President’s Message

Thanksgiving is the time of year to give thanks and the WTA certainly has had a lot of people step up and support the WTA in a variety of ways. I would like to highlight just a few of many ways people have assisted this year.

Thanks to the WTA Constitution Committee who met to make revisions to our constitution. The next step in the process will be for the WTA’s Exec and Rep Councils to review and then send out for a vote by the full WTA membership on January 19th, 2012. If you would like to give feedback on the latest proposed revisions of Constitution you can review the document on the WTA webpage (events section). Please give feedback to your building’s Rep Council member before their final vote on December 12, 2011.

Thanks to the WTA Audit Committee for meeting and reviewing the finances of the WTA. Once again the WTA financial controls were found to be in good working order. A copy of the Audit Committee report along with financial statements can be found in the secure section of the WTA website.

Thanks to all of the people who have supported our Weisenreder Fund this year by raising money to support people in need in our community. The Weisenreder Committee will soon be hard at work in December identifying families in need and supporting them through the fund.

Thanks to the people who responded to fill the vacancies on our TRC Policy Board, which has now returned after receiving much needed funding by the state. Our new Policy Board members are Ann Marie Evans, Stacy Cougle, Heather Melnick, Jamie Gallo, and Stu Shoots, who will be joining the WTA’s other representatives Susan Mack, Kathy Uerz, Tom Siembor, and me.

Thanks to the WTA American Education Committee for supporting us during American Education Week.

A big thanks for the WTA Representative and Executive Councils, along with the WTA Negotiation team for all of their hard work this year.

And of course a special thanks to Kim Shultz the editor of this paper, who is being nominated for a newsletter award at the upcoming NYSUT RA.

Thanks to all who have stepped up this year.

Jason Carter

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Wayne’s World

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Thank you for helping out, getting a “little” muddy and joined in the fun on Tuesday, November 2nd! We had about 30 staff participate and raised $174, with more donations coming in, for the Weisenreder fund. Very exciting for our first attempt at this fundraising event. For those of you that missed it we will be doing it again in the Spring!!

The winners of the pedometers were: HS- Anna McGrath; MS- Kathy Walker; FW- Bernie Schuster; OE- Barb Brock; OP- Kim LaFave

WTA Officers
Jason Carter (FE), President
Barb Thiele (OE), Internal VP
Kim Schultz (OP), External VP
Lisa Twitchell (HS), Treasurer
Faye Eaton (MS), Secretary
The Wayne Teachers’ Association Recognizes the School Board in Olympic Style!

On Thursday November 17th Kim Schultz and Barb Thiele attended the school board meeting on behalf of the WTA to present the board with a gift for National School Board Recognition Week. The board was presented with an Executive Group Intro to Fencing Class which will be taught by Olympic Fencers Iris and Felicia Zimmermann. The board members will be able to attend the Executive Group Class, which will include learning all the basics of fencing and engaging in fencing bouts. If the board cannot attend as a group, they can choose a second option. This option will allow them to take their families for a 2 hour Introduction to Fencing Class, which will also include learning all the basics of fencing and engaging in fencing bouts. Engarde!

Education costs money, but then so does ignorance. by Claus Moser

Enjoy your family, and everything you are thankful for… You deserve it!

The 3 R’s: Remarks, Reminders, and Relief!

Please check you paystubs!
If you are full time then you should be having $35.94 deducted for dues each pay period beginning in October.

Teachers in grades 4-8 who teach certain subjects will receive student growth scores in June of 2012. However, those scores can not be used in their annual evaluations unless a specific event / process takes place first.

What are the subject areas? What is the process / event?

The first unit member to contact Jeff Trout with the correct answer will receive a $15 Lowes Gift Card.
585-454-5550 (Office) jtrout@nysutmail.org

Conratulations and Recognitions

Tim Coon LTS, OP is recently engaged to his girl friend Jen, who is an 8th grade English Teacher in the city!

Thank you to Amy Gebhardt, who at the November 17th board meeting acknowledged American Educator’s Week, and sang the praises of all the wonderful teachers here at Wayne Central. Thanks again Amy, your word were inspiring and greatly appreciated!
Adopt-a-School: Locals Helping Locals

NYSUT’s “Adopt-a-School” program helps union locals to help each other in times of crisis with in-kind donations. Our growing listing of districts in need in the wake of recent flooding appears below.

Update 10/31: Great needs provoke great response. (Is your local union part of the “great response”?)

Help is just a click away

Looking to give? Members who may have a surplus of materials, computers, tools and other classroom resources should give that specific list to their local union president or building representative. Local presidents or their designees should then email the list of what they can offer to pwebster@nysutmail.org. Include a contact name for the person who can receive calls about the items. Please remember that you must follow your district’s procedures for disposing of surplus equipment.

Need donations? If a school, program or support area in your district has been wiped out by flood, fire, or other natural disaster or crisis, consider sharing your list of needs. Individual members in need of resources or materials for your office, lab, classroom or workspace, contact your local president or building representative. Give them a specific list of what you need. Local presidents or their designees should then email the list of needs to pwebster@nysutmail.org. Include a contact name to receive responses.

NYSUT action on special education mandate relief yields some results

Thanks to an all-out mobilization by NYSUT, bringing together members, parents and other advocates to voice opposition, the Regents backed off on an ill-advised special education mandate relief proposal: Rather than eliminating the school psychologist role on the Committee on Special Education (CSE) as proposed, the Regents agreed to maintain the psychologist on the CSE for meetings to determine a student’s eligibility for special education services.

Regrettably, the Board of Regents this week endorsed some other problematic special education mandate relief proposals that would limit special education services. NYSUT will now raise our concerns with the state Assembly and Senate where almost all of these proposals will need legislative action in order to be implemented.

Among the proposals endorsed by the Regents:
• Eliminating the student’s parent and the school physician roles on the CSE;
• Limiting the required participation of the school psychologist to the initial meeting to determine a student’s eligibility;
• Eliminating subcommittees on special education;
• Repealing the required components for an initial evaluation; and
• No longer allowing a school psychologist to determine whether there is a need for an individual psychological evaluation.

Retirement Update

The NYS Teachers’ Retirement System (NYSTRS) held their annual conference November 6th & 7th. This conference gave NYSTRS delegates the opportunity to learn about the retirement system, and what it’s members should be doing throughout their teaching career to prepare for retirement. Of utmost importance if understanding the retirement guidelines for your Tier and that members should review their Benefit Profiles for accuracy. The Benefit Profiles began being mailed out Monday, November 7th, so be on the lookout for that. Please review your service credit history for accuracy. If you find an error, a correction can be made by contacting a NYSTRS representative. You can also review your service history by signing up for a MyNYSTRS account at https://secure.nystrs.org/sma/security/logon.aspx. This account also gives you access to estimate your pension, schedule a consultation, apply for a loan and sign up for select e-subscriptions to NYSTR publications. In order to create an account you will need your EmplID. The EmplID is a number that the retirement system assigned you when you joined the system. It can be found on your Benefit Profile paperwork. If you cannot locate your EmplID, contact the TRS at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6250. However, be aware that for security purposes, the TRS staff will not be able to provide your EmplID over the phone or through e-mail, but it can be mailed to the home address you have on file.

News From NYSUT

NYSUT rolls out the TED system during American Education Week

The union this week announced the release of "TED," the new Teacher Evaluation and Development system that aims to advance student learning and professional development by establishing teachers as participants in — not merely recipients of — their own evaluations. The TED handbook and workbook are available for school districts statewide, posted at www.nysut.org/ ted.

As leaders, you’ve already heard about this. The public launch is intended to spread the word that this innovative tool is available to help local unions and school districts meet the requirements of the state’s APPR law. TED is covered extensively in the December issue of NYSUT United, due in mailboxes early next week.

"A comprehensive, integrated Teacher Evaluation and Development system, driven by practitioner knowledge and experience, is critical to advancing student achievement and professional teacher development," said NYSUT VP Maria Neira. "The TED system breaks new ground in accomplishing that mission."
Are you keeping your family’s best interests in mind?

The importance of having a will cannot be overstated – this crucial legal document protects your family during their time of grief and ensures that your wishes are honored. Drafting a will can help provide peace of mind for you today and prevent unnecessary stress for your family in the future. It also allows you to name a legal guardian if you have children under the age of 18. In addition, a will ensures that your estate will be distributed according to your desires.

A power-packed legal punch

The NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Legal Service Plan – provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. – provides access to legal advice and assistance that is crucial when looking to create or update a will.

Each year, the plan provides for one simple will or update at no charge. A simple will provides for the proceeds of one’s estate to be distributed to a specifically named beneficiary(ies), with an alternate distribution plan in the event that the primary beneficiary predeceases the writer of the will. With a simple will, proceeds are distributed outright with no conditions attached.

In addition to the simple will, you will receive a durable power of attorney, living will and health care proxy – all important documents to have in place before the need for them arises.

Discounted rates

NYSUT members can purchase the Legal Service Plan at the special cost of $85 per year or $55 per year for retirees; an Elder Law Rider and/or Business Protection Rider are available for an additional fee. Members eligible for payroll or pension deduction can take advantage of further savings.

Do you have other legal issues that you need assistance with, such as dealing with a speeding ticket or selling your home? The plan offers NYSUT members legal assistance for a variety of personal legal matters.

You will have access to unlimited, toll-free legal advice from plan attorneys; these attorneys will make phone calls and write third-party correspondence at no charge to resolve personal legal situations on your behalf before they become major problems. In addition, when you enroll in this plan, you will receive two coupons for free, hour-long consultations with a plan attorney.

How to get started

You can enroll in the voluntary plan online by visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org or printing a descriptive brochure and enrollment form. Feel free to also contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 with any questions about the plan.

Please note: if you belong to a local association that provides a group legal service plan through the local or its benefit fund, remember to take advantage of the plan’s benefits.

The Legal Service Plan provided through Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 33.33% of annual participation fees received for this program. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.