

Webster Teachers' Association



The Voice

Nov/Dec 2020 Issue



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Season Greetings

As we all approach the Winter break many of us are attempting to finish unit lessons, tests, IEP's or grading. This is typically a very busy time of year for everyone both at work and at home. That balance can be challenging at times but particularly difficult during a pandemic. In reflecting back over the past 12 months, I find myself thinking of how much our world has changed. Those changes have tested each of us in various ways and to differing degrees.

As Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." It seems fitting that this quote, at over 100 years old, is more than applicable today to educators across the nation.

While responding to the needs of our families, our professions, and our students may have seemed impossible, our response revealed our ability to persevere. In the midst of this pandemic, the WTA negotiated both a Collective Bargaining Agreement (2019-2023) and a subsequent COVID-19 MOA to further protect the rights of our members. The WTA has recently conducted surveys to hear the "Voices" of our members during these difficult and unparalleled times. It is imperative to this Association to try to meet the needs of all our members. We have also provided clarification and worked collaboratively with the District concerning APPR observations for remote teachers.

Safety isn't expensive, it's priceless. Protecting our members comes in many different forms and this year has tested that notion. Establishing the WTA Health and Safety Committee was in direct response to protecting all 800 members as the District planned its reopening of school buildings. Establishing "masking and 6 feet" has and will continue to be our mantra during Covid-19. Keeping students and staff safe is our foremost priority. The WTA was also able to secure face shields through an AFT grant to help make schools and classrooms a safer environment for everyone.

As we all approach the Winter break and the start to 2021 (good riddance 2020!!!), please take time for yourself, family, loved ones and neighbors.

Happy Holidays
Happy New Year
Stay Safe
Chris



Why Start a NYSUT Women's Committee?

When our newly-formed WTA Women's Committee administered a survey to WTA members, one question that was asked was, "Why do we need a Women's Committee?"

Delegates to the 2017 NYSUT Representative Assembly made the statewide Women's Committee a permanent, standing committee following the success of "Speak Up, Stand Up, Step Up," the first NYSUT Women's Conference in 2017. Since the creation of the standing committee, numerous NYSUT women's committee chapters have been established across New York State.

The state committee is co-chaired by NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, and NYSUT members Aisha Cook and Leslie Rose. The NYSUT Women's Committee has **four main goals**: **encourage more locals to develop in-house women's committee chapters; educate female members about the work of the union; highlight women-specific issues, including inequities in pay, health care and education; and involve more union women in leadership roles.**

Having our own local Women's Committee in Webster can provide opportunities to gather with our sisters of all educational and political backgrounds, cultural and racial histories, and work situations and job titles to address topics important to all of us. In particular, Women's Committees in New York have focused on five main issues:

- Safety - Women should live in a world free of human trafficking, harassment, and domestic violence.
- Fairness - Women should work and thrive in a world that is fair and just, a world where there is real respect and opportunity.
- Equity - Union women have an advantage over non-union women due to contract provisions and protections. For all those who do not have a union or are not paid what their counterparts are paid for the same world, the time is now for equal pay.
- Access - All girls and women need equal access to health care and a sound, basic education.
- Representation - Women should be represented where decisions are made: union leadership, school boards, town councils, county legislatures, the state Legislature, the governor's mansion, or the White House!

If you are interested in working with us, we meet on the last Wednesday of each month at 3:45 p.m. Meetings are, of course, virtual for now. If you would like to join us, please email Jennifer Heaphy at wtawomen@gmail.com. And be sure to follow our social media accounts! Our Facebook page is [@wtawomen](#), and our Twitter account is [@womenwta](#).

Webster Teachers' Association Scholarship Application
Webster Central School District

This application and all requirements must be submitted by:
Friday, March 12, 2021 by 3:30 PM

Are you the child of a W.T.A. member? _____ (y or n)

If you answered yes:

Name of WTA member: _____

Position _____ location: _____

Will you be pursuing a teaching career? _____ (y or n)

Eligibility - Scholarships will be awarded to children of WTA members in their senior year of high school. Eligibility is not affected by choice of major or the school they attend.

In addition, other Webster High School seniors who will be pursuing a career in education may also qualify.

Scholarship award - One thousand dollars (\$1000)

1. General information:

Name _____

Home address _____

Name and address of parent/ guardian

2. School you are now attending: _____

3. College you plan to attend: _____

Signature _____

The committee will be making its determination based on the following criteria: academic achievement, service to the school and community, extracurricular activities, a personal essay and three letters of recommendation. In addition to the application cover sheet, please submit the following information to help us make our decision.

4. Academic information

Please submit a high school transcript that includes your grade point average and a copy of your SAT/ACT scores. Your counselor can send the transcript to:

Sarina Schamberger
Webster Willink Middle School
900 Publishers Pkwy
Webster, New York 14580

5. School and community involvement and service information

Please submit a listing of school and community activities that you have participated in during high school. Be sure to list and describe service contributions that you have made in both your school and community.

6. Personal essay

On a separate sheet of paper, type or write an essay of approximately one page that describes your goals after graduation and what influences (people, events, and challenges) have helped you develop those goals.

Please *enclose this essay with the application* and forward both to

Sarina Schamberger
Webster Willink Middle School
900 Publishers Pkwy
Webster, New York 14580

Or [Sarina Schamberger@webstercsd.org](mailto:Sarina_Schamberger@webstercsd.org)

7. Letters of recommendation

Please obtain three letters of recommendation:

two should be academic;

the **third** should be *nonacademic*, such as a volunteer leader, scout or church leader.

Please have them forwarded to Sarina Schamberger at the above address. **It is your responsibility to follow through and verify that these letters were sent.** Every year, students are not considered for this award because the required three letters of recommendation failed to arrive in time to be considered. However, they **should not** arrive with your application; recommendations need to be confidential. Recommendations that arrive with applications will **not** be considered in the review process.

Application deadline is Friday, March 12, 2021 by 3:30 PM. No applications will be accepted after that date.

Be sure to follow through and have all requirements turned in by the deadline.



The Retiree's Pen
David Welker
Secretary, Webster Retired Educators Association (WREA)

First of all, I want you to know that despite the title of this column, I am keyboarding this article. But there is something romantic about taking a pen in hand and writing a beautiful note in perfect cursive. Perhaps I could peer at that letter through my monocle. But truth be told, my handwritten notes have cross-outs and splotches where the ink in my cheap pen blotted. There are no mistakes when you use a keyboard. (I have noticed that my backspace key seems a bit worn however!)

A bit about me. I was brought up on Lake Road at Nine Mile Point. I attended Webster schools K-12 and then after four years at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, I was hired to teach fifth grade at Bay Road School. It was the start of a wonderful 33-year career that stretched from 1971-2004. During that time I taught at Bay, DeWitt, and Spry.

I have to tell you that I miss teaching. Now don't go off the deep end here. I have never peered into my cereal bowl and mused, "I wish I could go to faculty meeting today." But I do miss the day-to-day contact with my students and my colleagues. That teaching itch is salved with some teaching at my church and with helping my twelve grandchildren. Before you get all nostalgic on me, I will tell you that that old book and movie, *Cheaper by the Dozen*, is a big lie!

As I hear the buses rumble by my house on their way to DeWitt Road, I say a prayer for you. I can only imagine how hard these past nine months have been on you. Speaking for all of your former colleagues, please know that we stand with you as you do your important job: training the next generation of Americans. Thank you for what you are doing.

100th Annual NYSTRS Delegates Meeting Report

November 9, 2020

Submitted by: Lisa Bullock, Sue Hooper, Wendy Sardella and Sarina Schamberger
WTA Delegates to the NYSTRS
2020: Annual Delegates Meeting



The 2020 meeting was held virtually on November 9.

More than 500 delegates participated in NYSTRS' 2020 Annual Delegates Meeting held virtually on Monday, Nov. 9. They voted to re-elect Elizabeth A. Chetney to NYSTRS' Board. She is one of three active teacher members on the 10-member Board, which also includes a retired teacher. The meeting also featured educational presentations and the Delegate-Board/Staff discussion.

Presentations:

The NYSTRS Year in Review: In this presentation, we examine the challenges of the past year and show how NYSTRS has continued to achieve our mission during these difficult times. This session covers topics like our COVID-19 response, implementation of laws and executive orders from this past year, new MyNYSTRS functionality, and our System's financial strength. [NYSTRS slides](#) (right mouse click then select Open Link)

Additional slides on the financial strength of NYSTRS [NYSTRS Numbers.pdf](#)

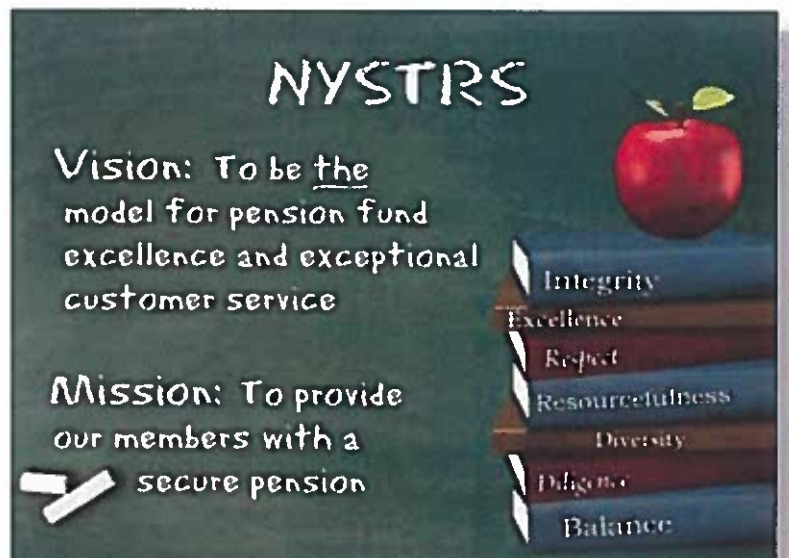
Delegate-Board/Staff Discussion: NYSTRS Board members and staff answer a wide range of questions submitted by delegates prior to the 2020 Delegates Meeting.

Election of Board Member: Votes were cast and teacher Elizabeth A. Chetney was re-elected to NYSTRS' 10-member Board.

Benefits Consultations at Your Convenience: NYSTRS is introducing a new feature for our benefit consultations program. You will now be able to meet with a System representative from your own computer, laptop or device. This provides you with more flexibility while you review the retirement process and receive personalized benefit estimates. In this session, we walk you through this new type of consultation in real time, and you may learn some important benefits tips along the way.

Protecting Against Fraud: This year's nationwide unemployment claim scam was just another in a growing list of fraud attempts against Americans. At NYSTRS, keeping our members' personal information secure is a top priority. In this session, we highlighted the many measures we take to ensure data protection and online security. In addition, we discussed steps you can take to keep your information safe. [NYSTRS fraud.pdf](#) (right mouse click then select Open Link)

Things to remember: Notify NYSTRS if you have beneficiary changes, marital changes, pre-surgery or medical changes, pre-planning your retirement, get credit from prior services, and most important register for a MyNYSTRS account. You can go to www.nystrs.org. An estimator calculator is available on their website www.ssa.gov/estimator. You can apply online (use the *Social Security Retirement benefit application*) www.ssa.gov for social security or call 1-800-772-1213 or go in person to a social security office.





Webster Teachers Association Community Outreach

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

THANK YOU to those who joined and/or donated to the American Cancer Society for our Drive to Make Strides event!

While it was not the usual crowd of 14,000 walking through the streets of downtown Rochester, the passion of our community was as strong as ever!

The fight to save lives against breast cancer does not stop here. You can still fundraise, turn in donations, and ask loved ones for support.

Any donations turned in by 12/31 will still be credited towards our 2020 fundraising totals.

Now more than ever, your support is needed to help ensure we do not see a decrease in breast cancer research funding. Breast cancer has not stopped due to the pandemic, and neither can we - Let's not let breast cancer gain ground!

To Donate go to:

<http://main.acsevents.org/goto/WTA>

Or Contact WTA Community Outreach Chair Dan Crowley
daniel_crowley@webstercsd.org





Backpack Food Drive



For the third year in a row WTA members have contributed to a Food Drive that benefits Webster Elementary Students!


Immanuel Lutheran Church in Webster provides non-perishable food items to our elementary buildings.

These items are discreetly placed in a students' backpack at the end of the week to fill a gap when a family might experience food insecurity over the weekend. It is a very effective and successful program. Our first donations came from the WTA team at the district office!



Only 3 Items:

- Boxed Milk (non-perishable)**

- Cereal**

- Fruit Cups**

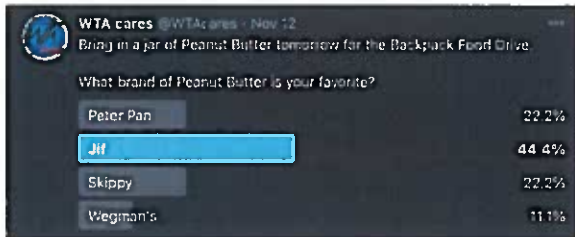

*Please no glass items, they will not be sent home with students

Last year we were able to all gather together at Schroeder HS for our annual Teachers Teach Teachers event and collect all the food at once.

That model was extremely successful. Even though we couldn't all be together in one place, it was more important than ever that we continue to support the backpack program and the food bank at Immanuel Lutheran Church as we have in the past.

This was a targeted food drive, meaning members donated items that had been identified as favorites of our students and easy to send home in backpacks for over the weekend.

In addition to milk, cereal, and fruit cups--there was a rather successful Peanut Butter Day one Friday!



Turns out WTA members love all peanut butter but prefer Jif!

Thank You to all of the staff, administrators and WTA members that made the Backpack Food Drive successful! We donated multiple truckloads of items that will go directly to Webster students in need.



Interested in getting involved with WTA Community Outreach? Email Community Outreach chair Dan Crowley at daniel_crowley@webstercsd.org



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To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org, call 800-626-8101 or scan the QR codes above.

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

MEMBER BENEFITS
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Nov./Dec.'20



2020-2021 WTA Calendar of Meetings

TIME: 3:45pm on Mondays NOTE: Currently remote via Google Meet

WTA Executive Board Meeting Dates

Location: WTA Office

September 14, 2020
October 5, 2020
November 2, 2020
December 7, 2020
January 4, 2021
February 1, 2021
March 1, 2021
April 5, 2021
May 3, 2021
June 7, 2021

WTA Representative Council Meeting Dates

Location: Schroeder High School Library

September 21, 2020
October 19, 2020
November 16, 2020
December 21, 2020
January 11, 2021
February 8, 2021
March 15, 2021
April 19, 2021
May 17, 2021
June 21, 2021

**Webster Teachers' Association
(Established 1972)**

Representing 806 teachers in 11 schools
(7 elementary, 2 middle and 2 high schools)
in the Webster Central School District
Affiliated with NYSUT, AFT/NEA, and the AFL-CIO

WTA office

Schroeder High School, Room #E28
875 Ridge Road
Webster, New York 14580
President's CELL PHONE: 585-683-9147

<http://www.wta1972.com>

Facebook: Webster Teachers' Association, #06-205

Twitter: @WTA1972