President’s Message

Your “Voice” (which was the theme of the recent NYSUT RA) as a WTA member needs to be active and heard.

Your vote is needed on Thursday, April 18 to elect the WTA district wide positions for the next 2 years. While the officer positions are unopposed there are 2 candidates for Delegate.

Your vote is needed again on Tuesday, April 30 to ratify the proposed WTA Contract and revised APPR document. The proposed contract is a repeat of the previous contract and would run from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015. There were highlights of the proposed contract emailed by Barb Thiele with the most recent Rep Rap. The APPR document contains some revisions. The document has doubled in length, but that is only because the previous APPR document that still covers psychologist, counselors, etc was attached as an appendix. None of the language regarding psychologist, etc was changed. While the proposed contract is for 2 years, the APPR is a living document and will probably be voted on again next year based on any revisions that may be made. Copies of both of the proposed documents can be reviewed before voting by signing one out from one of your building reps or negotiators.

There will be a rally in support of education sponsored by NYSUT on Saturday, June 8th. Your presence is strongly needed and please bring family and friends. Buses leaving from Rochester will be provided free of charge, with more information coming soon.

Please make your voice heard as an Educator and/or Parent regarding testing by signing the petition(s) link to right, and urging your legislator to support the Truth About Testing Act, link bottom of page.

WTA District Wide Election—Thursday, April 18,

On Thursday, April 18th WTA members will be electing their officers and delegates for the next 2 years. While the positions of WTA President, Internal VP and External VP are all unopposed, there are two people, Alan Eagle and Beth Peters, running for the position of Delegate. The person who finishes with the most votes will be the Delegate and the other candidate will serve as the Alternate Delegate.

Jason Carter     Michele Farley    Kim Schultz          Alan Eagle       Beth Peters
President           Internal VP       External VP               Delegate Candidates

http://testing.nysut.org/

https://truthabouttesting.org/
The 3 R’s: Remarks, Reminders, and Relief!

**Dates to Remember:**
- **WTA Elections** — Thursday, 4/18  **Don’t forget to vote!**
- **WTA Contract & APPR vote** — Tuesday, April 30
- **Rally for Public Education** — Saturday, June 8th

**Issues Currently Being Discussed/Explored**
- **APPR** — concerns with teachscape are being looked into
- **Annual Review** concerns were shared — RC looking into this
- **Concerns about PTC** were shared
- **Concerns for staffing/budget** were shared
- Rep Council will get clarification on teacher absences

**Trivia is Back!**
What percentage will automatically be cut from all federal education programs if the budget sequester takes place?
The first unit member who provides the correct answer to his/her NYSUT LRS will receive a $10 Lowes card.
Contact Jeff Trout with your answer!
- 585-454-5550 (Office)
- 585-454-7711 (Fax)
- jtrout@nysutmail.org

**NYSUT RA 2013**

Every year NYSUT delegates from locals across the state attend the NYSUT Representative Assembly. At this assembly delegates debate and vote on various resolutions that help set the agenda for NYSUT, listen to key note speakers, and network with their fellow delegates. This year delegates from the WTA and locals of ED Regions 5 & 6 (greater Rochester area), made a direct impact on NYSUT resolutions. Our very own Beth Peters got 2 resolutions that she helped create passed unanimously both in committee and general session at the RA. Both of these resolutions were regarding various support for school counselors. With the help of our ED 6 Director Michael Herlan (Marion TA), locals from ED 5 & 6 were able to get a resolution passed that created a task force to examine an amendment in the NYSUT Constitution that called for the elimination of one of the NYSUT Vice President positions. Delegates also got to have a question and answer session with NYS Education Commissioner John King, as well as hear from elected officials including NYS Senator Chuck Schumer, as well as hear guest speaker Shabana Basij-Rasikh, who is the co-founder of the School of Leadership in Afghanistan, discuss her struggles in both getting an education and fighting to educate afghan women.

*Photo on the Right: Beth Peters, Wayne TA, said, "This is a great day for school counselors" in speaking to two resolutions supporting her profession. Photo by Michael Campbell.*
Voice your frustration with standardized testing

Neira urged local unions to build relationships with all parents, not just the PTA, encouraging locals to use the online toolkit to help them engage parents, and to spread the word about NYSUT's "Tell It like It is" on-line vehicle to send messages on the testing issue to Commissioner King and the Regents. Click here for a link you can pass on to members.

Here are upcoming dates and locations for the town-hall style meetings:

April 18, Cicero-North Syracuse H.S. (Syracuse R.O.)

Call ahead to your Regional Office to be part of the dialogue when it comes to your area.

Latest SED memo on common core

SED Deputy Commissioner Ken Slentz sent a nine-page memo to superintendents on Wednesday on implementation of the common core learning standards. Here's the complete memo. This is SED's effort to justify their timeline for implementation of the common core and their flawed decision to base this year's grade 3-8 state assessments on the common core.

As you know, NYSUT's position has been clear, with the inconsistent implementation of the common core standards these new assessments are unfair to students and teachers. We continue to make the case for why this year's assessments should be used as an evaluation of implementation of the common core standards and not for any high stakes decisions about students or teachers. Obviously, this memo falls short of SED's responsibility to hold themselves accountable. We will continue to fight for "common sense" to prevail and have SED make the modifications needed.

Heads-up: All teachers must participate in roster verification

SED has issued the attached memo to school superintendents, BOCES district superintendents, as well as charter and other public school principals describing the process of roster verification for teachers for the 2012-13 school year. This year all teachers will be expected to participate in the roster verification process. As we have done in the past, we are making local presidents aware of this memo and the process it describes so you can inform your members. As we have indicated previously, verification of student rosters by teachers is critical to ensure the correct student data is assigned to each teacher. Presidents should contact their superintendent to ensure teacher and union involvement. The process for verifying teacher-student data linkages (TSDL) should be part of your APPR plan. NYSUT Vice

NYSUT Member Benefits offers spring webinar series

NYSUT Member Benefits presents a series of free webinars for local leaders, Benefit Fund trustees and fund administrators.

- Tuesday, March 26: Member Benefits Overview
- Tuesday, April 9: Best Practices for Benefit Funds
- Tuesday, April 23: Compliance Update for Benefit Funds
- Tuesday, May 7: Managing Fund Finances Part 1
- Tuesday, May 21: Managing Fund Finances Part 2

Each webinar will run from 4 to 5 p.m. Please contact Deb Conerty at dconerty@nysutmail.org to register.

Register online for NYSUT's Professional Issues Forum on Health Care, April 27 in Saratoga Springs. The program and registration materials are here. Deadline to register is March 25. Contact Marianne at 800-342-9810, ext. 6297.

Are you or do you know an exceptionally skilled and passionate educator who would like to be the next New York State Teacher of the Year? The deadline for nominations is March 29. Here's more information. As part of the Robert G. Porter Scholars Program, the AFT offers four $8,000 scholarships to high school seniors who are dependents of members. And, 10 grants of $1,000 each are available to AFT members seeking continuing education in their field. Applications are now available. The deadline is April 1.
SAVE THE DATE & SPREAD THE WORD:

BE THERE
6.8.13
ALBANY

RALLY
for the Future of Public Education
at the New York State Capitol

BE THERE: ALBANY, JUNE 8!
Rally will start at midday: watch nysut.org for details
NYSUT members: Is danger lurking in your home?

We’ve just about made it through a particularly cold winter, and spring is finally upon us. With that means warmer weather and the opportunity to spend more time playing with our pets (both indoors and outdoors).

And while we always hear about the dangers of ticks and fleas that can come from the “Great Outdoors,” what about those potential hazards lurking inside of our homes as well?

Check out the following list from VPI Pet Insurance about the most common calls received by the Pet Poison Helpline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5 Toxins &amp; Poisons – Dogs</th>
<th>Top 5 Toxins &amp; Poisons – Cats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Chocolate</td>
<td>1. Lilies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Insect bait stations</td>
<td>2. Topical flea &amp; tick medicine for dogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mouse &amp; rat poison</td>
<td>3. Household cleaners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fertilizers</td>
<td>4. Mouse &amp; rat poison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sugar-free gums &amp; candies</td>
<td>5. Paints &amp; varnishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So have fun with your four-legged friends this spring, but be mindful of where your pet is roaming both inside and outside of your home.

If you suspect that your pet has ingested anything harmful, seek immediate veterinary advice. The Pet Poison Helpline is also available for a fee 24/7 at 800-213-6680.

Remember NYSUT members receive a 5% discount on VPI’s base medical plan and up to a 15% discount if multiple pets are enrolled.

For more information, please visit memberbenefits.nysut.org and click on “Discounts & Travel – Members” and then “VPI Pet Insurance” or call toll-free 866-838-3461.

Insurance from A to Z...

While you’re considering whether pet insurance is right for your pet, don’t forget about the humans in your life as well. If you’re looking to protect yourself or your family, make sure to check out the variety of insurance programs endorsed by Member Benefits.

The following programs are currently available: Term Life & Level Term Life; WrapPlan® II Universal Life; Personal Property/Liability (auto, home, renters, boat, umbrella, etc.); Disability; Vision Plan; and Dental Plan. Many of these programs are also available to cover spouses/domestic partners of members, dependent children, dependent parents, and grandparents.

Learn more about our endorsed programs by contacting Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visiting 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.