Dear Colleagues,

WITA’s annual Excellence in Education Banquet is quickly approaching. This year’s banquet will take place on Tuesday, May 15th at Glendoveers and is being hosted by Rogers School. This is our premier event each year, and is a fantastic opportunity to enjoy each other’s company and celebrate the accomplishments of many deserving colleagues. We hope that you will be there! Thank you to Rogers Vice-President Mary Beth Lenzi and all of the committee members for the work that they are putting into this great event.

If you have not yet had a chance to nominate a fellow WITA member for a Beverly F. Engel Excellence in Education Award, the deadline is March 29th. There is no set number of awards given, and each nomination is evaluated against the award criteria on its own merit. Any WITA member may nominate any other WITA member for this honor. If you need the award criteria re-sent to you, please email me.

The banquet is also a chance to win some fantastic raffle prizes for a good cause. This raffle, fueled by prize donations from our members and our neighbors, is the primary source of revenue for our scholarship fund. Each year, we award $2500 in scholarships to IHS seniors pursuing careers in education or human services. Many thanks to Kim Gardner and Anna Conti for coordinating this year’s raffle. If you are able to donate a prize either individually or as part of a group, please email Kim, and don’t forget to bring cash to the banquet to buy those tickets!

I am hoping that you have already been approached by a Building Representative to discuss one-on-one the upcoming Janus v. AFSCME decision by the Supreme Court. This case is a challenge to an Illinois law that requires government employees to pay a “Fair Share” or “agency fee” to the union that represents them. A similar law exists in New York, so an adverse decision by the court is very threatening to us and what we do. This decision could greatly impact our strength and financial viability. It is important to note that this case is being funded by groups whose goal is to decimate unions and lower wages and benefits for working people.

Re-Commitment Cards are the first step in ensuring that WITA can remain strong for our members. Prior to agency fees being required in New York, eligible teachers voluntarily joined unions like WITA. The collective voice of all employees working together won us things that we now take for granted, such as paid sick and personal leave, planning time, a duty free lunch and set contract hours, not to mention competitive salaries and benefits. We are hoping to maintain 100% membership to show the commitment of our members and to help us to stay strong in negotiations.

If you have concerns about signing, I hope that you will take the time to discuss those with your building rep, the executive committee and me. We will gladly provide any information needed. If you are still hesitant, the question I will likely ask you is: “What can or should your union do for you or do differently in order to have your support?” I certainly realize that we cannot please everyone all of the time, especially when member priorities conflict with each other. That said I believe strongly in our union and our ability and willingness to work hard for and support all members.

Finally, negotiations are ongoing for a successor agreement to our contract that expires on June 30th. Many thanks to your negotiations team for the countless hours of work that go in to developing a proposal and negotiating with the district to compromise on an agreement that both sides are willing and able to support. As soon as we have a tentative agreement, all dues-paying members will be invited to an information session and will then have an opportunity to vote on the proposal. Thank you for your patience and support through this challenging process.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

In Solidarity,

West Irondequoit Teachers’ Association
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Rochester, NY 14617
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E-mail: Scott_Steinberg@westiron.monroe.edu Scott_Steinberg@frontiernet.net
SAVE THE DATE...
Tuesday, May 15, 2018
WITA Excellence in Education Dinner
@ Glendoveers

Important Events 2018
(All meetings are on Tuesdays at 3:30 pm at IHS except as noted)

April:
10th: Executive Committee
13th: WITA Logo Shirt Day
17th: Governing Council
27-29th: NYSUT Rep Assembly in Buffalo

May:
1st: Executive Committee
4th: WITA Logo Shirt Day
8th: Governing Council
15th: WITA Excellence in Education Dinner

June:
1st: WITA Logo Shirt Day
5th: Executive Committee
12th: Governing Council

Have you seen our website? Check it out at WITEACHERS.ORG

Please send your wedding and birth announcements to Kimberly_Sklenar@westiron.monroe.edu

WITA Excellence in Education Dinner
@ Glendoveers
Congratulations WITA Members on 25 Years of Service
Kimberly Barlette (Iroquois), Kimberley Bartela (IHS), Rebecca Berbert (Iroquois),
Kenneth Eckman (IHS), Patricia Welch (IHS)

Congratulations WITA Member on 35 Years of Service
Jeff Guercio (IHS)

Welcome New Members!
Brookview: Samantha Call
Colebrook: Alexis Shavers
Dake: Akeem Gomes, James Gambacorta-Hoffman, Adam Miller
Iroquois: Lauren McKeon, Isabel Lopez
Rogers: Christopher Blaine, Taurie Decker, Todd Gursslin, Becky Smith
Seneca: Abigail Yeazell
Southlawn: Melinda Viscardi, Bill Buttaro, Sabrina Smith, Angela Miner

Baby News...

Oliver Andrew
born December 13 to
Leighann (Colebrook) and Dave Szmania

Support the WITA scholarship fund….
Wear your WITA Logo Shirt the First Friday of every month!
Please contact the WITA office if you are in need of a shirt, sweatshirt or would like to place an order.

Hosts for Dinners
The host schools for the Excellence in Education Banquet rotate on a regular cycle.
The host schools through 2022 are as follows:
2018.........................Rogers School
2019.........................Iroquois School
2020.........................Dake School
2021....Irondequoit High School
2022......Neighborhood Schools