It's time to raise all our voices in unison to support public education. Educators, parents, students and community members will have the opportunity to speak as one on Saturday, June 8, at the Capitol in Albany.

NYSUT President Richard Iannuzzi gave the rallying cry at last month's Representative Assembly when he said: "Our collective voice must not be wasted or depleted frivolously through unbridled passion, nor should it be left to die on the vine or be reasoned into oblivion. We have come too far in nurturing that voice."

"Our collective voice speaks loud and clear, but there is still more to be done. In his second inaugural address, President Obama told America it was time 'to complete the journey.' We know that the journey cannot be completed without our voice - without the voice of unions - without the voice of public workers - without public education."

Can we count on you? Save the date - 6.8.13 - and spread the word.
REFLECTION ON THE TIMES
Submitted by Michael Lyons, WCT Vice President for Elementary

As we approach and really get into “Test mania”- the corporate way to evaluate students, here in the state of New York, I could not let this time go by without commenting. Yes, where would we be without Spring - lawns finally being mowed, flowers blooming and tiny little circles with blackened pencil marks being filled in by nervous 8, 9, and 10 year olds in elementary schools throughout the state.

After attending the recent NYSUT Convention in Washington, D.C. with several colleagues, I couldn’t help but go away with the theme (5th grade C.C. Standard) of the convention - which was the corporatization of the American educational system. This was a major piece of each speaker’s message. Corporations want to help us incorporate the new Common Core Standards. They want to “raise the bar.” Are we really ready to do this or are we just “raising the corporation?” Are they seeing the Common Core as an opportunity to get some of the millions or billions of dollars from school districts throughout the country? I think we already see that here in New York.

No sooner was I home from the convention when I actually saw evidence (5th grade C.C Standard). During the Masters golf tournament the nation was bombarded with commercials about how Exxon/Mobil is so concerned about Common Core, and the plight of the American student. Really? Yes, let’s follow their wonderful track record of greed and environmental disasters. (The most recent one in Arkansas about 3 weeks ago - which they tried desperately to keep out of the press - Google it.) Now there is a real role model to follow. How about them sending some of those oil subsidies back to the schools, towns and villages to alleviate the problems associated with our wonderful two percent tax cap.

I do understand that the world is changing and that America needs to change also. However, does change mean we have to test these young children for six days at ninety minutes a day? Really, students getting nervous, crying, not sleeping and having all kinds of anxiety. Change has to be a well thought out process, not something that happens in one year. We cannot implement a change like Common Core by just throwing it at every grade level. This needs to be done gradually and with great care and concern. However, even when it is implemented, we cannot forget to address other concerns that we see every day in our classrooms. Poverty, social problems and a whole host of problems that our students and families face, need to be looked at also. We need to address the widening gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in this country, which seems to be growing every year.

Yes - my fellow members, there are many problems that we face as educators, but let’s prioritize them. We cannot accept and go along with the “myths” that are constantly floating around out there in our society, about schools and students. Students in America are succeeding and are excelling, and the ones who are not need our hope and encouragement to find their way in the world. Students need real answers to their problems and they need the guidance and concern of the caring teachers who are in the trenches every day. Don’t let corporations take over our lives. Don’t let people who have never spent one minute in the classroom create our rules. Let us stand together and fight for what is right for us and right for our students.

With this in mind, please put SATURDAY, JUNE 8th in your calendar. There is going to be a major rally in Albany, which is going to address many of these same concerns. Please make it a point to attend this important day. Many details will be forthcoming about this rally.
Thank You for your time and concern.
Wappingers Congress of Teachers
Recognition Dinner
Honoring 2013 Retirees,
Members with 25 Years of Service,
Members Granted Tenure,
& National Board Certified Teachers.

Friday, June 7th, 2013
6:00 P.M.-11:00 P.M.

Cocktail Hour with Carving Station
Top Shelf Open Bar
Dinner Choice: Chicken Marsala, Prime Rib, Salmon
Cake & Coffee

Price: $40.00 per person- Free for 2013 retirees
RSVP to the WCT Office by Friday, May 17, 2013

Please return this lower portion of the invitation with your payment. Checks are to be made out to “WCT”. Reservation accepted until Friday, May 17, 2013.

Name: ________________________________

Number attending: _____________

Building: ________________________________

Dinner Entrée Choice:

Chicken Marsala: ______
Prime Rib: ______
Salmon: ______
**FISHKILL STUDENTS PERFORM EARTH DAY PLAY**

After dedicating a year of their time to creating an Earth Day play, girls from Fishkill Elementary finally got to perform!

In April of 2012, 11 girls from Mrs. Seablom’s then 3rd grade class were inspired to educate the school about the harmfulness of plastic waste. They wanted members of the school to take the "no plastic pledge," to refrain from using plastic water bottles, grocery bags, and straws. Because Mrs. Seablom looped with this class, the girls had extra time to continue the initiative they started.

After writing the play entitled ‘Saving the World from Plastic’ and practicing during their recess time, the girls were ready to perform as 4th graders. The play was full of scientific information about the environment and slap-stick comedy as it followed 2 "Green Super Heroes" as they conquered different environmental emergencies.

The girls were thrilled that the Poughkeepsie Journal wanted to write an article about their efforts! (http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2013130421012)

**FISHKILL PLAINS PLAYS HOOPS FOR HOPE**

Fishkill Plains staff participated in the “Hoops for Hope” basketball Tournament at Marist College on Saturday, March 16, 2013. The “Hoops for Hope” supports the Miles for Hope Breast Cancer Foundation.

Julia Alvarez, Amy Buckingham, Kerri Rescigno, Karen Sanborn, Susan Wagner and Lindsey Wessels were the “Panthers” as they played in the Competitive Mom’s League in the tournament. It was a great time for a great cause!

Anyone who feels they would like to join them for next year’s event, feel free to contact Karen Sanborn. If you would like to create your own team, or find an event for your friends, go to: www.milesforhopebcf.org.

**PENNIES FOR PATIENTS AT FISHKILL PLAINS**

Denise Lombardi, kindergarten teacher, organized Pennies for Patients at Fishkill Plains Elementary. The fundraiser ran from January 7th to January 25th. Students received boxes to collect their pennies in. The students at Fishkill Plains collected $2,312.74 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Ms. Hirsh and Mrs. Glauber's class raised the most money ($227.19) and will be treated to a pizza party! Thank you to all who raised money for this amazing cause!

**PARENTS’ NIGHT OUT AT FISHKILL PLAINS**

On November 30th, Fishkill Plains' teachers hosted a Parents' Night Out. The WCT members organized, ran, and chaperoned a Movie Night in the school's All Purpose Room. The students watched The Lorax and snacked on pretzels, popcorn, and water. The price of admission... a nonperishable food item which was donated to a local food pantry just in time for the Holiday Season!

While the students and teachers enjoyed their Movie Night, the parents were given the opportunity to go out to dinner at a local restaurant. Thank you to The Blue Fountain, Izumi, Tomas, and Pizza Village, for discounting dinner that evening for the Fishkill Plains' parents! Just about 150 students participated in the evening. They all had a blast!
SPORTS HALL OF FAME TO INDUCT SEVENTEEN

The Thomas D. Macrini Sports Hall of Fame added 17 new members to its roster at their Twenty-second Annual Induction Ceremony held on Friday, May 10. The Hall of Fame currently consists of 400 former athletes and coaches, whose performances in Wappingers’ schools from 1927 to 2002 have been recognized by the committee as outstanding. The induction ceremony and dinner were held at Christos (McCann Golf Course), Poughkeepsie.

In addition to the 17 new inductees, the Hall of Fame honored 2 Special Service Award recipients. A Special Service recipient is an individual whose service to the athletic program of the WCSD, in capacities other than player or coach, has been judged outstanding by the committee. Forty-five individuals have previously been bestowed with this honor.


HOW RESPECTFUL IS YOUR SCHOOL OR DISTRICT?


Explanation of the Elements in the Inventory:

Critical Component: The critical components are seven areas identified in the RESPECT Blueprint as essential to transforming the teaching profession.

Indicator: The inventory items listed below were identified in the RESPECT Blueprint as key indicators or qualities of education systems successfully implementing the RESPECT vision.

Status: Rate your district on a scale from 1-5 where 1=Non-existent or rarely, 3= Imperfect or sometimes, and 5=Exemplary or always

Action Steps: Consider action steps that you and other RESPECT champions can take to begin implementing RESPECT work in this area.

JJHS AT CUPCAKES FOR CAPE BAKE OFF

Six students from Tricia Leonard's Baking and Pastry class at John Jay participated in the Cupcakes for CAPE Bake Off competition on Saturday April 27th at Shadows. CAPE stands for the Council on Addiction Prevention and Education. All high school and middle school students from Dutchess County were eligible to participate. The competition was to raise awareness for substance abuse and they won!

From left to right: Nadine Segarra, Summer Cary, Tricia Leonard, Toni-Marie O’Connell, Rahani Green, &Tabitha Barnett (not pictured: Emma Pogge).
NYSUT STEPS UP TO FIRST BOOK CHALLENGE

Once upon a time (April 12, to be exact), New York State United Teachers president Richard Iannuzzi invited educators attending the state federation's representative assembly to help write a new chapter in their students' lives by providing kids from low-income families a book they can take home and keep.

Thanks to a new partnership with the AFT and First Book, NYSUT members can receive new books at little or no cost for students through age 18 in schools that are Title I or Title I-eligible. Iannuzzi, who is also an AFT vice president, says he hopes to have 50,000 NYSUT members register with First Book over the coming year.

What will educators receive? Boxes of brand-new, colorful books, with spines ready to crack when opened. First Book has stories kids clamor for and books that feature characters and cultures not always abundantly represented in children's literature. More than 4,000 titles are available—including poetry, plays, classics and counting books as well as young-adult releases; other titles can be requested.

"We believe people closest to the kids know what gets kids most excited," says Kyle Zimmer, president and founder of the nonprofit First Book, which provides books to schools and organizations that serve low-income families. "We give you the tools to do the magic you do."

NYSUT locals in Albany, Buffalo, Central Islip, Freeport and Schenectady (where many students do not own books) already are partnering with First Book, which also is donating books to educators in areas affected by Superstorm Sandy.

"Families value having books, but don't have the opportunity to get them," says Juliet Benaquisto, president of the Schenectady Federation of Teachers. Many students' families in the district struggle financially, she says, and some schools lack libraries and librarians.

PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The following photography students earned national recognition in The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, 2013:

Jamie Fandl, grade 12, GOLD
Jason Dinelli, grade 12, SILVER
Jillian Bruschi, grade 10, SILVER
Justin Pietropaoli, grade 11, 1 GOLD and 2 SILVER (Justin earned silver last year as well)

Here are some statistics:

* 230,000 pieces of artwork were submitted at the regional programs
* 15,000 gold keys from across the country qualified for nationals
* 1,900 pieces were selected as national award winners

Jamie, Jason, Jillian, and Justin have been invited to receive their medals at a ceremony on May 31st at Carnegie Hall.

Text the word VOICE to 518-631-3202 to receive updates
DELEGATE REPORT FROM THE NYSUT RA CONVENTION
Submitted by Diane DiChiara, Meredith Inkeles, and Christine Romano

The theme of this year’s NYSUT RA Convention in Washington, D.C. was “Tap into the Power of your VOICE.” And voices did we hear! One of the most passionate and angry voices we heard was NYSUT Vice President Maria Neira. She has read over a thousand compelling “Tell It Like it Is” letters NYSUT members have been sending in and they are keeping her up at night. She said, “We are calling for common sense and fairness. We know learning is more than a test score and teacher effectiveness is much more than a composite score.” Most of the voices echoed Vice President Neira’s words about fair and equitable accountability, as well as the poor implementation of the Common Core, school safety, and treating children as a commodity and making education a for-profit industry.

Common Core was mentioned frequently. Many speakers mentioned how the Common Core itself is not bad but as AFT President Randi Weingarten said to delegates, “the Common Core was implemented in the worst possible way. They lead with testing first and not teaching.” Sadly, NYSUT Vice President Neira let us know that the State Education Department “has turned a deaf ear and rushed implementation of the new Common Core tests even though they are fully aware of the uneven rollout of Common Core standards throughout the state ... All educators know you don’t test students on material that hasn’t been taught!” However, NYSUT is fighting back. NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta told delegates about The Truth About Testing Act 2013 which consists of two bills being put before the state Assembly. Bill A-6593 would prevent testing students in kindergarten through second grade, except for diagnostic testing. Bill A-6594 would require a review of the testing costs. NYSUT Executive Vice President Pallotta encouraged delegates to channel their anger and contact their legislative officials to get these bills passed. For more information about these bills and to fax your legislators, visit the truthabouttesting.org website.

Delegates and speakers were not just speaking angrily about testing; they were also reverently speaking of the Sandy Hook tragedy in Newtown, CT. Delegates watched a moving video and honored the victims with a moment of silence. A resolution was presented to the delegates regarding gun violence protection which was referred to the NYSUT Board of Directors. It is a complicated and heated issue but as one delegate said while addressing the group, “We need to stop using the phrase gun control. We are really talking about gun safety.” NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi let delegates know he would make sure the Board will act.

The other most talked about topic was how education reformers aren’t about actual reform, they are about making money. NYSUT Vice President Neira said, “It’s about testing becoming big business! It’s about silencing our professional voice and the privatization of public education.” AFT President Randi Weingarten gave delegates some reading homework as she mentioned two important articles that had just been released. Matt Taibbi, writer for Rolling Stone Magazine, wrote about Dan Loeb who is a hedge fund manager who has “been soliciting the retirement money of public workers, then turning right around and lobbying for those same workers to lose their benefits.” The other article mentioned to delegates was “Michelle Rhee’s Reign of Error” by John Merrow. Michelle Rhee, a so called education reformer and former Chancellor of the Washington, D.C. school district, said she wanted to run the district by looking out for the children’s best interest. Instead, she covered up a testing cheating scandal (“it’s not the crime; it’s the cover-up”) and left the district in more dire straits than when she took over. Teachers have been speculating about the drive to privatize education for a profit for years. Finally the media is catching on and slowly more information is getting out.

Teachers have no time to teach and students have no time to learn. As NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta said, “I see a membership that is angry and sometimes anger is good.” The overall atmosphere of the convention was one of anger but also of hope. Almost two-thousand delegates chanted “Let us teach” in front of Commissioner King hoping the message would be heard. We are hoping that our voices will finally be heard on June 8th at the One Voice United Rally in Albany.

(Left to right: Meredith Inkeles, Christine Romano, and Diane DiChiara)
WCT FOOD DRIVE

Submitted by Michelle Ross

The Wappingers Congress of Teachers will hold our 5th Annual Food Drive in all Wappingers Central School District buildings from May 20th until May 24th. We collected over 4,000 pounds of food last year and I challenge all of you to beat that total during this year’s food drive!

We are calling upon everyone in the district to bring in non-perishable food items and place them in the boxes that are in or near the main offices in our buildings. Parents, students, and other community members are also welcome to bring in food and donate it.

The food we collect from May 20th-24th will go to the Zion Food Pantry, which is located in a converted garage at the Zion Episcopal Church. They are 100% non-denominational with regard to the people that they serve. Jack Devine, member of the Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers, is an active volunteer at the Zion Food Pantry. Jack recently told me that the pantry is in dire straits again this year. They anticipate having difficulty meeting the basic needs of their clients at this time. With help from organizations such as the WCT and the WCSD staff, they can continue to give each of their 70 clients:

- 1 box of cereal
- 2 cans of tuna fish
- 2 cans of fruit
- 2 cans of vegetables
- 2 cans of soup
- 2 boxes of macaroni and cheese
- 1 jar of peanut butter
- 1 jar of jelly
- 1 jar/can of spaghetti sauce
- 1 box of pasta
- 1 can of stew
- 1 package of cereal

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to this food drive over the last several years. Please remember that every can, bag, and package donated makes a big difference to someone in our area struggling with putting food on the table!
MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS


FOR SALE: 4 Concert tickets for "One Direction" at Hershey Park Arena on July 5, 2013. Good seats. Selling for exactly what I paid for them - $380.66. If interested, please call Rosie at 845-

FOR SALE: 4 window air conditioners, 5000 - 9000 BTU's (3 use remotes, included). $75 each or all four for $250. Call 845/494

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**SUNDAY & MONDAY**—$2.50 pints of Bud Lite drafts and $5.25 wings at the bar.

**TUESDAY**—Prime Rib Night  
**WEDNESDAY**—Italian Night

**THURSDAY**—Turkey Thursday with the Fixin’s

**FRIDAY**—Free Happy Hour Hot Buffet and Drink Specials at the bar from 3:30pm–6:00 pm

**SATURDAY**—One of a kind stuffed burgers

**TUESDAY & THURSDAY**—10% off lunch orders (eat in or take out)

**MONDAY—WEDNESDAY**—Early Bird Special from 4-6 pm.  
Full course meal only $11.95!

LIVE MUSIC AND KARAOKE NIGHTS

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK FOR SPECIAL EVENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

**TEXT COACH TO 33938**

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MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS continued


FOR SALE: Violin — Full size. Excellent condition. (Otto Ernst Fischer Stradivari). Includes bow (Becker) and case (Heritage) with humidity gauge. Originally $1159.50. Asking $800.00 OBO. Call 845-223-6423 (Jill).

HOUSE FOR SALE: Fishkill - 2 Bedrooms, 2 Full Baths. 1,000 sqft. COMPLETELY RENOVATED inside and out - including new electric, plumbing, Andersen windows, siding, insulation, furnace and central air. Large work kitchen with granite counters and floor; including cherry cabinets and stainless steel appliances. Oak hardwood floors throughout, tiled bathroom floors and custom tiled shower in master bath. Many extras include laundry room on main level, fenced in back yard, two Trex decks, barn shed, full basement and attic for storage. Brand new driveway and stone paver sidewalk just completed. $249,999 Make an offer 845-897-2815. See full listing and pictures for 364 Cedar Hill Rd. Fishkill, NY at Zillow.com.

FREE: 7ft. artificial Pine Christmas tree with stand, if you pick it up. Call Eloise @ 266-8655.

FOR SALE: 2003 Nissan Xterra SE 4WD. 76K miles, red, gray interior, 6 disc Rockford Fosgate sound system, electric windows, cruise control, tow package, great in snow. $7850. Call 845-226-8766.

GOOD NEWS!

- Congratulations to Kelly Barry (and her husband Brendon) as they welcomed a little girl, Ryann Rae on April 2, 2013 to their family.
- Congratulations to Christine Romano (Myers) on the birth of her first grandchild, Autumn Mary. Autumn was born April 19, 2013.
- Best wishes to Karen and Keith May (both at VW). They welcomed twins - a boy and a girl, Carter Jackson and Kylie Hope, to their family on April 26, 2013.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

WCT General Membership Meeting:

Monday, May 20 at District Offices at 7:30PM
Monday, June 3 at District Offices at 7:30PM
Monday, June 17 at District Offices at 7:30PM

JUNE 11th
FROM THE WCT WELFARE TRUST FUND

Upcoming Financial Planning and Legal Days

May 29, 2013
June 19, 2013

Appointments are one-hour blocks available between 2:00-6:00 pm on a first-come first-served basis. Appointments are available at no cost to you; this is a benefit through the Welfare Trust Fund.

Since these slots fill up very quickly, call as soon as possible!

DIRECTIONS TO THE WCT OFFICE

- The WCT Office is in the Heritage Square Complex at 2537 Route 52 in Hopewell Junction.
- Heritage Square is a short distance east of the intersection of Routes 376 and 52 and west of the Taconic State Parkway.
- Enter the lot and make the second right into the parking area.
- Enter the main entrance of the building. The sign over the entrance reads “PRUDENTIAL.”
- Take the stairs or elevator to the 2nd floor.
- Go right all the way to the end.
- Look for the “Wappingers Congress of Teachers” sign posted on the Suite 15 door.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE WCT WELFARE TRUST FUND

Trustees:

Christine Romano….. .....Chairperson
Kim Mahusky….. .....Treasurer
Erin Mulligan….. .....Secretary
Flip Gertler….. .....Trustee
Pasquale Delli Carpini….. .....Trustee
Ronnie Dwyer….. .....Administrator

- You must let the WTF know of any changes in your personal information ASAP.
- Student verification must be sent to Daniel H. Cook every semester.
- Dental & prescription reimbursement forms are on-line at the WTF website at WCTeachers.org
- Please direct all questions & concerns to the WCT office or directly to Daniel H. Cook.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Daniel H. Cook
(1-800) 342-6651

Davis Vision
(1-800) 999-5431

Health Advocate
(1-866) 695-8622

Mirkin & Gordon (attorneys)
(914) 997-1576

Stacey Braun Associates (fin. consultant)
(1-888) 949-1925

WCT Office
(845) 227-5065
Should private, student-specific testing data be made available to corporate entities for their own commercial marketing efforts? Of course not. But it could be.

In New York, corporate predators may be able to obtain private, identifiable education information about individual students – including name, address, test scores, disciplinary and attendance records, race, ethnicity, disabilities and other highly sensitive information – for their own commercial use.

Parents have no say in the matter. Students cannot refuse. And education data could be transformed into for-profit marketing lists.

Please contact lawmakers and tell them to support legislation that would prohibit the release of personally identifiable information about individual students to third parties without parental consent.

Use the MAC site to contact legislators on key NYSUT issues, and find the MAC app to access the action center from your smartphone.