

The Member Ship



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

Secretary of Education Nominee is Cause for Concern

President-Elect Donald Trump has recently tagged Betsy DeVos as the next Secretary of Education. Betsy DeVos is a strong backer of charter schools and vouchers to private institutions. It is clear that the policy of this administration will focus on privatization and the defunding of public schools. DeVos is extremely conservative and the former chair of the Michigan Republican Party. Michigan has been one of the states that has most aggressively moved towards school choice with very poor results. Unlike in New York State, Michigan allows “for profit” charter schools. It is easy to assume that the bottom line is at least as important as the line at graduation.



DeVos is considered an enemy to public education. She is the daughter-in-law of Amway founder, Richard DeVos and uses her connection to other billionaires to help drive the charter school and voucher agenda. This is the epitome of letting the kid run the candy shop. Her interests are contrarian to the foundation of public education that has served this country well, since its inception. DeVos has never attended public school. She has never worked in a public school, ran one and none of her children went to public schools. She has used her wealth to lobby against campaign finance reform and attacking labor laws. DeVos is not only unqualified, she is looking to turn public education over to the private sector.

How has Betsy DeVos impacted the education system in Michigan? Eighty percent of charter schools in Michigan are for profit, privately run and privately managed. Very often, these schools are worse than the public schools that the students are leaving. The charter schools have fewer students with disabilities and fewer English as a New Language learners. Additionally, students can be removed from the charter school system for disciplinary reasons and return to the public school system. Also proposed in Michigan is a school voucher program. Families would be given a voucher for \$4,000 - \$8,000 and told they can attend any school they choose, charter or public, religious or community. This violates the law of separation of church and state. Charter schools were originally intended to function as a small scale laboratory for cutting edge educational practices. Unfortunately, this movement has been taken over by opportunists looking to create massive charter for-profit networks.

Senate hearings will be held as part of the approval process beginning January 11th. Expect the NEA, AFT and friends of public education in the Senate to expose Betsy DeVos as the antithesis of an advocate for public education.

It is difficult to predict what to expect in the upcoming years. President-Elect Trump will attempt to push a pro school choice initiative and attempt to decrease the influence over the federal government’s role in education. The new ESSA Law (Every Student Succeeds Act) has been revised to assure that the billions of dollars that flow through the states and then local school districts is distributed to assist the most impoverished areas. Time will tell if that actually occurs. Also, if DeVos is approved, AFT and NEA will oppose as much of the Trump agenda as possible.

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The most difficult fights will be in Republican-controlled states and unfortunately for us, New York. The practices of our Democratic Governor have been well documented. Education will still be in the headlines as the battle to save and value public education continues.

Here is how you can help. Keep the focus on the children in front of you and enjoy all the satisfaction that comes with serving your community by enriching the lives of the next generation. If you want to do more, please refer to the list below which contains members of the US Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee. This publication may not come out prior to January 11th, however, the approval process may not be completed. Please consider contacting some or all of the members. A sample script is included below the list.

Local Representatives:

John Katko: Local Office 315-423-5657 DC Office 202-225-3701

Charles Schumer: Local Office 315-423-5471 DC Office 202-224-6542

Kirsten Gillibrand: Local Office 315-448-0470 DC Office 202-688-6262

My name is xxxx and I am calling to let the Senator know that I would like him/her to oppose the appointment of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education.

DeVos and her family heavily lobbied the Michigan legislature to shield the charter industry from greater oversight. She pushes for-profit charter schools and online schools, which consistently fail the students that they are supposed to serve.

I want my tax dollars to stay in my community to support my public schools. Betsy DeVos is bad for American education. She is unqualified to serve as Secretary of Education.



US Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (HELP) Committee.

You can call these representatives as well with the same script from Page 2.

Member	Washington Phone	Fax	Additional Phone Numbers
Chairman Senator Lamar Alexander (Republican – TN)	P: (202) 224-4944	F: (202) 228-3398	(423) 752-5337 (731) 664-0289 (901) 544-4224
Ranking Member Senator Patty Murray (Democratic – WA)	P: (202) 224-2621	F: (202) 224-0238	(425) 259-6515 (360) 696-7797
Senator Michael B. Enzi (Republican – WY)	P: (202) 224-3424	F: (202) 228-0359	(307) 261-6572 (307) 772-2477
Senator Richard Burr (Republican – NC)	P: (202) 224-3154	F: (202) 228-2981	(828) 350-2437 (336) 631-5125
Senator Bernie Sanders (Democratic – VT)	P: (202) 224-5141	F: (202) 228-0776	(802) 862-0697 (802) 748-9269
Johnny Isakson (Republican – GA)	P: (202) 224-3643	F: (202) 228-0724	(770) 661-0999
Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr (Democratic – PA)	P: (202) 224-6324	F: (202) 228-0604	(215) 405-9660 (570) 941-0930
Senator Rand Paul (Republican – KY)	P: (202) 224-4343		(270) 782-8303 (859) 426-0165
Senator Al Franken (Democratic – MN)	P: (202) 224-5641		(218) 722-2390 (218) 284-8721
Senator Susan Collins (Republican – ME)	P: (202) 224-2523	F: (202) 224-2693 (253) 383-5841	(207) 622-8414 (207) 945-0417
Senator Michael F. Bennett (Democratic – CO)	P: (202) 224-5852	F: (202) 228-5097	(303) 455-7600 (719) 542-7550
Senator Lisa Murkowski (Republican – AK)	P: (202) 224-6665	F: (202) 224-5301	(907) 456-0233 (907) 271-3735
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (Democratic – RI)	P: (202) 224-2921	F: (202) 228-6362	(401) 453-5294
Senator Tammy Baldwin (Democratic – WI)	P: (202) 224-5653		(715) 832-8424 (920) 498-2668
Senator Tim Scott (Republican – SC)	P: (202) 224-6121 Toll Free: (855) 425-6324	F: (202) 228-5143	(803) 771-6112
Senator Christopher S. Murphy (Democratic – CT)	P: (202) 224-4041	F: (202) 224-9750	(864) 233-5366
Senator Orrin Hatch (Republican – UT)	P: (202) 224-5251	F: (202) 224-6331	(435) 586-8435
Senator Elizabeth Warren (Democratic – MA)	P: (202) 224-4543		(617) 565-3170 (413) 788-2690
Senator Pat Roberts (Republican – KS)	P: (202) 224-4774	F: (202) 224-3514	(620) 227-2244 (785) 295-2745
Senator Bill Cassidy, M.D. (Republican – LA)	P: (202) 224-5824	F: (202) 224-9735	(318) 448-7176 (225) 929-7711

You asked for it... and you got it!

Third Annual Member Appreciation Month set for February 2017



Don't miss out... join MAP!

NYSUT Member Benefits and our endorsed program providers will once again be teaming up for the Third Annual Member Appreciation Month set for February 2017 in recognition of all you do to make *NYSUT union strong*.

To be eligible for these drawings, you simply need to be a member of the voluntary MAP Alert email service or sign up before January 31, 2017.

MAP Alerts are a convenient way to learn about new endorsed programs; updates to current programs; and special offers unique to MAP Alert participants -- without being inundated with emails.

Prize drawings will be held each day, with the winners announced exclusively on the Member Benefits website throughout the month of February.



Win prizes such as Best Buy, Amazon or American Express gift cards; car rental certificates; wireless speakers; an i-Pad Mini; and many more.

Last's year Grand Prize winner received a free vacation to Orlando, FL!

We encourage you to spread the word to your colleagues about this special event. **So if you see a phone call or email from us, make sure you answer it!!!**

For more details about this exciting event, visit the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101**.

Contact Your WGTA Executive Officers

<http://www.wgta.net>

John Mannion, President

Email: mannionforwgta@gmail.com

School: 315-487-4601

Cell: 315-333-2094

Mary Weaver, Vice President

Email: mweave66@gmail.com

School: 315-487-4615

Mike Perkins, Vice President for Grievances

Email: beakerperkins@gmail.com

Mary Gotham, Treasurer

Email: megoatham@gmail.com

School: 315-487-4574

Jeanine Stables, Secretary

Email: jstablesster@gmail.com

School: 315-487-4653



Important Updates, By WGTA Vice President Mary Weaver

Happy New Year to all of the WGTA. Our Superintendent's Liaison Committee (SLC) presented the following issues to the Superintendent: the need for more support for students with emotional concerns by way of a Social worker at WGMS, school psychologist at CMS and more counselor support at the elementary level. We have also discussed the need for the district to support students whose families are not financially sound. The financial struggle that these families are going through has an effect on a child's ability to function well in school.

We continue to discuss the substitute situation and hash out the problems and successes seen with the new service provided by BOCES. The more elaborate versions of these minutes are given and distributed by your representatives on the SLC. If you have any more issues that cannot be addressed at the Principal liaison, please add send them to us when the next all-call for agenda items goes out to staff.

Directing Council Teaching Center Update

Eight Collegial Circles have been approved and three Action Research Project have been approved. There was an approval of \$400 for Professional Development for a speaker on Mental Health. There was a district request for Student Teachers from Syracuse University. We are in need for a representative on the council from the high school. If interested in becoming a representative, please contact me.



Mary Gotham, Treasurer

WGTA initiated fundraising for two medical research endeavors, The Carol Baldwin Breast Cancer Research and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Your contributions will go towards finding cures and ensuring access to treatments for breast cancer, leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, as well as to improve the quality of life of patients and their families. Between the two fundraisers, WGTA contributed \$637.00. Your generous response will support cancer patients and continued research for a cure. We want to thank everyone that participated.

There has been discussion of changing the direction of WGTA's philanthropic approach. We recognize that there is a greater local need for support within our own community. As such, we have coordinated with West Genesee School District to gather and disperse items that will positively impact students, staff and families in the West Genesee community. The WGTA, along with other WG staff and students, collected non-perishable food, clothing, hygiene and other items. These items were then sorted by HS Student Council students and assembled into care kits. Over 75 care kits were made and distributed back to the schools. Additionally, each nurse's office at the elementary schools received a stockpile of assorted hygiene items that they will dispense throughout the year as needed.

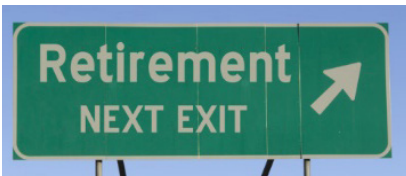
The success of our local outreach this year, has reinforced our shift from raising monies for The Carol Baldwin Breast Cancer Research and The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, towards a more local focus that will meet the needs of our own community. Next year, in lieu of fundraising for cancer research, WGTA will coordinate with West Genesee School District to conduct another "annual" fundraiser drive for our neediest community members. In addition, we may provide monetary donations on a case by case, pressing need basis.

*Fundraisers. 2017, Manteca Unified School District, Manteca, CA,
<http://mantecausd.net/Home/ShowImage?id=2133&t=635583344703430000>, Accessed 5 Jan 2017.*



Dates to Remember

SABBATICAL APPLICATIONS CAN BE SUBMITTED BETWEEN **FEBRUARY 15 AND MARCH 15.**



TO RECEIVE ONE OF THE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES IN THE CONTRACT, AN EMPLOYEE MUST INFORM THE DISTRICT OF THEIR INTENT TO RETIRE BY **MARCH 23.**



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEANUP AND LUNCH

Tentative Date **SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 10AM – 12PM**



“DINNER OF 100” at Coleman’s.

THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 6PM - 9PM

FREE TO THE FIRST 100 WGTA MEMBERS AND THEIR SPOUSES OR SIGNIFICANT OTHERS! FREE DRINKS, FREE FOOD, FABULOUS DOOR PRIZES!



TEN QUESTIONS FOR NEWS DETECTION

Use the questions below to assess the likelihood that a piece of information is fake news. The more red flags you circle, the more skeptical you should be!

START

1. Gauge your emotional reaction: Is it **strong**? Are you **angry**? Are you intensely **hoping** that the information turns out to be true? YES | NO
2. Reflect on how you encountered this. Was it promoted on a website? Did it show up in a social media feed? Was it sent to you by someone you know?
3. Consider the headline or main message:
 - a. Does it use **excessive punctuation(!)** or ALL CAPS for emphasis? YES | NO
 - b. Does it make a claim about containing a secret or telling you something that **"the media" doesn't want you to know**? YES | NO
 - c. Don't stop at the headline! Keep exploring.
4. Is this information designed for **easy sharing**, like a **meme**? YES | NO
5. Consider the source of the information:
 - a. Is it a well-known source? YES | NO
 - b. Is there a byline (an author's name) attached to this piece? YES | NO
 - c. Go to the website's "About" section: Does the site describe itself as a "fantasy news" or **"satirical news"** site? YES | NO
 - d. Does the person or organization that produced the information have any editorial standards? YES | NO
 - e. Does the "contact us" section include an email address that matches the domain (not a Gmail or Yahoo email address)? YES | NO
 - f. Does a quick search for the name of the website raise any suspicions? YES | NO
6. Does the example you're evaluating have a current date on it? YES | NO
7. Does the example cite a variety of sources, including official and expert sources? Does the information this example provides appear in reports from (other) news outlets? YES | NO
8. Does the example hyperlink to other quality sources? In other words, they haven't been altered or taken from another context? YES | NO
9. Can you confirm, using a reverse image search, that any images in your example are authentic (in other words, sources that haven't been altered or taken from another context)? YES | NO
10. If you searched for this example on a fact-checking site such as Snopes.com, FactCheck.org or PolitiFact.com, is there a fact-check that labels it as less than true? YES | NO

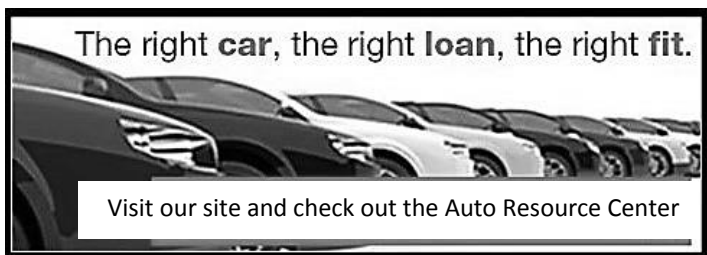


REMEMBER:

- It is easy to clone an existing website and create fake tweets to fool people.
- Bots are extremely active on social media and are designed to dominate conversations and spread propaganda.
- Fake news and other misinformation often use a real image from an unrelated event.
- Debunk examples of misinformation whenever you see them. It's good for democracy!



Introducing our new Auto Resource Center!



- Free CARFAX reports • Find & Price Local Inventory
- Right Fit Auto Build • Used Car Values • Refinance Calculator
- Multi-vehicle Comparison Tool • "My Cars" Save Feature

The Wildcat Branch is now open!



Membership is open to all students and staff of the West Genesee Central School District. However, the Wildcat Branch is limited to current school district employees and students attending the high school.

2565 Hambletonian Way, Camillus, New York 13031 • Phone: (315) 672-7827 • Fax: (315) 672-9282

Email: westar@cnyemail.com • Web: westarfcu.com

WGTA APPAREL NOW AVAILABLE!

You asked, we listened. Follow the link below to visit our online store to view various WGTA apparel items. The WGTA receives no funds from the purchase of these items, however, we will donate \$1 for every item purchased to WGTA Philanthropy to help our neediest students. The pullovers are perfect for "Professional Casual Fridays."



<http://qnet.e-quantum2k.com/~justright/Custom/2676R/RETAIL/cgi-bin/qnet-main.cgi>

Below are a sample of a few items that are offered.



DG440W

LADIES STRETCH TECH-SHELL COMPASS 1/4 ZIP PULLOVERS

\$44.80 / EA



SPORT WICK TEXTURED 1/4 ZIP PULLOVERS ST860 **\$34.80 / EA**

The Back Page

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 send your advertisement to Kelly Chambala (SR) at kchambala@gmail.com.

The only other advertisements that are run in *The Member Ship* are those provided by NYSUT, AFT, or the AFL-CIO.

House Painting

Over 30 years experience...
we've been at it awhile!

Bob Deegan (315) 399-9537,
and Jim St. Croix (315) 256-2222, or
contact us at WGHS.

FREE ESTIMATES!

WGTA Email Directory



Join the FREE WGTA Email Directory. There are currently around 200 WGTA members, retirees, WG Staff and WG parents in the Directory. We share our Email addresses and send each other educational articles, WGTA and union information and personal notes.

If you would like to be a part of this FREE Directory, please send your name, Email address and WG status (school name / retired / WG staff, etc.) to Lynn Davis at: DavisRetired@gmail.com.

Email address are only shared with other members of the Directory.

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