



Webster Teachers' Association *The Voice* October 2015 Issue

Dear Colleagues,

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As November is quickly approaches, let me remind you that it is time for the annual WTA social & benefits fair event, which many of our members habitually do not attend. If that is you, please try to break that record and join us this year! We have good (and free!) catered food, a variety of door prizes provided by various vendors (some of them quite generous) and the chance to spend some down time with colleagues. There is of course information available – both from District representatives including the payroll and HR departments, and products from various vendors who often have bargains targeted at union members. You don't know what you don't know ... please come and check it out!

We are also, as we are all painfully aware, several months into a year working without a contract. Thanks to the state's Triborough Amendment, we are protected from most adverse effects of that situation, except for the most obvious: we have not yet received a salary increase for this year, nor have any auxiliary stipends been adjusted. But what is preserved under the terms of the amendment is everything else in our contract – all 112 pages of it. Were it not for the Triborough Amendment, the administration would be able to unilaterally change our working conditions and terms – as happened several years ago in Wisconsin when the government took away teachers' collective bargaining rights. While we are safe for the moment, vigilance is necessary. Please stay up to date using NYSUT's [website](#), and if you have not signed up to send easy, usually pre-written messages to your legislators using the "[Member Action Center](#)" app for both computer and cellphones, please do so! This is a tremendously powerful tool for

advocating for our rights, and sadly, it is underutilized. If we aren't loud enough, we will be ignored, and it's never too late to lose what our predecessors fought so hard to win for us.

Many of the districts around us have settled contracts within the last year, and a very short summary of these was attached along with the September Representative Council minutes distributed by your senior building representative. Other attachments normally include flyers from vendors for union members, agreements (like MOAs) under consideration by the WTA, and other news you can use. In any case, we are struggling to obtain a new contract that will be fair to our members, and will be competitive with the contracts recently negotiated around us. Members of the negotiating team and other WTA officers and committee chairs will be present at the WTA social/benefits fair, and we will be delighted to talk to you. I hope to see you then!

In Solidarity,
Steve Turiano

There's an App for That!



Did you know that the **New York State Teachers' Retirement System** has an app for mobile devices? It's available for both Apple and Android devices.

The NYSTRS app is easy to navigate, and contains a great deal of useful information. It includes headlines about pension-related issues including current legislation, and locations and dates for upcoming NYSTRS Prep Seminars.

My favorite part is the listing of key service credit milestones for every Tier of membership in the Planning section of the app - probably the most frequently-asked questions are about these milestones. If you are facing major life-threatening illness or surgery, there is a video explaining what steps you should take to protect your benefits, as well as those designated for your beneficiary.

If you are thinking about retiring, there are tools for planning and even a countdown clock for your potential retirement date. In addition, there is contact information listing the NYSTRS phone numbers for the most common pension-related questions.

The information on the app can get you through the basics; if you need more information, then the NYSTRS website (www.nystrs.org) is your next stop. Also well-organized, it contains a wealth of detailed information as well as any forms you may need which can be downloaded.

More questions? Send me, Jeanne Coonan, an e-mail and I'll do my best to answer general questions and get you to the right department at NYSTRS.

Jeanne Coonan

WTA Treasurer and NYSUT Retirement Committee Member



NYSTRS Mobile

NYSTRS News & Magazines

★★★★★ 3

Everyone

This app is compatible with some of your devices.

Add to Wishlist

Install



WTA's 2015 Social & Benefits Fair

- When?** Thursday, November 19, 2015 3pm-6pm
- Where?** Liberty Lodge at Finn Park, 850 Maple Drive, Webster
- What?** Excellent financial, benefits, and teacher information PLUS hors d'oeuvres and prizes!
Flu shots available 3:30-5:30; bring your insurance card
- Who?** All WTA members and their spouses



Births:

Chris Callahan (Thomas HS) and wife Margaret announced the arrival of their first child, Lucy Frances, on 9/29/15. Lucy weighed 7lbs/5oz and measured 20" long.

Weddings:

From Thomas HS: Kim and Eric Muth were married on 7/18/15

Also from Thomas HS: Nina (Prabhu) married Rick Sidoti on 7/11/15

Please email WTA Member Services Chairperson, Dina Malboeuf, Life Events being celebrated in your building for inclusion in upcoming editions of The WTA Voice!

Professional Growth Funds

What are professional growth funds?

The Professional Growth Fund is money set aside by WTA for use by WTA members to purchase items to assist in their professional growth. This is not district money; it is WTA money.

What can professional growth funds be used for?

Professional Growth Funds can be used for materials to support WTA member's professional learning that leads to effective teaching practices and enhanced student experiences. (Limit of up to \$100 reimbursement per person per school year.)

How do I access these funds?

The Request Form has been sent to your building representatives and has been posted on the WTA website. The Follow the steps below.

Process for Accessing Professional Growth Funds

1. Teacher completes Professional Growth Funds Request Form.
2. Professional Growth Funds Request Form is sent to Kim Ebbecke at Willink Middle School.
3. Kim Ebbecke will notify teachers of approval via email. **Do not purchase materials until you have received approval!***
4. Purchase materials after receiving approval.
5. Send **original receipts** to Kim Ebbecke at Willink Middle School. Original receipt must be submitted to be reimbursed. **Copies are not acceptable.**
6. Reimbursement checks will be sent by the WTA treasurer.

* There is a limited amount of funds to be used for Professional Growth materials, so first come first serve. Once we run out of money, your request will be denied.

Professional Growth Material Request Form

Teacher Name: _____

Building: _____

Date of Request: _____

Material(s) Requested	Number of Items	Cost per Item	Total
Tax			
Shipping & Handling			



Grand Total: _____

Please attach supporting information from material source.

For example: *A copy of catalog page with item description and cost.* (Remember: There is a limit of up to \$100 per person per school year.)

(For WTA use only.)

\$ _____ Approved on _____ by _____
(date) (Chairperson's Initials)

Original Receipt received on _____ by _____
(date) (Chairperson's Initials)

WTA President Signature _____

Identity theft protection available for NYSUT members



TRUE IDENTITY PROTECTION™

NYSUT Member Benefits is excited to announce that its newest endorsed program – ID Watchdog – is now available to all NYSUT members & their families looking for protection against the growing threat of identity and credit theft.

What Do I Get When I Sign Up for ID Watchdog?

- Credit & Cyber Monitoring
- Credit Reports & Scores
- Individual, Individual/Spouse or Family Coverage Available
- Monthly Credit Score Tracker
- High Risk Monitoring

According to Javelin Strategy & Research, an estimated 13.1 million Americans fall victim to identity theft each year. These individuals are hit with approximately \$7,000 in fraudulent charges per person and spend about 330 hours each trying to recover from the effects of identity theft.

ID Watchdog (founded in 2005 as a theft protection service) uses proprietary monitoring technology that alerts members as soon as new or updated information associated with their identity is detected – allowing them to catch fraudulent activity immediately.

To learn more about ID Watchdog, call toll-free 866-513-0823
or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

2015-2016 Calendar of Meetings

TIME: 4-6pm on Mondays LOCATION: Thomas High School Library

WTA Executive Board Meeting Dates

[1st Monday of the month]

September 21, 2015

October 5, 2015

November 2, 2015

December 7, 2015

January 4, 2016

February 8, 2016

March 7, 2015

April 4, 2016

May 2, 2016

June 6, 2016

WTA Representative Council Meeting Dates

[3rd Monday of the month]

September 28, 2015

October 19, 2015

November 16, 2015

December 21, 2015

January 25, 2016

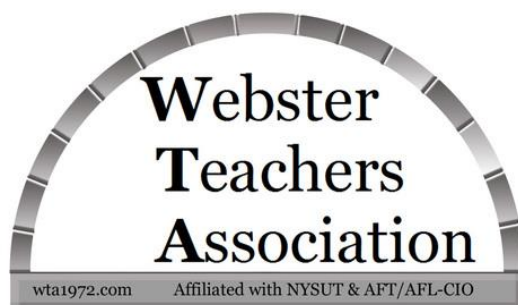
February 22, 2016

March 21, 2016

April 18, 2016

May 16, 2016

June 20, 2016



Webster Teachers' Association

(Established 1972)

Representing 730+ 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

Thomas High School, Room #90

800 Five Mile Line Road

Webster, New York 14580

President's CELL PHONE: 585-683-9147

<http://www.wta1972.com>

on Twitter: @WTA1972