, those who aren't part of a "team" can sometimes feel left out. "For me, the best part was being included in all activities," Glor said. "We were all equal."

The program highlights team-building missions, real life astronaut training, and simulations. Everyone completed the high-performance jet and zero-gravity simulations, Glor said, even if they were scared or had motion sickness. "It was amazing to see people overcome their fears."

Glor plans to incorporate her new knowledge throughout her curriculum. One plan is to have sixth grade students come up with a "mission," a goal they want to have throughout the school year. They will create "mission patches" like the ones real astronauts wear on their flight suits symbolizing their missions.

"It's really about values," Glor said. "During space camp we had to come up with goals and a plan to solve different problems." Her "mission patch" activity will draw on those same skills, integral for 21st Century learning.

"I would highly recommend any teacher, no matter what their subject area, apply for this program," Glor said.

Looking for Kudos!

The Member Ship is looking for news to publish about West Genesee teachers. If you - or someone you know - has attended or presented at a conference, had a baby, published an article, etc., please contact Keith Newvine (HS) at konewvine@gmail.com.

Please — DON'T BE SHY!! The teachers in West Genesee have a lot to be proud about — help us spread the word.



E-mail Directory

Join the FREE WGTA E-mail Directory. There are currently more than 100 WGTA members, retirees, West Genesee staff, and West Genesee parents in the directory. We send each other educational articles, WGTA and union information, and personal notes.

If you would like to be a part of this FREE directory go to <http://goo.gl/dBpXYF> or email konewvine@gmail.com.

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As a science teacher, I use data acquisition and analysis all the time. Lately, almost every conversation concerning data is quantitative: numbers.... percentages.... percentiles. The data I see as equally if not more important in directing our teaching is qualitative: quality. You cannot attach a number to the satisfaction that comes with the quality of accomplishment, community, success, belonging, or joy.

Focus for the Year Ahead

Multiple new initiatives, many of which are a part of the APPR process, are taking time away from teachers and students making those quality connections. I have heard a multitude of stories from teachers that pre-assessments, SLO/LAT writing, Edmodo, etc. have had a negative impact on their ability to connect with their students. I felt that angst myself, and my students could sense it. A teacher in chaos cannot be effective, no matter what number is attached. We need to slow down and perfect the things that we already do well while we adjust our teaching to meet the needs of our students, and that will be the WGTA focus and message to the District Administration in the coming months.

Whether we like it or not, APPR is something that we need to work with while we continue to keep sight of what is truly important in education. The WGTA Executive Officers had the opportunity to renegotiate many items of our APPR agreement, including an adjustment to the scoring bands. I thank all who contributed in making the APPR process fair and as manageable as possible. Please see the APPR Updates section on pages 5-6 for information on the important APPR changes or procedures for the upcoming school year.

On a final note, after attending the NYSUT New Presidents Leadership Conference in Albany, I have to say that I am excited about becoming an even more active participant in local and state association meetings. As a result of the meeting, I have established connections throughout the field of education which provide me with a network of experts regarding advocacy for teachers. I welcome the challenges which come with my position as President, and I appreciate the support of the membership of the West Genesee Teachers' Association. Good luck this year, and please let me know if there is anything I can do.

Contact YOUR Executive Officers...

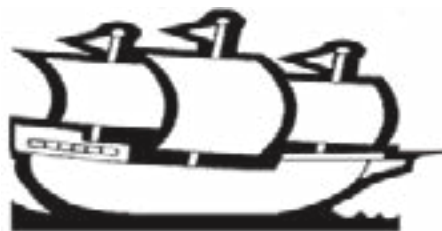
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Congratulations to the 2013-2014 WGTA Building Leaders and Representatives!

Name	Position	Building
Sandi Sherlock	Leader	Stonehedge
Terry Lindsey	Representative	Stonehedge
Allyson Winters	Representative	Stonehedge
Janet McDonald	Leader	East Hill
Heather Thome	Representative	East Hill
Jeanine Stables	Leader	Onondaga Road
Kathy Gauthier	Representative	Onondaga Road
Sue Giannini	Leader	Split Rock
Wendy Vogt	Representative	Split Rock
Carol Glor	Representative	West Genesee Middle
Mary Beth Smith	Representative	West Genesee Middle
Kristyn Sperduti	Representative	Camillus Middle
Courtney Updegraff	Representative	Camillus Middle
Chris Paoli	Leader	High School
Patti Sullivan	Leader	High School
Molly Devaney	Representative	High School
Mark Grier	Representative	High School
Theresa Mosey	Representative	High School
Theresa Murray	Representative	High School
Mary Gotham	Alternate	High School
Margie Thiele	Alternate	High School

PLEASE NOTE:

A special election will be held in October to fill the vacancy of Building Leader at Camillus Middle School. Please look for an email form Kristyn or Courtney near the end of September, and email John with any questions.

Also, while there is no Building Leader at West Genesee Middle School, Executive Officers Mary Weaver and Sue Marshall, along with Membership Chair Matt Bolha, will be undertaking the responsibilities of that position. Please email any of those Cabinet members with your concerns.

THANK YOU!

APPR Update

1. There are new Scoring Band Ranges for Multiple Measures of Effectiveness (MME).

2012-2013

	Student Growth Measures	Student Achievement Measures	Multiple Measures		Overall Score
Highly Effective	18-20	18-20	52-60		91-100
Effective	9-17	9-17	42-51		75-90
Developing	3-8	3-8	37-41		65-74
Ineffective	0-2	0-2	0-36		0-64

You are still rated the same way for Standards 1 – 7. 4=Highly Effective, 3=Effective, 2=Developing, 1= Ineffective. One Indicator needs to be scored for each Element.

2013-2016

	Student Growth Measures	Student Achievement Measures	Multiple Measures		Overall Score
Highly Effective	18-20	18-20	59-60		91-100
Effective	9-17	9-17	57-58		75-90
Developing	3-8	3-8	50-56		65-74
Ineffective	0-2	0-2	0-49		0-64

If you averaged a 3 (Effective) on your 60 points last year, you would receive 57 out of 60 using the new scale; whereas, last year, if you averaged a 3 (Effective) on your 60 MME, you would have only received 42 out of 60 points.

Here is your new 60 point MME scale.

Overall Rubric Score	Rating Category	0-60 Point Distribution by Rating Category
1-1.8	Ineffective	0-49
1.9-2.8	Developing	50-56
2.9-3.6	Effective	57-58
3.7-4.0	Highly Effective	59-60

2. We are using the new NYSUT 2012 Rubric which has fewer Indicators and less redundancy.
3. There is new terminology that states that the teachers sets their SLO and LAT targets which are then approved by their administrators.
4. Our pre-observation form from last year has become our Classroom Practices form for Standard 1. It is due 10/15.

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APPR Update...continued

5. The agreement is for three years but will be renegotiated each year, as needed:

Tenured Teachers-

Year 1= One formal observation with lesson plan, pre-conference, and post conference and one walk-through (mini-observation). Additional walkthroughs can be requested.

Years 2 and 3= Two mini-observations.

Non-Tenured Teachers and Teachers on Improvement Plans-

Year 1= Two formal observations with lesson plan, pre-conference, and post conference and two walkthroughs (mini-observations). Additional walkthroughs can be requested.

Years 2 and 3= Two formal observations with lesson plan, pre-conference, and post conference and two walkthroughs (mini-observations). Additional walkthroughs can be requested.

6. Binders provide evidence for Standards 5, 6 and 7 and are due by 4/1.

Contact John Mannion, Mary Weaver, or Keith Newvine with any questions, comments, or concerns.

15th Annual Race for Respect!



On Sunday, September 22, 2013 at 12:00PM, the West Genesee School District and the Town of Camillus will be hosting the 15th annual Race for Respect.

To register, download a flyer from the district website, www.westgenesee.org. Students and families may pre-register at their respective schools until September 18, 2013. Fees are \$6 for single entries, \$5 for each member of a family, and \$5 for senior citizens. Registration on the day of the race is \$7 per entrant. A race T-shirt is provided while supplies last.

We all benefit from such an event as the Race for Respect. Look for the West Genesee Teachers' Association sign so we can walk as a Union! Contact Mary Weaver for more information!

Carol Baldwin Fundraiser

Our annual Denim Day is set for Friday, October 11! Stay tuned for emails from your Building Leaders or Reps or watch Facebook and Twitter for more information.

To register for the Run for Their Life on Sunday, October 13, go to smbarunfortheirlife.com.



The Happenings...

Keith Newvine, Editor

FROM THE TREASURER, SUE MARSHALL

An audit was conducted in July by Grossman St. Amour, PLLC. The report recommended more stringent internal controls and required a refiling of 990 Tax Forms, an annual reporting return that federally tax-exempt organizations must file with the IRS. The budget for the 2013-2014 fiscal year was also presented and approved by the Cabinet at the August meeting. Many cost-cutting measures have been put in place to keep dues down. The Union purchased Quickbooks to put the finances on the computer and make it easier to generate financial reports. Sue will be chairing the Finance Committee, the Scholarship Committee, and the Insurance Benefits Committee as well as co-chairing the Membership Committee for the upcoming school year. If you would like to join one of these committees, please contact Sue at smarshall1@rocketmail.com.

FROM THE SECRETARY, KATIE WILLIAMS

We have been organizing the various committees of the WGTA and compiling a list of important meeting dates and events. In order to meet the requirements of the Bylaws and Contract, the reestablishment of these committees are an important detail for the collective voice of all Union members. Moreover, attendance by at least one of the Executive Officers at the Board of Education meetings has been added to their duties, a schedule for which the Secretary has created. Katie will be the chair of the Sick Bank and co-chair of the Orientation Program and the Educational Development Committee for the upcoming school year. If you have any questions or would like to join one of these committees, please contact Katie at kwilliams1126@hotmail.com.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT, MARY WEAVER

The Fall Fling is scheduled for October 17 from 4-6PM. We are trying to work with Pine Grove to host the event--something local with a family-friendly environment. Stay tuned to email, Facebook, and twitter for more information in the future. We are also looking into more of a presence in the community through our involvement in Erie Canal Days and by promoting our organization in Neighbor's West of the Post Standard. Mary will be chairing the Legislative Committee, the Public Relations Committee, the Social Committee, the Special Education Committee (formerly known as the Mainstreaming Committee), and the Teaching Center Directing Council as well as co-chairing the Superintendent's Liaison Committee. If you have any ideas for getting our voice out there or would like to join one of these committees, please contact Mary at mweav66@yahoo.com.

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR GRIEVANCES, KEITH NEWVINE

The Executive Officers submitted a Request for Testing Resolution to the Board of Education and Superintendent Brown. Following the other local districts, the request asked the Board to "reexamine public school accountability systems, to develop a system of multiple forms of assessment which do not require extensive standardized testing, which more accurately reflects the broad range of student learning, and which is used to support students and improve school, and to reduce the testing mandates, promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability, and not mandate any fixed role for the use of student test scores in evaluating teachers." A summary of Dr. Brown's response can be found in his August 6 blog post at <http://superintendentwgcsd.blogspot.com>. Keith will be chairing the Grievance Committee, the Newsletter Committee, and the Rules and Bylaws Committee as well as co-chairing the Educational Development Committee, the Public Relations Committee, and the Superintendent's Liaison Committee. If you have any questions or would like to join one of these committees, please contact Keith at knewvine@gmail.com.

Advertisement Policy

We want to advertise for you!

Advertisements in The Member Ship are provided free to West Genesee Teachers' Association Members and their family. Please send your advertisement to Keith Newvine (HS) at knewvine@gmail.com. The only other advertisements that are run in The Member Ship are those provided by NYSUT, AFT, or the AFL-CIO.

<http://www.wgta.net>

The benefits of an *online* bank

Have you heard of online banks? These are banking institutions that do not utilize actual “brick and mortar” branches; instead, they offer banking services that are predominantly done online.

So why consider using one of these types of banks? Online banks are often able to offer superior rates and incentives since they don’t have physical locations -- thereby passing these savings along to their customers.

Many people decide to utilize online banks in conjunction with their current traditional bank to secure higher rates for supplemental accounts, such as term-based certificates of deposits (CDs), savings accounts or IRAs.

The Member Benefits Corporation endorses the GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program, which is an online banking service that allows NYSUT members and their families to take advantage of some of today’s most competitive interest rates.



GE Capital Retail Bank

*4 reasons to use the
GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program:*

1. Earn preferred interest rates on Money Market Accounts, High-Yield Savings Accounts, CDs, and IRAs.
2. Access your money and account information 24/7 by phone or online.
3. Grow your funds, finance a vacation, save for retirement, and much more!
4. All GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program customers receive free identity theft resolution services.

Learn how the GE Capital Retail Bank Deposit Program can help you save by calling toll-free 866-226-5638 or visiting gecrbatwork.com (enter “NYSUT” in the company or association name box).

Financial expertise customized for your situation



Looking to learn how to properly invest your assets to build a college savings or retirement fund; what to look for when purchasing or financing a home; or maybe tips for getting your credit under control?

The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program – provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. – offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation.

The program offers:

- Up to six hours of objective toll-free telephone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.
- In-person consultations at least once per calendar year at your NYSUT Regional Office or Stacey Braun's New York City office
- Access to Stacey Braun’s password-protected website and a 24-hour email helpdesk for basic financial questions.
- NYSUT members can purchase the Financial Counseling Program for an annual fee of \$260; a 403(b) Limited Plan is available for an annual fee of \$185.

For more information, call **800-626-8101** or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.