



THE MEMBER SHIP

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

Our Case for Funding

We live in a world of high property taxes. Any debate on revenue and funding must acknowledge that. We must be fiscally conservative, we must be prudent with our spending and tough decisions need to be made accordingly. There are many needs across this state and this region. In this era, budget decisions are about prioritizing. Here are the arguments to assure that public schools need to remain a priority.

Following the tragic shooting in Parkland, many school districts are in the process of making their buildings more secure. This security involves a variety of costly items including new entryways, security systems, screening devices, additional school resource officers and others. Difficult decisions have been made to keep our children in a nurturing, secure environment. *Many districts need more social workers, school psychologists and counselors to help address the every growing number of students that need support including mental health services.*



Our children will shortly be entering a workforce where job titles for emerging career positions have not yet been created. Great things are happening in school districts around the region in the areas of technology, industrial arts and engineering. We need to continue to make meaningful additions to these programs to meet the needs of our local employers in these continuously growing fields. Corporations like Lockheed Martin, Saab and others have acknowledged that finding skilled, qualified employees has been a challenge. Our public schools and institutes of higher learning are a contributing factor in helping those private institutions thrive, grow and

remain in our area. Many schools need updated equipment and instructors need professional development to prepare students for a career in these fields.

Finally, schools around the state are in a crisis. Changes to education in regards to funding, punitive teacher certification costs and procedures and the mandated, flawed implementation of state tests, new curriculum and teacher evaluations have driven potential teachers away from the field. As a result, school districts, especially rural and urban districts find it increasingly challenging to fill positions in certain tenure areas. One third of all teachers could be leaving the field in the next five years as they approach the end of their career. We do not have enough students in teacher preparation programs to fill that gap. In the short term, the crisis is that we do not have enough substitutes when teachers are out due to illness or attendance at workshops and conferences that enhance their teaching. Many districts have resorted to hiring uncertified teachers but it is still not enough. Ask students that you may know and they will tell you that there are sometimes no substitutes, classes have to be combined and teachers with available time during a planning period or duty are scrambling to assist in covering classes. This leaves locations unattended, students less safe and instruction is impacted.

Let's make sure our children have a first rate, enriched education that prepares them for a career and being an active, engaged citizen. The money is there and education needs to be a high priority. Let's make our investment now or we will surely pay for it in social services, incarceration, rehabilitation and unemployment costs.

Statement from NYSUT BP Jolene DiBrango on Testing Advocacy

In conjunction with the administration of this year's Grade 3-8 state tests, we will be launching a testing advocacy campaign entitled Correct the Tests. It is designed to move the Board of Regents to take action to fix the problems with the testing system. The items we believe must be addressed to return trust to the system include:

1. The state ELA and math tests are flawed and invalid.
2. The tests are too long.
3. The tests are developmentally inappropriate and the untimed tests are cruel and traumatic.
4. Computer based testing* is problematic and has been rolled out too quickly.
5. The scoring benchmarks** are invalid and mislabel kids.



The campaign will include a communications component, NYSUT MAC Blasts to the Board of Regents and a regional event in each of NYSUT's regions designed to have our members show up and voice their concerns about the tests. The events will be held between the ELA test and the Math tests.

We are looking for locals to host an event. A member of the NYSUT Board of Directors from your region, as well as your Regional Staff Director, will assist you with the logistics of hosting an event. Let me know if you are interested in assisting us with correcting the State tests by being a host local.

In solidarity,
Jolene

*NYSUT opposes the use of computer-based testing in grades 3-5.

**NYSUT will not provide teachers to write test questions until the benchmarks are reset.

Dinner of 
June 26, 2019

from
6pm – 9pm

If you reserved a seat and cannot attend, please email mannonforwgta@gmail.com



New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

As students in grades 3 through 8 take New York's state assessments this week, we appreciate the efforts of school leaders to ensure parents have all information to make a decision about the assessments that is right for their family. We would like to remind school leaders of the importance of honoring requests received by parents to opt their children out of the exams. While federal law does require all states to administer state assessments in English language arts and mathematics, parents have a right to opt their children out of these exams. To be certain, the vast majority of schools honor parents' requests to have their children not take the tests; however, we have also heard of isolated but troubling reports of parents' requests being ignored.

We thank New York's parents, teachers, and school administrators for their support and understanding as we continue to work together in the best interest of all students.

ANECDOTES FROM STATE TESTING –

On day 1 and 2 of ELA testing, teachers and administrators did all they could to try to provide a calm, structured testing setting for their students; however, NYSED and Questar did not have this right. Computer Based Tests are simply not ready to be implemented. At the district level, we can only control what we can control. We do have control over how the tests are conducted. The results of these exams are shared by grade level and school at Strategic Planning, at Board of Education meetings, and with anyone that has access to the internet. The people viewing those results years from now will most likely not be aware of the situations described below.

It took us until 10:00 to log on. We started at 9:20. Several students had to exit the sign in, re-enter their username and password and then click sign in again. The students then went to submit and it said it failed. They did this several times until someone said to just close the chrome books and they would check the fix the submissions later. We had to tape their access cards to the chrome books. When I logged into the monitoring website, all but two students had the answers submitted even though the "failure" message appeared. Administration came in later in the day to submit the remaining two.

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It took my students 45 min just to log in. I didn't get started until after 10 am. Normally in the past, I have my kids independently working by 9:35ish. That caused more and more kids to have to use the bathroom throughout the test due to the delay. Because of technological issues, they were unable to pause their test when they needed to do so, and I had to stand by and secure their Chromebook. When they got back they had difficulty logging back in from anywhere from 5-15 minutes! None of my students were able to submit their tests when they were done, which was extremely frustrating because we spent at least 20 min attempting to retry over and over again.

We started at 9:35

At first none of my students could get on. At about 10:15 7 of my students were able to access the test and begin after several attempts. The other 6 students we're not able to get on until 11am, these students sat for an 1 1/2 before beginning.

All of my students had difficulty submitting, the error code came up for everyone.

It was a terrible day.

9:30am - Started test directions per directions from our principal..

9:45am - Students log onto Questar. 8 students could not get onto site. Entire class sat and waited until I could troubleshoot... I am NOT a technology teacher!

10:10am - 11/18 students started assessment. (3 students taking test in alternative placement)

10:20am - 7 students still cannot start assessment because of "loading" delays.

10:25am - 6/7 remaining students start test.

Speaking as a parent of a child in the district who was unable to submit her results after working for an hour and a half on the test as well as her delay with the initial log in...(along with her peers)...it's frustrating. In prepping for both the ELA and math, she shared with me the many frustrations with the Chromebook and its glitches prior to exam day. These issues were shared with and by teachers as well. My daughter clearly spoke to the numerous times she worked diligently and accurately only to lose her information. Testing creates anxiety; however, paper testing when administering these high stakes exams makes good sense at this point. We learned these issues last year and the fact that we are repeating the cycle of frustration for our youngsters is unacceptable. One might ask...how can these tests be any reflection of the true knowledge our students possess given the ongoing technical glitches? Let's reduce anxiety, and as you mention, control the variables that we can easily control. My request to the state and our district is to allow our students the option of a paper exam

My third graders had to sit and wait from 9:20 to up to 10:00 or so to log on.

Then, they sat longer in their seat to take the test. The average time on the test was around one hour and 20 mins. from the time they started.

That's a long time!

They were extremely stressed when after all that work, they got a sign that there was an ERROR and the test was not submitted!

It was a mess.

DAY 2

Some students were testing for over 6 ½ hours on day 2. Some of these students are labeled Learning Disabled.

Many students worked from 9:15 -12:30, ate lunch and continued from 1:00 - 3:00. These students still did not finish and missed their specials.

WGTA would like to give a round of applause to

January 2019 National Honor Society
for Dance Arts Inductees.



Standing Left to right: Lily Wegerski, Emma Pinker, Juliana Lisi
Up front: Alyssa Cicirello, Monet Raymond

Officers for National Honor Society for Dance Arts



Standing from left to right:
Natasha Skidmore, Julia Neimeier, Jordan Fascia.
Sitting: Karly McGraw, Rose Hays, Ella Gauthier.

National Honor Society for Dance Arts recognizes outstanding artistic merit, leadership, and academic achievement in students studying dance in public and private schools. The goals of this program are to promote life-long learning in the field of dance and to encourage an understanding of and an appreciation for dance as an art form. This is one of the highest honor programs for dance in the United States. This is only the second year that WGHS has had a chapter. There are over 10 students inducted, with 3 seniors being recognized this year for Graduation with Honors. These seniors are Jordan Fascia, Rose Hays, and Natasha Skidmore.

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*APR: Annual Percentage Rate. Rates are determined by credit worthiness. Rates are subject to change without notice.

Membership restrictions apply.

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Contact Your WGTA Executive Officers

<http://www.wgta.net>

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Mike Perkins, Vice President
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Dawn Personte, Vice President
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School: 315-487-4631

Mary Gotham, Treasurer
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School: 315-487-4601

Jeanine Stables, Secretary
Email:
jstablesster@gmail.com
School: 315-487-4653

Our Union Dues Work for You

Every dues dollar helps defend Our Voice, Our Values, Our Union

- 54%** Negotiating contracts that provide Better Pay, Good Benefits and a Secure Retirement
 - 12%** Providing legal support to help members Defend their Rights and Enforce their Contracts
 - 8%** Providing professional development tools, training conferences, and assistance with certifications for Members and Local Leaders
 - 8%** Amplifying Our Voice and advocating for Our Professions in the media and online
 - 6%** Fighting to ensure Our Voice is Heard in the halls of power
 - 6%** Providing Regional Offices with the resources and technical infrastructure to Support Our Locals
 - 4%** Providing direct assistance to SRPs, Small and Rural Locals, Health Care Professionals and Retirees
 - 2%** Partnering with state and national unions to Amplify Our Voice and Defend Our Values
- 100%**

DID YOU KNOW?

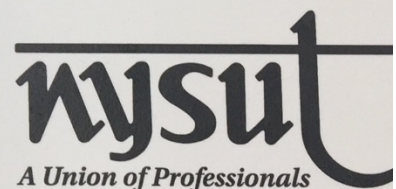
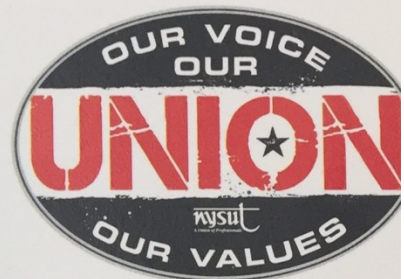
- ★ No NYSUT dues dollars are used to support candidates or campaign committees.
- ★ NYSUT has a voluntary fund called VOTE-COPE. Members can elect to contribute if they want to support candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public education and pro-labor.

Meanwhile wealthy special interests are fighting to take away Our Voice, Our Values and Our Union.

Strong unions mean higher pay, better benefits, a secure retirement and a voice in the workplace.

LEARN HOW YOU CAN FIGHT BACK

visit www.nysut.org/janus



**WGTA HIGHWAY CLEANUP SATURDAY,
APRIL 27TH from 10AM -12PM**

**Meet at 9:45 behind the Olympus Building
25 Main Street in the Village of Camillus**



**The WGTA needs volunteers
to help clean up
our section of RTE. 5
in Camillus!**

Teachers Contract, Term 1923

This is an agreement between Miss _____ teacher, and the Board of Education of the _____ School, whereby Miss _____ agrees to teach in the _____ School for a period of eight months, beginning September 1, 1923. The Board of Education agrees to pay Miss _____ the sum of \$75 per month.
Miss _____ agrees:

1. Not to get married. This contract becomes null and void immediately if the teacher marries.
2. Not to keep company with men.
3. To be at home between the hours of 8 pm and 6 am unless in attendance at school functions.
4. Not to loiter in downtown ice-cream stores.
5. Not to leave town at any time without the permission of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.
6. Not to smoke cigarettes. This contract becomes null and void immediately if the teacher is found smoking.
7. Not to drink beer, wine or whiskey. This contract becomes null and void immediately if the teacher is found drinking beer, wine or whiskey.
8. Not to ride in a carriage or automobile with any man except her brother or father.
9. Not to dress in bright colors.
10. Not to dye her hair.
11. To wear at least two petticoats.
12. Not to wear dresses more than two inches above the ankle.
13. To keep the schoolroom clean:
 - A. To sweep the classroom floor at least once daily.
 - B. To scrub the classroom floor with hot water and soap at least once weekly.
 - C. To clean the blackboard at least once daily.
 - D. To start the fire at 7:00 am so the room will be warm at 8:00 am when the children arrive.





What all Prospective School Board Members Should Know

2019 Dates to Remember

- April 22** Petition must be filed for central, union free and common school districts
May 1 Petition must be filed for all small city school districts
May 21 Budget Vote & Election Day

Commitment to Public Education

A school board member takes on one of the most important citizen responsibilities: overseeing the education of the community's youth. In these challenging times for public education, school boards are seeking men and women who find excitement and satisfaction in confronting tough challenges and working collegially to rise above them and help students in their communities succeed.

The board of education is a uniquely American institution. It oversees and manages the community's public school system. It ensures the public schools are flexible and responsive to the needs of the community. School boards are comprised of volunteers within the community who dedicate their time to better public education. Except for those in Yonkers and New York City, board members are elected.

The size of a school board depends on the type of school district but generally ranges between three and nine members. With limited exceptions, school board members serve three- four- or five-year terms. Terms are staggered so all board positions are never open at the same time. Voters have the power to change the size of the board as set forth within the law.

Responsibilities of a Board Member

With schoolchildren always their ultimate focus, school board members act officially at the board table, working with other board members to serve students and accomplish the following:

- Create a shared vision for the future of education
- Set the direction of the school district to achieve the highest student performance
- Provide rigorous accountability for student achievement results
- Develop a budget and present it to the community, aligning district resources to improve achievement
- Support a healthy school district culture for work and learning
- Create strategic partnerships with the community stakeholders
- Build the district's progress through continuous improvement
- Adopt and maintain current policies
- Hire and evaluate the superintendent
- Ratify collective bargaining agreements
- Maintain strong ethical standards

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Characteristics of a Board Member

Below are attributes that all effective board members should possess.

- **Effective Communicator:** Can describe what he or she wants and describe what others want; a good listener
- **Consensus Builder:** Capable of working toward decisions that all can support and willing to compromise to achieve goals
- **Community Participant:** Enjoys meeting a variety of people, can identify the community's key communicators and reaches out to the community
- **Decision Maker:** Is comfortable making decisions and can support group decision-making
- **Information Processor:** Can organize priorities and schedules to handle large amounts of verbal and written information
- **Leader:** Willing to take risks, be supportive of board colleagues, district staff and community
- **Team Player:** Helps promote the board's vision and goals

Running for Your Local School Board

Once you have made the commitment to run for your local school board, there are requirements, deadlines, and processes that must be adhered to.

Eligibility Requirements

Generally, school board candidates must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old, qualified voters in the school district and able to read and write. They must be residents of their districts continuously for one year (as little as 30 days or as long as three years in some city school districts) before the election. At the time when the board member takes office, they cannot be employed by the board on which they serve or live in the same household with a family member who is also a member of the same school board.

Nominating Petitions

The requirements for filing nominating petitions for a school board vary depending upon the type of school district. Generally, candidates must submit a nominating petition to the school district clerk. The petition must be signed by at least 25 qualified district voters or two percent of the number of those who voted in the previous annual election, whichever number is greater. In small city school districts, nominating petitions must be signed by at least 100 qualified voters.

The petition must include the following:

- Candidate's name and residence
- Vacancy in question
- Incumbent's name (if any)
- Residences of the persons who signed the petition
- Length of the term of office for which the candidate is being nominated

Blank petitions are often available from the district clerk. If a school district runs for seats "at large" such that each nominee is eligible for each vacancy, the nominating petition does not need to identify the specific incumbent's seat the nominee is seeking. This petition must be filed with the district clerk at least 30 days (20 days in small city districts) before the election meeting, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Campaigning

Once the petition is filed, the next step is to gather support. State law requires all candidates for election to a board of education to file a sworn statement with the district clerk disclosing their campaign expenses. Statements must be filed at three different times during the election period. If expenditures made by the candidate or by others on the candidate's behalf exceed \$500, a statement also should be filed with the commissioner of education. Expenditures of not more than \$25 may be made without the candidate's permission if the donor or donors file a sworn statement with the clerk and the commissioner stating that the candidate did not approve the expenditure. Details concerning these requirements may be obtained from your district clerk or from the Performance Improvement and Management Services (PIMS) and Chief Financial Office (CFO), New York State Education Department, Albany, NY 12234.

Election

By state law, school board and budget elections, in all districts except the Big 5 (Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers), must be held on the third Tuesday in May. In 2019, the budget vote and election occurs on May 21th.

New York State School Boards Association

If you are elected, you don't need to face this new challenge alone. The New York State School Boards Association is here to help you! The New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) was founded in 1896 in Utica, New York. With over 100 years of commitment, NYSSBA serves as the statewide voice of more than 650 boards of education.

The Association provides current information and advice on matters affecting school boards and works with other educational and related organizations in promoting excellence in public education. Consistent with our dedication to children, learning and the community, the Association provides advocacy, information, leadership development and custom services to public school boards.

Training

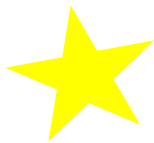
Once elected, you will be required by New York State law to fulfill mandatory training within your first year of service. This includes fiscal oversight training and governance skills training. NYSSBA provides convenient online courses and regional academies to fulfill these requirements and to further your knowledge of public education and your responsibilities as a board member.

NYSSBA is ready to assist you in your effort to serve your community. Good luck in your pursuit of school board service and thank you for your dedication to providing quality education for New York State public school children.

For more information on school board service, visit the [School Board Member Experience](#) site, or contact NYSSBA at (518) 783-0200 or via email at info@nyssba.org.



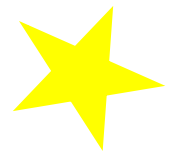
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show your West Genesee Employee ID.*

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 Shana Michel (WGHS) at shanamcaffrey@gmail.com. The only other advertisements that are run in “The Member Ship” are those provided by NYSUT, AFT, or the AFL-CIO.

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Affiliated with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, NEA, AFL-CIO.



Legal Service Plan

NYSUT members have access to dozens of endorsed programs available through NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality legal and financial planning assistance services that can help to protect their loved ones and provide them with peace of mind.



For an annual fee, the **Legal Service Plan** -- provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. -- offers legal expertise on a variety of personal legal matters such as dealing with a speeding ticket or handling estate planning. With the base plan, you'll get access to unlimited, toll-free advice from plan attorneys.



Financial Counseling Program

Meanwhile, the **Financial Counseling Program** -- provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. -- offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation. The full-service program provides you up with to six hours of toll-free phone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.

And unlike with purchasing products available to the general public, there's no need to go it alone when Member Benefits has your back. Member Benefits acts as your advocate for any program you participate in, and we'll do our best to quickly resolve any issues or concerns you may have.

Whether you are participating in one of our legal or financial services; insurance plans; or shopping, travel or entertainment offerings, NYSUT members have the **"Power of the Union"** behind them.

A wealth of financial information -- Now available on the NEW Member Benefits website

Financial Planning Center

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.