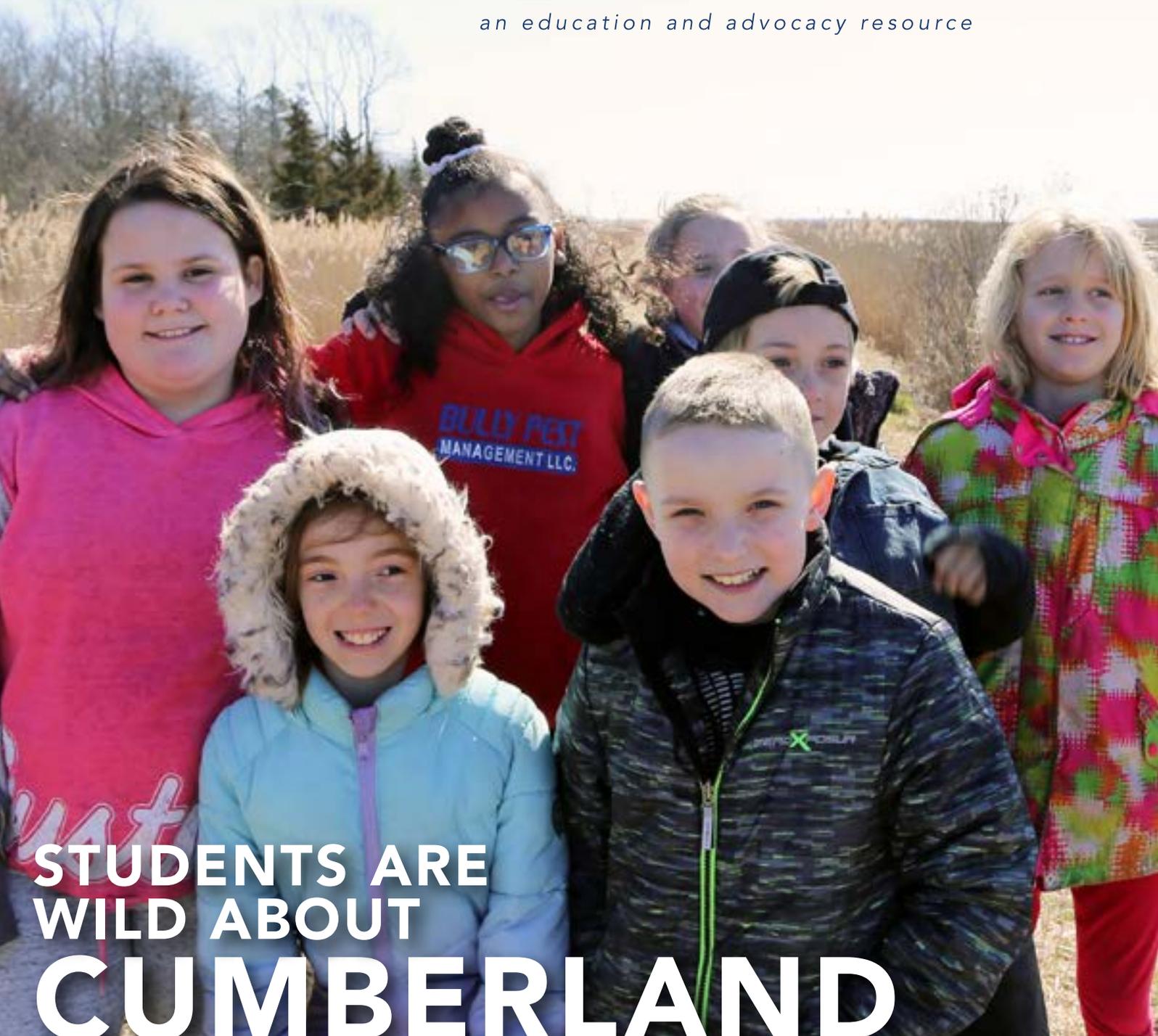


REVIEW

OCT
2019
njea.org



an education and advocacy resource



STUDENTS ARE WILD ABOUT CUMBERLAND

24 STUDENTS ARE WILD ABOUT CUMBERLAND

28 STRONG FOUNDATION FOR TEACHERS

30 EDUCATION IN FINLAND

42 ARTIFICIAL TURF: USE IT? BAN IT?

EDUCATION: MASTERED

Information Session
11/9 @ 10 a.m.

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- Supervisor (*online*)
- School Administrator (*online*)
- Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Speech-Language Pathology

The Allendale Holiday Observers, an organization dedicated to celebrating the spirit of Allendale, marked its 100th anniversary with a townwide celebration on Sept. 7.



NEA held its Educator Voice Academy in Washington, D.C. on Aug. 12-14. Designed to promote leadership in the association, engage members and promote membership, NJEA sent a strong contingent. Educators' voices in the implementation of ESSA was a major topic. Front row (l-r): Jeremias Salinas, Ann Marie Finnen, Lee Brensinger, Toby Murphy and Todd Pipkin. Middle: Jean Jackson, Jennifer Miller, Antoinette Hopkins and Anita Kober. Back row: Catherine Krause, Heidi Brache, Jennifer Dubroski and Gayle Nelson.



Working under an expired contract since 2018, members of the Berkeley Heights Education Association marched on Sept. 9 before a negotiations Fact Finding hearing over salary guides. Following the rally, over 60 members camped out on the lawn in front of the board of education offices, until late in the night awaiting reports from the hearing.

Entering into their third year without a contract, **Clinton Township EA** members gathered on their first day back to school to listen to their union's plans to achieve a settlement, as well as address the myriad issues their district faces. From left: Dottie Daniello, Rose Mastroianni, Barbara Pisani, and Liz Tracey.



I AM NJEA



Check the events calendar for upcoming events and conferences you can attend.

+ PHOTO GALLERY ONLINE
[flickr.com/NJEA/sets](https://www.flickr.com/photos/NJEA/sets)

FEATURES



24 | WILD ABOUT CUMBERLAND

Voorhees Education Association President Tony Klock is passionate about educating children about their own backyards. As a CU Maurice River trustee, Klock and dozens of volunteers help students leave screens behind and learn the value of the natural world.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



28 | READING INSTRUCTION, TEACHER EDUCATION

North Main Street School in Pleasantville and Stockton University have partnered for the benefit of both preservice teachers and struggling early readers. Their mutually developed program provides the intensive reading instruction early elementary students require and the need for preservice teachers to put theory into immediate practice.

BY RENEE ALFORD



30 | LESSONS FROM FINLAND

Rider University faculty led 20 preservice educators on a short-term international study experience of Finland's educational system to find out what that nation is doing right and what lessons it held for them as future American educators.

BY DRS. TRACEY GARRETT AND SHARON MCKOOL



34 | JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

NJEA is affiliated with over 40 professional associations. Find out how you can become involved in the ones most suited to your work.

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42 | ARTIFICIAL TURF

Artificial turf products include playground mulch, poured-in-place playgrounds with rubber waste bases, and infill on synthetic grass athletic fields, golf courses, and indoor playing surfaces. There are no standards for synthetic turf content. The industry pitches its outdoor product as an eco-friendly solution, but government agencies, schools and parents want to know what harm artificial surfaces can cause.

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

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GOOD NEWS!

Did you know?

October:

New Jersey is one of the **top 2 states** in the nation in the percentage of **3- and 4-year-olds** who are enrolled in **preschool**.

Source:
Education Week. Quality Counts 2019:
Grading the States. January 2019.



The numbers
80%

Eighty percent of New Jerseyans say their local school districts include a good mix of races and ethnicities, and just 14 percent say their local schools are segregated, despite research that has found high levels of segregation of black and Latin-American students in the Garden State.

“Despite being one of the most diverse states in the country, research shows New Jersey has the sixth-highest level of segregation of black students and the seventh-highest level for Latin-American students,” said Ashley Koning, assistant research professor and director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University–New Brunswick.

Source: Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu.

On the Cover



Students from schools across South Jersey get closer to nature when they visit the Delaware Bayshore. Volunteers from Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries guide students on a nature walk at PSE&G's wetland restoration site and interactive stations at the Bayshore Center at Bivalve. The region has the highest concentrations of rare and endangered wildlife in the state.

PHOTO BY
KATHRYN COULIBALY

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Annual membership dues are: Active professional: \$950 (full time); \$475 (part time) \$475 (on leave). Active supportive \$475 (full time) \$237.50 (part time) \$237.50 (on leave). Retired: \$86; \$1,065 (retired life). Retired ESP: \$60; \$675 (retired ESP life); Preservice \$32. General professional (outside N.J. public education employment): \$250. Subscribing \$250. Only those in education positions in N.J. public schools and colleges are eligible for active membership. Payment of annual dues entitles a member to receive the *Review* for one year, from January through December. Dues include \$5 for the *NJEA Review*.



NEED A BOOST? CONNECT WITH NATURE

We have so much to be proud of in New Jersey, but one of our strongest assets is often overlooked: our incredible diversity of ecosystems. From the Highlands and the Meadowlands in the north to the Pine Barrens and the Delaware Bayshore in the south, New Jersey has protected more than 1 million acres—22 percent of its area—the largest protected space on the Eastern Seaboard. On top of that, almost 800,000 acres are devoted to farming.

These aren't just important resources from an environmental or educational perspective; research shows that spending time in nature is critical to children's development and has a positive impact on their mental health into adulthood.

Studies have shown that just five minutes spent in nature can have a powerful positive impact on children's and adults' ability to concentrate, mental health and physical health.

Learn more about the power of nature in this month's cover story, "Students Are

Wild About Cumberland," and make a commitment to getting that boost yourself. Especially consider making the trip to explore Cumberland County, whose biodiversity is considered of global importance. But every county in the state can take pride in a beautiful park, preserve, or geographical wonder.

Whether it's hiking in the Sourland Mountain Preserve, picking fresh apples and pumpkins from a local farm, hunting for one of the state's 12 waterfalls, or walking along New Jersey's 130 miles of shoreline, New Jersey has so much to offer, and autumn is a beautiful time to explore and enjoy our environment.

Re-energize and recharge by exploring some of New Jersey's wild wonders, and let's continue to find ways to encourage our students to benefit from all of the beauty that surrounds us.

Marie Blistan



From left: NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, NJEA President Marie Blistan, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: Thank you to our Camden County leaders who attended the UniServ regional office welcome back barbecue! Our UniServ office staff did a GREAT job organizing and hosting this event! We updated our members about Chapter 78 and Job Justice Bills and the postponed PAC endorsement meeting. Our NJEA family also showed support for our member who lost her home in a fire. #RedforEd!

In late August, NJEA President Marie Blistan met with members in an event organized by the Region 3 UniServ office in Camden County. While Blistan, staff and county and local association leadership updated their fellow presidents and membership chairs on key issues in the coming school year, everyone enjoyed a barbecue on a great summer day. Through the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund, Blistan delivered a relief check to the member who lost her home.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerForNJEA: Standing united with all the members of the Evesham Township Education Association as they demand the respect they have earned! Thank you for what you do and thank you for staying strong for our profession.

NJEA Vice President Sean Spiller walked the informational picket lines and rallied with members of the Evesham Township Education Association to raise community awareness that Evesham's teachers and educational support professionals have been working under an expired contract since June. He posted pictures from the line.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Thank you, Gov. Phil Murphy and Speaker Craig J. Coughlin for your support!

The power of positive partnerships and the articulation of a vision that provides our students with great opportunity! Excited to be at the newly opened New Brunswick P-Tech and see the wonderful new facility with our members leading the way! As the governor pointed out in his remarks, New Jersey schools rank #1 in the nation because of US!

On Sept. 6, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, Middlesex County EA President Lois Yukna and New Brunswick EA President LeShaun Arrington joined Gov. Phil Murphy for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at New Brunswick P-Tech and toured the new school.

KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

NJEA PAC ENDORSES 60 CANDIDATES FOR ASSEMBLY

NJEA's 125-member political action committee (NJEA PAC) has voted to endorse 60 candidates for election to the New Jersey General Assembly in the Nov. 5 election.

The NJEA PAC screening process begins with the establishment of screening committees for each legislative district. Each committee includes members of the NJEA PAC Operating Committee who represent their respective counties, the New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) legislative county chairperson and other local association leaders working in the legislative district.

Screening committees invite candidates for an interview in the summer. Prior to meeting the candidates, the committee reviews completed NJEA questionnaires submitted by the candidates and, if they are incumbents, their voting records. Without a questionnaire or an interview, the screening committee cannot recommend a candidate for an endorsement.

The screening committee makes its recommendations to the NJEA PAC Operating Committee, which consists of members of the NJEA Executive Committee; the Government Relations Committee; the Congressional Contact Committee; the county association presidents; the president of NJEA Preservice; at least three ESP members; and representatives from NJREA: the legislative chairperson, vice chairperson, and three legislative regional coordinators. The NJEA PAC Operating Committee debates the recommendations and makes a final determination for endorsements.

FOR THE NOVEMBER 2019 GENERAL ELECTION, THE NJEA PAC OPERATING COMMITTEE HAS ENDORSED:

- LD 8 Ryan Peters (R) and Jean Stanfield (R)
- LD 9 Sara (Sally) J. Collins (D)
- LD 10 Erin Wheeler (D) and Eileen Della Volle (D)
- LD 11 Eric Houghtaling (D) and Joann Downey (D)
- LD 12 Ronald Dancer (R) and Robert Clifton (R)
- LD 13 Serena DiMaso (R) and Barbara Singer (D)* and Gerard Scharfenberger (R)*
- LD 14 Wayne DeAngelo (D) and Daniel Benson (D)
- LD 15 Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D) and Anthony Verrelli (D)
- LD 16 Andrew Zwicker (D) and Roy Freiman (D)
- LD 17 Joseph Danielsen (D)
- LD 18 Robert Karabinchak (D) and Nancy Pinkin (D)
- LD 19 Craig Coughlin (D) and Yvonne Lopez (D)
- LD 20 Jamel C. Holley (D) and Annette Quijano (D)
- LD 21 Jon Bramnick (R) and Nancy Munoz (R)
- LD 22 James Kennedy (D) and Linda Carter (D)
- LD 24 Deana Lykins (D)
- LD 25 Anthony M. Bucco (R) and Lisa Bhimani (D)
- LD 26 BettyLou DeCrose (R) and Christine Clark (D)
- LD 27 John F. McKeon (D) and Mila M. Jasey (D)
- LD 28 Cleopatra Tucker (D) and Ralph Caputo (D)
- LD 30 Sean T. Kean (R) and Edward H. Thomson (R)
- LD 31 Nicholas Chiaravalloti (D) and Angela McKnight (D)
- LD 32 Angelica M. Jimenez (D) and Pedro Mejia (D)
- LD 33 Raj Mukherji (D) and Annette Chaparro (D)
- LD 34 Thomas Giblin (D) and Britnee N. Timberlake (D)
- LD 35 Shavonda Sumter (D) and Benjie Wimberly (D)
- LD 36 Gary Schaer (D) and Clinton Calabrese (D)
- LD 37 Gordon Johnson (D) and Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D)
- LD 38 Lisa Swain (D) and Christopher Tully (D)
- LD 39 Gerald Falotico (D) and John Birkner Jr. (D)
- LD 40 Kevin Rooney (R) and Christopher P. DePhillips (R)

** Indicates that two or more screened candidates were deemed to be qualified for endorsement for one seat.*

ELECTION DAY IS NOV. 5 6 A.M. TO 8 P.M.

Last day to register to vote: **Oct. 15**

Vote by Mail application due: **Oct. 29**

Last day to apply in person for a

Vote by Mail ballot: **Nov. 4** (up to 3 p.m.)

VOTER REGISTRATION

Voter registration form can be obtained at njelections.org. Click on “Voter Registration and Voting” in the left-hand sidebar.

VOTE BY MAIL

In New Jersey, any voter can vote by mail in any election. To apply for a Vote by Mail ballot, go to njelections.org, click on “Vote by Mail” and scroll down to the form for your county of residence. Print it, complete it, and sign it. The county clerk cannot accept faxed or emailed copies of the application, unless you are a military or overseas voter, because an original signature is required.

SELFIE OF THE MONTH

On June 13, Allie Hart, Jennifer Peppe, Maria Russo and Kim George from North Brunswick Township Education Association made their voices heard the CWA/NJEA Rally at the Statehouse in Trenton.



CLEARING THE RECORD

The September *NJEA Review* reported that NJEA member Ashanti Rankin was elected to the NEA Board of Directors at the NEA RA in July. The story misidentified the county in which Rankin works. Rankin, a Millville paraprofessional, works in Cumberland County.

Download the NJEA Political Action Guide

The political season is heating up! Every New Jersey State Assembly seat is up for election and the Legislature and State Board of Education continue to consider legislation and regulations that affect you, your students and your profession. NJEA's Political Action Guide has all the resources you need to stay on top of the political process and advocate for the issues that matter most to you. Download it at actioncenter.njea.org and share it with your colleagues in education so that together, we can make a difference!



NEXT DA MEETING IS THURSDAY, NOV. 7

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) meeting at the NJEA Convention will take place on Thursday, Nov. 7, starting at 6 p.m. in the Atlantic City Convention Center's Hall A.

NJEA's policy-making body, the DA is composed of elected delegates representing members from each of New Jersey's 21 counties. In addition, elected delegates represent members from higher education, retired, non-classroom teachers, and preservice. The DA meets five times a year—in September, November, January, March, and May.

NJEA members who are not delegates and wish to address the DA must sign up on-site prior to the designated speaking time. That time is set for 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 7. Under the DA rules, each speaker is limited to five minutes.

Meeting entry is restricted to NJEA members and authorized individuals required for the operation of the meeting and invited by NJEA. To gain entry, nondelegate members must show a photo I.D. and have their membership verified.

PLAN NOW FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK ACTIVITIES

American Education Week—Nov. 18-22—presents an opportunity to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a great public education. The theme of American Education Week is “Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility.”

The National Education Association was one of the creators and original sponsors of American Education Week. The first observance was held in 1921, with NEA and the American Legion as co-sponsors. A year later, the then-named U.S. Office of Education joined the effort as a co-sponsor, and the PTA followed in 1938.

Visit nea.org/aew to learn more about American Education Week and to find resources that will assist in planning your local or county association's celebration. 📄

COOL STUFF

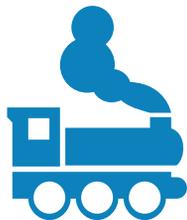


NOMINATE SCHOLAR ATHLETES FOR RECOGNITION

NJEA and News 12 New Jersey are seeking high school students who excel both academically and athletically. The NJEA/News 12 Scholar Athlete Recognition Program honors New Jersey high school seniors who are successful not only in the classroom, but on the court or on the field as well. Thirty students will be selected based on nominations received from high schools around the state. Each week, a Scholar Athlete will be featured in a news segment on News 12 New Jersey. In May or June, the winners, their families, coaches and teachers will be honored at a luncheon. One student will be selected as 2019-20 Scholar Athlete of the Year and receive a \$5,000 scholarship. Four finalists will receive \$1,000 each.

To nominate a student, look for a form on njea.org. (Scroll down to "Partnerships and Contests.") The form must be signed by the principal or guidance counselor, as well as the coach or athletic director. A News 12 sports panel will make the selection. Selections are ongoing, no applications will be accepted after March 2, 2020.

SENSORY-FRIENDLY/ INCLUSION PRODUCTION AT WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY



The Little Engine that Could Earns Her Whistle

Nov. 20 10:30-11:30 a.m.

(Please arrive by 9:45 a.m.)

Admission: \$8

Little Blue Engine dreams of someday leaving the train yard to pull the big cars on the main line track. But can she convince Big Silver that she is worthy of being a main line engine? This dynamic, song-filled adventure, portrays Watty Piper's timeless tale about hard work, determination, and loyalty. This sensory friendly production is suitable for audiences on the autism spectrum as well as general audiences.

Location: William Paterson University – Shea Center for Performing Arts

Reservation deadline: Reserve tickets by Wednesday, Nov. 6, 2019 by emailing Lavene Gass at gassl1@wpunj.edu.



TEACH LIFE LESSONS BY COLLECTING USED PLASTIC TOYS

Jingle bells are just around the corner and many kids will be receiving lots of new toys for the holidays. But what happens to the toys they have outgrown? Tens of thousands of plastic toys end up in our landfills each year, while they could benefit the thousands of children in New Jersey that go without any toys.

You and your students can help change this by conducting a collection of gently used plastic toys with your class or school. It's fun, easy and offers meaningful life lessons on reuse and giving back. And best of all, there are no toys to buy!

Second Chance Toys, a nonprofit that keeps gently used plastic toys out of landfills by donating them to children in need, makes it easy. They will match your collection with a local organization and arrange for transport of the toys! Demand for Second Chance Toys is at an all-time high and your class or school can help fill the need.

Go to secondchancetoys.org/collect-toys to register as a collector on to participate in the Holiday Collection. To help you get started, check out the free resource materials including collection tips, school flyers, morning announcements and activity booklets at secondchancetoys.org/collector-resources.

For more information contact info@secondchancetoys.org and visit secondchancetoys.org.



REQUEST A VISIT FROM AN AVIATION STEM AMBASSADOR

The Federal Aviation Administration William J. Hughes Technical Center Aviation STEM Program focuses on using aviation principles to spark an interest in the four disciplines of STEM: science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Since 2016, Aviation STEM outreach ambassadors have supported over 120 activities and reached over 17,000 students ranging from elementary school through college. Additionally, the Aviation STEM Program engages with educators to incorporate aviation-themed lessons into the classroom. To request a classroom presentation and visit from an Aviation STEM ambassador, email the Aviation STEM Program at 9-ACT-AvSTEM@faa.gov.

GIRLS WHO CODE FREE CLUB APPLICATION OPEN FOR 2019-20

SCHOOL YEAR Girls Who Code is an international nonprofit organization working to close the gender gap in technology. The organization offers free after-school clubs for grades 3-12. No computer science experience is required to run a club. The application for the 2019-20 school year is open. Please submit the easy online application at girlswhocode.com/Clubs.

Girls Who Code provides the online curriculum, training and \$300 per club for snacks, etc. You just need computers, internet and someone age 18 or over to facilitate the club, and a host site, such as a school, library, college or nonprofit. During the 2018-19 school year, Girls Who Code had over 6,500 free Clubs nationally and is excited to grow its presence further in the 2019-20 school year.

If you have questions or would like to start multiple clubs, contact the Girls Who Code New Jersey representative, Eve Balick, at eve.balick@girlswhocode.com.

FREE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES ON THE VIETNAM WAR

Free educational resources from the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration may be viewed online, downloaded, or shipped for free to libraries, middle and high schools, colleges, and museums.

The USA Vietnam War Commemoration is a Department of Defense office authorized by Congress in 2008 and launched by President Barack Obama in May 2012 to honor the service and sacrifice of America's Vietnam War veterans and their families. Staffed by professional historians and educators, the organization's History and Legacy Branch has developed a series of educational materials to aid teachers in helping their students understand the importance of the Vietnam War in our nation's history. The teacher's toolkit is a booklet sized lesson-planning aid filled with Vietnam War websites, primary and secondary sources, links to education plans, films, books and more. It may be downloaded at vietnamwar50th.com/education/teachers_toolkit.

The organization also collects and compiles veterans' oral histories, which may be viewed at bit.ly/vwcoralhistories.

Posters that are visually engaging, full-sized, and easily digestible primers for students are also available. With a host of topics that include POWs, the Home Front, Gender and War, Race and War, Medicine, Sensors, Indigenous People, Allies, and Helicopters, these works will aid teachers in introducing interested students to the Vietnam War from a variety of fascinating topics. New posters are added every few months. To view the current poster listings, visit vietnamwar50th.com/education/posters. Physical copies of posters and the teacher's toolkits may also be requested by emailing whs.pentagon.wso.mbx.vnwar50th-edu@mail.mil. When requesting materials, please include your name, address, and the number of poster sets and teacher's toolkits required, and the Vietnam War Commemoration will ship these materials for free. Please note that the Vietnam War Commemoration cannot ship to P.O. boxes.



INVITE THE CAT FOR YOUR READ ACROSS NJ CELEBRATION

To celebrate Read Across New Jersey, NJEA will send four costumed "cats" to visit nearly 300 schools across the state in February and early March. Each year, the cats—retired educators who dress up in seven-foot-tall professional Cat in the Hat costumes—bring the message of literacy to thousands of students. To invite the Cat to visit your school, fill out the online request form at njea.org/ranj. Completing the form does not guarantee a visit, but it is the only way to be considered for one. The first 50 members to sign up will receive a gift, courtesy of NJEA.

The invitation deadline is Friday, Nov. 8.

Visits will begin in February and continue through mid-March. Depending on when the Cat is available, the visit may be the kick-off or the finale of your ongoing Read Across-NJ celebration. NJEA cannot accommodate requests for specific dates but will advise you in early January of the Cat's availability to visit your school. While the Cat visit is a highlight, it should be just a piece of the bigger celebration you have planned.

To learn more about NJEA's Read Across-NJ celebration, visit njea.org/ranj.



Tips for a successful Cat visit

If you are selected to receive a Cat visit, you will be considered the visit coordinator responsible for overseeing the event. Follow these simple suggestions to make the most of your day.

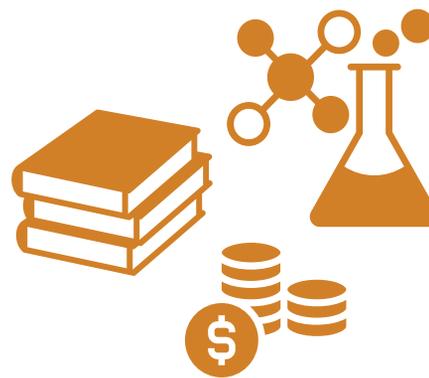
- Alert your principal and school secretary to the day and time the visit will occur to avoid any confusion upon arrival.
- Invite your colleagues to brainstorm ways to ensure multiple classes, grade levels and school employees can join in on the fun.
- Plan an RANJ event where the Cat can appear. Use the free, downloadable materials found at nea.org/readacross to help organize a brief assembly where the Cat can join the fun.
- Arrange for a special area for the Cat to get set up and ready to perform that day, as well as provide parking suggestions for the Cat to follow.
- Be sure to check your school and personal email often before the visit to get more tips, insights and last-minute advice from the Cats themselves.

NEA MEMBERS CAN WIN A \$2,500 ACADEMIC AWARD FROM CALIFORNIA CASUALTY

What could you do with \$2,500? Previous California Casualty Academic Award winners have purchased chemistry lab equipment, acquired new books, funded electronic learning systems, and paid for cultural and historical learning field trips. California Casualty, provider of the NEA Auto and Home Insurance Program since 2000, is ready to add you to the list of award recipients.

The \$2,500 Academic Award from California Casualty was created in 2012 to give public K-12 educators, who use an average of \$500 to \$1,000 of their own funds each year, financial assistance in buying necessities for students, schools and learning projects.

NJEA/NEA members hoping to win the next \$2,500 Academic Award can learn all the details and enter at teachersacademicaward.com. The entry deadline is July 17, 2020, with a winner announced in August.



NJEA Report

Chapter 78 relief bills introduced in Assembly and Senate



Last summer, members lobbied legislators at the Statehouse to pass bills to provide Ch. 78 relief and Job Justice for ESPs.

Bills to provide relief from the exorbitant payroll deductions caused by Chapter 78, have been introduced in the New Jersey General Assembly and the Senate.

A-5814 is sponsored by Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin. As the most powerful member of the Assembly, his sponsorship demonstrates his commitment to restoring fairness to public

school employees who are suffering under the burden of Ch. 78.

Its Senate companion, S-4114, was introduced on Sept. 12. It is sponsored by Sens. Joseph Cryan, D-Union, and Joseph Vitale, D-Middlesex.

The bills would reduce members' health care costs by tying school employees' health insurance contributions to a percentage of salary rather than to a percentage of premium. The current link to the health insurance premium has caused members to see their take-home pay decrease year after year as the rise in premiums outpaces salary increases.

In addition to lowering member contributions, these new bills provide more than \$300 million in savings to state and local employers, including boards of education.

A-5814 and S-4114 replace earlier legislation that had garnered considerable support. The earlier Senate version had 10 sponsors and the Assembly bill had 34 sponsors. Because the new bills are similar in principle to those bills, but also include significant savings for the state and local employers, NJEA expects them to garner even greater legislative support in both houses. At press times, the new bills were in the process of being assigned to committees and gathering sponsors and co-sponsors.

JOB JUSTICE FOR ESP

In concert with Ch. 78 relief, NJEA members have continued to pressure legislators to pass legislation that would provide just-cause arbitration rights to educational support professionals (ESP) and that would prevent subcontracting of ESP positions during an active collective bargaining agreement.

A-3395, the bill to prevent subcontracting, passed the Assembly by a vote of 70-6 on May 24. A-3664, the bill to provide just case arbitration, passed by the same margin on May 23.

Now the action moves to the Senate. S-296, the Senate version of the subcontracting, has 17 sponsors and co-sponsors, while S-3089, the just-cause bill, has 18 sponsors and co-sponsors.

VISIT NJEA.ORG TO ACT

Because developments that occur after press time may affect recommended actions, visit njea.org regularly for the latest developments. Scroll to "Take Action" to contact your legislators on these and other important issues.

To make sure that you don't miss any all-member emails on the topic, log into njea.org. Under "My NJEA" click on profile to update your contact information. To receive text messages for informational and action updates, text the word UNITY to 738674. 📱

NJ Appellate Court finds BOEs cannot pay salaries of full-time release union officials

ASSOCIATION SEEKS TO APPEAL DECISION

The Appellate Division of the New Jersey Superior Court issued an Aug. 21 decision finding that boards of education are not permitted to pay the salaries of full-time release local presidents or other school district staff who are on full-time release to do association work.

The case, *Rozenblit v. Lyles*, was filed by several Jersey City residents against the Jersey City School District. The suit is backed by the Goldwater Institute, a conservative and libertarian think tank based in Arizona. In its announcement of the court's decision, the Goldwater institute described

its Director of National Litigation Jon Riches as "part of the legal team leading the lawsuit."

Rozenblit challenged a contractual provision in the Jersey City Education Association collective bargaining agreement that provides district-paid salary and benefits to the full-time release local association president and his or her designee. The court found that Title 18A, which contains New Jersey's education statutes, did not give school boards the authority to pay these salaries.

The court found that state law gave school boards the authority only to provide compensation in cases where there are "reciprocal benefits to the board." The association had contended that full-

time release presidents are beneficial to a school board because their availability contributes to labor peace and the efficient conduct of labor-management relations, among other benefits.

JCEA is seeking a stay of the decision as it seeks to appeal the decision to the New Jersey Supreme Court. If granted, the Appellate Court's decision would not take immediate effect.

Local associations with full-time release officers seeking guidance as this case unfolds should contact their regional UniServ field representatives. 📞

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Meet New Jersey's 2019-20 County Teachers of the Year

NJEA is proud to join with students, school employees, parents and others in congratulating the 2019-20 New Jersey County Teachers of the Year.

"What an achievement to be named one of our County Teachers of the Year, and one that recognizes not the accomplishments as a cumulative, but as a promise of continued dedication to a profession, that is as much a calling as a career," said NJEA President Marie Blistan.

"This incredible honor recognizes the work of our amazing educators and the impact they have on our students and communities. They are the face of public education, and the personal face that students, parents and communities can identify with," stated Sean M. Spiller, NJEA Vice President.

"It is no wonder that New Jersey is number one in the nation when we have such quality educators represented here by our County Teachers of the Year. They have chosen to serve in this most honorable profession of teaching our students, and I am so proud," said Steve Beatty, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer.

ATLANTIC

Leslie Kronemeyer

Mainland Regional High School
Mainland Regional High School District

BERGEN

Leah Jerome

Pascack Valley High School
Pascack Valley Regional High School District

BURLINGTON

Michelle-Anne Spring

Hawthorne Park Elementary School
Willingboro

CAMDEN

Kimberly Dickstein

Haddonfield Memorial High School
Haddonfield

CAPE MAY

Thomas Belasco

Lower Cape May Regional High School
Lower Cape May Regional School District

CUMBERLAND

Amanda McCloskey

West Avenue School
Bridgeton

ESSEX

Yanelis Cabaleiro,

School #3
Belleville

GLOUCESTER

Brittany Mason

Washington Township High School
Washington Township

HUDSON

Martha Garcia

Academy 1 Middle School
Jersey City

HUNTERDON

Therese Squicciarini

J.P. Case Middle School
Flemington-Raritan School District

MERCER

Helen Corveleyn

Hopewell Elementary School
Hopewell Valley Regional School District

MIDDLESEX

Jennifer Olawski

Livingston Elementary School
New Brunswick

MONMOUTH

Elizabeth English

Freehold Township High School
Freehold Regional High School District

MORRIS

Sarah Guza

Lincoln Park Middle School
Lincoln Park

OCEAN

Kelly Cerbone

Lake Riviera Middle School
Brick Township

PASSAIC

Patrick Slater

Wayne Valley High School
Wayne

SALEM

Tracy Demarest

William Roper School
Woodstown-Pilesgrove
School District

SOMERSET

Suzanne Updegrave

Branchburg Central Middle School
Branchburg

SUSSEX

Jennifer Caputo

Helen Morgan Elementary School
Sparta Township

UNION

Brian Lowe

Valley Road Elementary School
Clark

WARREN

Debra Koch

Belvidere High School
Belvidere

Note: This article appeared in the September *NJEA Review*, but inadvertently left one county teacher of the year off the list. To ensure a complete list in print, the editor has republished the corrected list in this edition of the Review.



Nicky Fifth returns to convention

Tackles opioid awareness

TACKLES OPIOID AWARENESS

Award-winning New Jersey author Lisa Funari-Willever returns to the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City with free books for members. This convention marks the release of Book 11 in the Nicky Fifth chapter book series, *Decisions, Decisions*. Responding to the requests of New Jersey educators, Funari-Willever has infused the messages of smart decision-making and drug/opioid awareness with the familiar humor and adventures found in the Nicky Fifth books.

With New Jersey facing unprecedented levels of opioid addiction, accurate information must be presented to elementary students in an age-appropriate manner.

“We tell children they must take their medicine, to the point of forcing them,” says Funari-Willever, “but as they get older, we then try to convince them of the dangers. It’s a conflicting message and information is our most effective tool. With 80% of addictions beginning with legally prescribed medications, we must reach our students as early as possible. And the most effective way to ensure understanding and retention is to present that information within the context of literature.”

Thanks to a partnership with NJEA, members attending the convention will receive 25 free copies of *Decisions, Decisions*—a retail value of \$175.00. A free copy of the *Nicky Fifth’s Curriculum Guide*—a retail value of \$50.00) will also be on hand and available by request.

In addition, a new title celebrating New Jersey women, *And Then, She Did It*, will also be released. Funari-Willever has highlighted a wide array of amazing and accomplished women in the Garden State. Their dedication to the common good is presented in an easy-to-read and share format. Each member will receive a free copy. Copies normally would cost \$5.

And returning to the convention and joining the Nicky Fifth team will be the New Jersey Forest Firefighters, providing members with a free copy of Book #8, *Nicky Fifth Explores New Jersey’s Great Outdoors* that is valued at \$6.95.

With New Jersey facing unprecedented levels of opioid addiction, accurate information must be presented to elementary students in an age-appropriate manner.

For giveaway times, school author visit information and additional details, visit www.nickyfifth.com and sign up for the Nicky Fifth’s newsletter. Funari-Willever and her team are gearing up for an exciting NJEA Convention and look forward to reconnecting with everyone. 📖



Lisa Funari-Willever speaking at the 2016 NJEA Convention.



Nilka Julio to speak at Higher Ed Luncheon

Nilka Julio, from the National Education Association Human and Civil Right Department, will deliver a luncheon address at the NJEA Convention to members who teach or provide support services in New Jersey’s 19 community colleges. The Higher Education Luncheon is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 8, 1 to 3 p.m., in the Sheraton Convention Center Hotel’s Pearl Ballroom.

Julio brings her authentic self to her work. Her life and worldview have been shaped by having lived in Panama, Brooklyn, Hawaii, San Francisco, Chicago, Washington D.C. and Baltimore. She has worked as a cancer researcher, a community organizer, a labor organizer (where she bargained contracts), a mediator, and has been an organizational specialist in NEA’s Center for Organizing since 2014.

Julio has worked in higher education and has also partnered with higher education members to start NEA’s Degrees Not Debt college-affordability program. She also has worked with National Council of Urban Education Associations locals to start racial justice listening tours.

She delivers training, facilitation, strategic guidance and coaching. She partners with NEA affiliates, such as NJEA, for organizational transformation.

Reservations are required by Oct. 23. To make a reservation, send a check for \$29 payable to NJEA/HE, c/o Beneficial Bank, P.O. Box 13661, Philadelphia, PA 19101-3661.

MORE CONVENTION PROGRAMMING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

The NJEA Higher Education Members Breakfast & Brainstorming session begins at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 8 and concludes at 11 a.m. A Roundtable Discussion for higher education members concerning the key elements of the N.J. Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act and how to apply these elements to recruit and maintain members.

Registration is required and must be done in advance. Seating is limited. To register, contact Jean DiQuinzio at jdiquinzio@njea.org or 609-689-9580 by Oct. 25. 📖

Governor, higher ed secretary announce vision for higher education



NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty (l) and NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller with Gov. Phil Murphy as he and Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis outlined their vision for higher education in New Jersey. Photo by: Edwin J. Torres/Governor's Office.

On March 26, Gov. Phil Murphy and New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis announced the release of “Where Opportunity Meets Innovation: A Student-Centered Vision for New Jersey Higher Education.” Murphy and Smith Ellis unveiled the plan at Rutgers University-Newark, surrounded by students, state officials and other higher education stakeholders.

The plan builds upon Murphy’s “Stronger and Fairer Economy in New Jersey,” the economic plan unveiled by the governor in 2018. A key priority of that plan is to “invest in people” so that all New Jerseyans can find work to sustain and support their families.

“Today, New Jersey’s great colleges and universities set course to make our state the hub for American innovation and economic opportunity,” Murphy said. “My administration has committed to growing New Jersey from the middle out and lifting communities from the bottom up. There’s no better way to achieve those goals than strengthening our state’s institutions of higher education.”

“The plan we release today seeks to ensure that every student, no matter their life circumstances, has the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education that prepares them for life after college,” Smith Ellis said. “Since taking office, I have had countless meetings with those invested in the state’s postsecondary education future. Most importantly, I have talked to students from colleges and universities all around the state and learned firsthand their passion for learning

and the challenges they encounter on the way to getting a college credential. The plan released today represents the collective wisdom of those conversations.”

There’s no better way to achieve those goals than strengthening our state’s institutions of higher education.

Murphy and Smith Ellis outlined the objectives of the state plan, affirming the central goal of achieving 65 percent postsecondary attainment by 2025 and committing the state to its vision that every New Jerseyan, regardless of life circumstances, should have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality credential that prepares them for life after college.

This commitment is embodied in the vision for New Jersey’s Student Bill of Rights, which holds every New Jerseyan, regardless of life circumstances, should have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality credential that prepares them for life after college.

Under this vision, all New Jersey students should have:

- Early exposure to college.
- Clear and comprehensive financial information.

- Affordable and predictable education costs.
- Experiential learning opportunities.
- Supportive faculty and staff.
- Support for on-time college completion.
- Opportunities to earn college credit outside the classroom.
- High-quality academic programs.
- Safe, supportive, and inclusive campuses.
- A voice in the decisions that affect their education.

To that end, Murphy signed Executive Order No. 61, which creates a Task Force on New Jersey’s Plan for Higher Education. The Task Force will be divided into five working groups:

- Creating On-Ramps to College
- Making College Affordable
- Student Success
- Safe and Inclusive Learning Environments
- Research, Innovation and Talent.

Each working group will be led by two co-chairpersons, appointed by the governor, and is to issue a final report on its subject area within nine months. 

CONVENTION PROGRAM UPDATES

Two convention items printed in last month’s NJEA Review require correction.

Priya Vulchi and Winona Guo will deliver their keynote address, Choose Racial Literacy, on Thursday, Nov. 7 at 9:30 a.m. The September Review had the correct day, but the wrong date.

The title of Lucy Calkins’ presentation on Thursday, Nov. 7 is Writing Workshop. The session, which runs from 12:30 to 3 p.m. will focus on the methods and content needed to teach a writing curriculum. It will be filled with practical strategies that will position you to teach writing well. The September NJEA Review incorrectly included “readers workshop” in the workshop description.

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WILL THIS BE YOUR FIRST NJEA CONVENTION?

Get a **FREE** overnight room!



As of Sept. 1, 2019, were you an NJEA member for five or fewer years? Will the 2019 NJEA Convention be the first one you've ever attended? If so, NJEA would like to help you have a great convention experience and help make it easier to attend by reimbursing your overnight stay at the Golden Nugget on Thursday, Nov. 7.

In addition to being an NJEA member for five or fewer years, you must take the actions listed below to be eligible for reimbursement. You will be using your convention badge in the steps that require scanning at various convention locations.

- Scan in and attend one professional development workshop on Thursday, Nov. 7.
- Scan in at the Early Career Network Center on the Exhibit Hall floor in the Atlantic City Convention Center, before the floor closes on Thursday, to obtain your ticket to the Early Career Network Event, which will be held that evening at the Premier Nightclub at Borgata.
- Scan in, and attend, the Early Career Network Event at Premier on Thursday evening, Nov. 7.

- Scan in at one location at the NJEA Convention on Friday, Nov. 8.
- After the NJEA Convention, complete an emailed survey.

Should this promotion reach its capacity, a waiting list will be started for additional participants. Any participant who has not booked their room at Golden Nugget by Oct. 22 will be removed from the promotion and their spot will be given to the first available individual on the waitlist.

HOW DO I SIGN UP?

Participation is easy, so do it now before you end up on the waiting list! You'll need to complete both steps below.

1. Visit njea.org/firsttimeconv to claim a spot in the promotion. Do this right now before the offer reaches its capacity.

2. By no later than Oct. 22, visit njea.org/hotel-blocks book, and pay for, a room on Thursday, Nov. 7 at the Golden Nugget at the NJEA rate of

\$62, plus taxes and fees. You may reserve additional nights, but NJEA will reimburse you for Thursday night only. The room rate is also \$62 (plus taxes and fees) on Wednesday, Nov. 6. The rate is \$162 (plus taxes and fees) for the night of Friday, Nov. 8.

After the NJEA Convention, if you have successfully met all of the requirements, a voucher will be sent to you. You will need to sign and return it with a copy of your paid hotel receipt by Feb. 1, 2020 to receive your reimbursement. 📄

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Paulsboro award honors unity and human rights for 62 years



Seated (l-r): PHS Student Council Co-Advisor Christine O'Malley and nominees Kimberly Robinson, Allison Wileczek, and Amaya Reed-Clark. Standing (l-r): 1962 PHS graduate and first African American female Brotherhood Award winner Wilma Harris, nominees Robert Glocker and Anthony Morina, award founder Ada Rosen, Freeholder Jim Jefferson, PHS Principal Paul Morina, PHS graduate and keynote speaker Robert Burzichelli, and PHS Student Council Co-Advisor Margaret LaDue.

In May, Paulsboro High School celebrated community and human rights with its annual Unity Week, which concluded on May 17 with the 62nd Annual Brotherhood Award Assembly. Unity Week grew out of the Mayor's Civil Rights Commission of Paulsboro, which had been established in the 1950s. The commission was tasked with finding ways to make significant advances in human rights and relations.

As the only educator on the commission, Paulsboro High School teacher Ada Rosen worked with fellow commission member George Gaines to launch the first Brotherhood Assembly at Paulsboro High School in 1957. Initially the award ceremony was held in February to coincide with Abraham Lincoln's birthday as a part of Brotherhood Week, which was later renamed Unity Week and held in May.

Speaking at the 2019 assembly, Rosen marveled at the award's long history.

"I can't begin to tell you what a wonderful and unique thing this is," Rosen told the gathered students, staff and families. "Is there any other school that does anything like this for 62 years?"

You can be so very proud."

Paulsboro Education Association members Christine O'Malley and Margaret LaDue are co-advisers to the student council, which is responsible for continuing the annual award program. O'Malley, a 1996 Paulsboro High School graduate, beams with pride at the award's long tradition.

"The awards assembly is filled with music, speeches, and special guests," O'Malley said. "Cory Booker sent a video message for our 60th anniversary, Tug McGraw had been a speaker, and we've had freeholders, senators, and many other dignitaries over the years."

While the award maintains the name "Brotherhood," it is not limited by gender. The nominees for the 2019 award were Robert Glocker, Anthony Morina, Amber Reed-Clark, Kimberly Robinson and Allison Wileczek.

Wilma Harris, a 1962 graduate of Paulsboro High School, was the first African-American female to receive Brotherhood Award. Harris attended the 2019 ceremony to receive the Emerita Award on behalf of her late aunt, Joyceline Gaines,

a 1954 Paulsboro High School graduate who was the school's first African American valedictorian. Harris commented on the meaning of the Brotherhood Award.

"Aretha Franklin spoke about respect, and hopefully you will all 'live' respect," Harris said. "A simple definition of respect is 'just because it's different doesn't mean it's wrong.' Talk to people and get to know them and you'll find that we all have more in common than we have differences."

The Brotherhood Award nominees are selected by student representatives, administrators, faculty and staff in a closed session. The criteria for nomination include regard for people of all faiths, racial backgrounds and ethnic origins, as well as regard for the welfare of fellow students. Participation in student affairs, with a special emphasis on the just treatment of others and a willingness to go out of their way to be of service, is also considered. Once the nominees are identified, staff in students in grades 9-12 vote to select the winner of the award.

The 2019 Brotherhood Award winner was Anthony Morina.

Robert Burzichelli, a Paulsboro High School graduate who had been an award nominee in his senior year, delivered the keynote address. He reflected on the history of the award.

"Paulsboro High School had always been integrated, but Paulsboro's neighborhoods were not," Burzichelli said. "The Brotherhood Award was a way to highlight our humanity."

Burzichelli discussed the importance of real human connections in an age where Americans are more connected than ever through technology.

"We read each other's texts and scroll through each other's photos, but we are losing the ability to look each other in the eye," he said. "It can start with a simple human gesture—reaching out to say a simple hello—to take risks by expanding our groups of friends."

Gloucester County Freeholder Jim Jefferson also spoke.

"Whenever you can combine rich history and motivating and recognizing young people, it is always a good thing," Jefferson said. "My favorite part is how young and old, black and white and Hispanic come together. It doesn't matter when you're in Paulsboro, because everyone 'reps' the same town."

Following the event, a catered luncheon was served by Paulsboro High School students in the library. An NJEA Pride in Public Education grant funded the luncheon. 🍷

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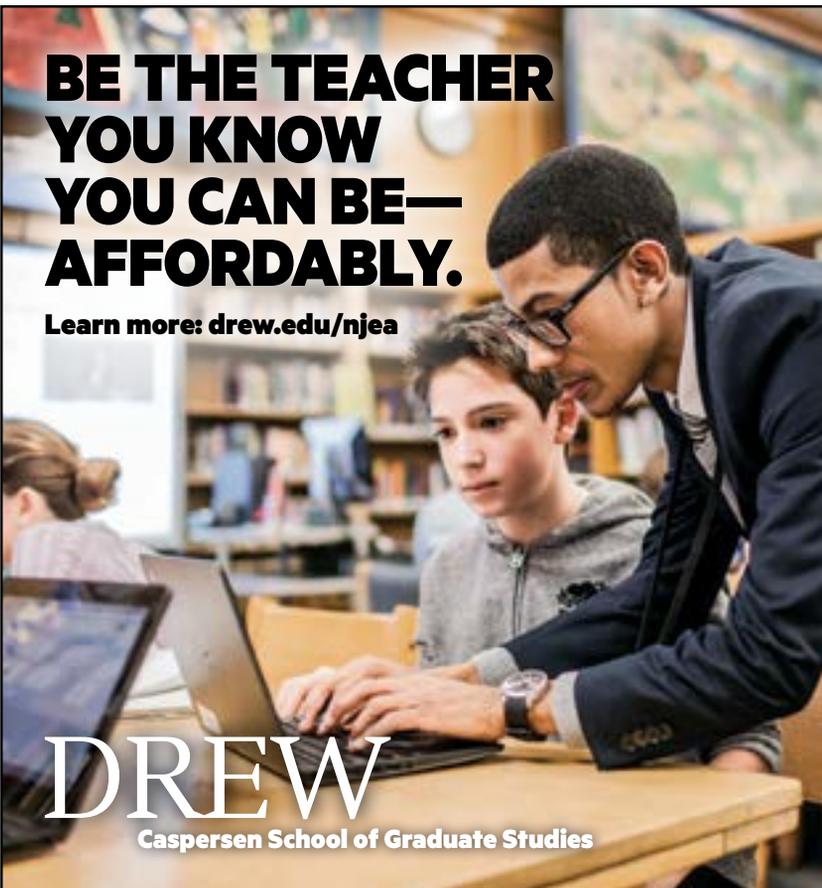
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PREREGISTRATION AVAILABLE FOR SELECTED NJEA CONVENTION WORKSHOPS

As reported in the September NJEA Review, the association is piloting preregistration for several convention workshops. For most workshops at Convention, no registration is needed.

Full details are in the September Review and at njeaconvention.org. The following programs are available for preregistration.

THE MATH INSTITUTE

Elementary school math teachers can decide to turn their convention experience into a two-day math institute with six offerings from the Bedtime Math Foundation. Each day begins with a keynote presentation followed by two additional workshops each day. You may attend the entire institute, or go a la carte, selecting individual workshops.

The workshops that comprise the Math Institute are:

- Exploding Dots: A New Frontier in Discovering Numbers (Keynote)
- Exploding Dots in Depth
- In Real Life, We Are All Mathematicians
- Teaching Algebra in New Jersey State Prisons (Keynote)
- Nine Ways to Skin a Math Question
- At Last! Practical Ways to Differentiate Instruction

ROCK AND ROLL FOREVER FOUNDATION

The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation was established by Steven Van Zandt, the songwriter, producer, actor and activist who is a member of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band. TeachRock is the foundation's national middle and high school curriculum initiative.

Created to address the challenges of an environment in which schools face cuts to arts funding, TeachRock includes interdisciplinary, arts-driven materials designed to keep students engaged and in school. Its groundbreaking curriculum is available at no cost to educators.

The workshops that comprise the offerings of the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation are:

- Exploring Current Events and Recent History Through Popular Music
- Music and Visual Arts
- Stonewall 50: Music and LGBTQ Issues in the U.S.
- Using Music to Put the "A" in STEAM

ROCK AND ROLL FOREVER FOUNDATION PRESERVICE TEACHER EVENT

- Day One: Music and Culturally Responsive Curriculum
- Day Two: The Preservice Mixer



WRITING WORKSHOP

(PREREGISTRATION REQUIRED FOR THIS PROGRAM)

Acclaimed literacy educator and author Lucy Calkins will appear on Thursday, Nov. 7 at 12:30-3 p.m.

Lucy Calkins is the author of over 40 books that have quickly become an indispensable part of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the world. Calkins is also the author or coauthor of numerous foundational professional texts with Heinemann.

ADVOCACY

The NJEA Convention is the largest professional development conference of its kind in the world. The NJEA members who attend are dedicated to enhancing their professional and career learning. As the most popular statewide event NJEA offers, it is for many members, the only statewide NJEA event in which they participate. These members may have many questions about what it means to be a member of a union.

- NJEA: Your Union

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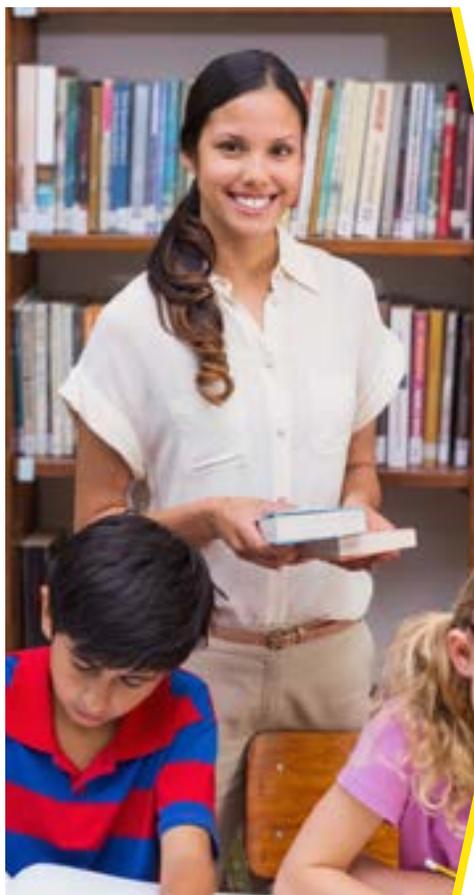
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STUDENTS ARE *wild* ABOUT CUMBERLAND

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

On a late spring day, volunteers with Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries (CU Maurice River) mill around in a field near the river's watershed, waiting for school buses to deliver more than 200 fourth-graders from area schools. Over the course of two days, more than 400 students will participate in the nature walk at PSE&G's wetland restoration site and interactive stations at the Bayshore Center at Bivalve. The program aims to build enthusiasm for outdoor exploration and pride in Cumberland County's natural and cultural history, especially

Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to njea.org. She can be reached at kcoulibaly@njea.org.

along the Bayshore.

Students are quickly divided into groups when they arrive. From their first footsteps, they begin to learn about the ecosystem into which they have stepped.

Anthony Klock, a CU Maurice River trustee and volunteer naturalist leads a group of Jennifer

Trivellini's students from Vineland's Anthony Rossi Elementary School. Klock is an educator and president of the Voorhees Education Association. A volunteer for many years, he has taken a personal day to guide these students through the watershed.

Joining Klock are volunteers and experts in a variety of subject areas including one of the foremost experts on moths and insects in the region, Dr. Dale Schweitzer.

The tour begins with a set of maps that help students identify where in the world they are. Students easily identify the seven continents, the United States and New Jersey, and even Cumberland County, but that's where it gets a bit confusing. This provides an opportunity to talk about the unique ecosystem they have entered.

Group leaders demonstrate the differing sizes of watersheds, working down from a global to a local scale. While political lines such as national and state borders have been drawn in the sand, ecosystem functions aren't contained by those human-created boundaries. The exercise promotes a sense of place from a local perspective, while also aiming to instill a sense of connection with the rest of the world.

Klock provides some background on the Lenni-Lenape people who once called the region home. He points out native and invasive species as the walk to the water begins. Along the way, the group stops to examine plants, trees and wildlife. The volunteers have helpfully, and somewhat cheekily,

placed stuffed native species along the trail to give students a real-life example of the kinds of animals found in the region.

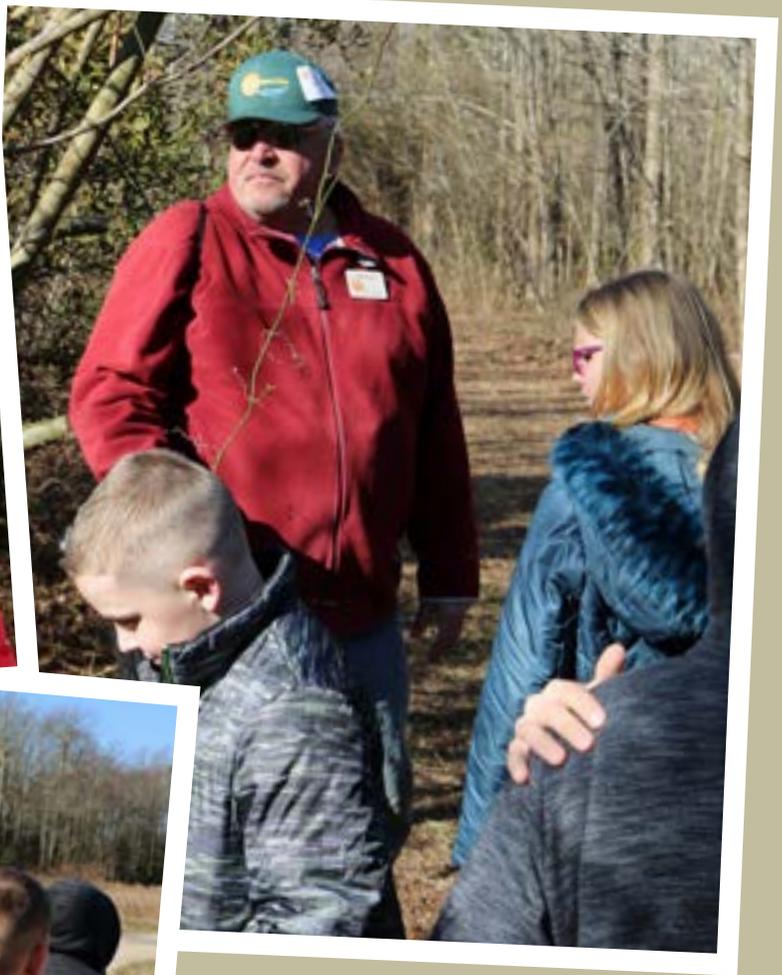
There are no cellphones out, but there are some binoculars, and they are trained on the birds swooping overhead, which Klock and his fellow volunteers point out and identify for students. One of the most exciting moments of the day is when a bald eagle is spotted and admired by the group.

As they make their way along the path, Klock points out beehives, birds' nests, webs, warrens and more. Klock is passionate about educating children about their own backyards.

A HOME TO RARE AND ENDANGERED WILDLIFE

According to CU Maurice River, "This region has the highest concentrations of rare and endangered wildlife, coupled with the lowest

Students need to recognize the importance of where they live and develop an appreciation for it.



density of urban development in New Jersey. It is considered of 'global importance' with considerable opportunities for conservation."

"This is a remarkable place to live," Klock said. "Students need to recognize the importance of where they live and develop an appreciation for it. The people volunteering here today are all looking to conserve what we have, the best we can. And the best way to do that is to engage the kids who live here so they can continue this work into the future."

Many of these students already participate in "green time," where they enjoy unstructured outdoor activities, and some are very eager to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for nature during the walk. But others have fewer opportunities, so experiences like this help to get children into nature.

The lack of green time is reaching a critical level, and the negative impact is increasingly apparent. According to The Nature of Americans National Report, "Parents of children 8 to 12 years old said that their children spend three times as many hours with computers and televisions each week as they do playing outside."

Research has shown that there are many benefits to replacing screen time with green time. Among them are:

- Better school performance and improved cognitive function.
- More creativity.
- Higher levels of fitness.
- More friends.
- Less depression and hyperactivity.
- Stronger bones, decreased risk of cardiovascular issues, diabetes or other health issues.
- Improved eyesight.
- Better sleep.

This region has the highest concentrations of rare and endangered wildlife.

- A longer life span and a healthier life.

Klock has observed this "nature deficit disorder," and he believes strongly that activities such as Wild About Cumberland, Maurice River's Eagle Festival and the Cumberland County Eagle Festival, and Kids About the Bay all help to get children exploring the natural world around them.

"Children really need to be outside," Klock said. "I've been teaching for 30 years. Students want to observe and engage in the natural world. They may not realize that, but this program can help reawaken that."

Human-caused environmental factors are having a negative impact on the region.

VOLUNTEERS

It helps that the children are surrounded by grown-ups who are experts in a variety of subjects, and who are eager to share their passion for the environment with the students.

“We have 40 volunteers here today; 30 are from CU Maurice River and 10 work at the Bayshore Center at Bivalve,” said Karla Rossini, program manager with CU Maurice River. (Bivalve is a historic oystering community in Port Norris,

Cumberland County.) “Many are either currently employed or retired educators, others include conservation professionals, naturalists, a former game warden, and a lepidopterist [a person who studies butterflies and moths], among others. No matter their background, team members share an appreciation for the region’s outstanding natural and cultural resources coupled with a desire to pass along their knowledge of and passion for the great outdoors to the next generation of stewards.”

“We’re all nature geeks,” Klock said. “So this kind of stuff is just what we do.”

The students can observe the level of excitement and wonder among the grown-ups in their groups as they spot a red maple blooming—an early sign of spring. The excitement is contagious as they listen to the sound of wood frogs croaking in the reeds. The wonder grows they look through an expertly calibrated telescope to spy on waterfowl swimming in the tidal creeks of the Delaware Bayshore’s wetland complex.

“Students who come back to visit me always bring up the times that we took them outside looking for macroinvertebrates, bird-watching or observing a river,” Klock said. “Fourth grade is the perfect year to get them hooked on nature, and it fits in perfectly with the curriculum. Since fourth grade is traditionally the year they learn about New Jersey, we take a lot of time helping them discover their sense of place.”

Volunteers spend considerable time talking about how the ecosystem has changed. Superstorm Sandy changed the landscape of the watershed, and other human-caused environmental factors are having a negative impact on the region.

“We want the students to understand the significant changes that have taken place in the last two years and the potential changes to come,” Klock said. “We need them to be the next generation of advocates, not just for this region but for the entire natural world.”

When the students finish the nature walk portion of the day, they are off to the Bayshore



Center at Bivalve to participate in hands-on workstations, which are coordinated by Allison Place, the Shipboard Program coordinator. Other partners also lead workshops. They include Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, the AmeriCorps New Jersey Watershed Ambassadors Program, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, the Lenape Tribe and others.

A longstanding favorite program is the live raptor show presented by the Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge. For many students, it marks the first time they have ever seen or heard an owl or hawk. When the vulture happens to show off its wingspan, the students' and teachers' faces light up with astonishment.

In 2019, OceanFirst Bank was the major corporate sponsor of Wild About Cumberland. The program is also made possible by invaluable assistance from partners such as The Nature Conservancy, as well as further funding from the National Park Service's Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, Cumberland County Planning and Development, and CU Maurice River members. 🏠

Want to get Wild About Cumberland?



CU Maurice River has resources available online to help educators reconnect students with nature. Download its teachers' guide at cumauriceriver.org. Slide over to "Education" and click on "Teacher's Guide."

Area educators can participate in the next Wild About Cumberland, which will be held March 24 and 25, 2020. There are also many other activities offered in the region. For more information or to receive the program packet, email Karla Rossini at Karla.Rossini@CUMauriceRiver.org or call the office at 856-300-5331.

CU Maurice River

Incorporated in 1979, Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries (CU Maurice River) was pivotal in the designation of the Maurice River as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. CU Maurice River is dedicated to protecting the Maurice River Watershed's natural integrity and cultural heritage.

As South Jersey's leading watershed organization, CU Maurice River engages in fieldwork, advocacy, research and education initiatives generating and contributing to a greater understanding of local environment and wildlife. CU Maurice River's work is accomplished through an extensive network of naturalists, field experts, citizen scientists and volunteers. To learn more, or to volunteer, go to cumauriceriver.org.

A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AND READING INSTRUCTION

A PLEASANTVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARTNERS WITH STOCKTON UNIVERSITY TO STRENGTHEN LITERACY AND PRESERVICE TEACHER PREPARATION

BY RENEE ALFORD

Conundrum: a confusing and difficult problem or question. As a teacher of reading and writing, I recognize this as a typical vocabulary word my students would investigate. As a teacher of reading and writing this is also a real-life situation. When a majority of students enter your classroom reading well below grade level, and your district removes vital systems of support—such as basic skills instructors and resources in reading interventions—because of budgetary constraints, you have a confusing and difficult problem. Could a partnership that was developed years before be the answer?

Renee Alford is a second-grade teacher in Pleasantville. She is a 2018 New Jersey Exemplary Educator and the 2007 Atlantic County Teacher of the Year. She can be reached at alford.renee@pps-nj.us.

LITERACY BACKGROUND

My passion for literacy began in 2004 when I entered the Literacy Collaborative at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Balanced literacy opened my eyes to teaching reading, writing and word study immersed in the workshop model and centered around interactive read-alouds. I became certified as an intermediate literacy coordinator in 2007 and went on to work with students in third through eighth grades for a number of years.

When budget cuts forced basic skills instructors and interventionists back into the classroom at the beginning of the 2017 school year, I was assigned to a second-grade inclusion class, and quickly realized the reading needs of my students presented many challenges; the necessary, effective and explicit phonics program was missing as was the staff needed to work one-on-one and in small skill-based groups with my students. Matt Barnard, my special education co-teacher, was just as concerned and frustrated.

“We simply didn’t have the appropriate resources to differentiate instruction to meet the variety of early reading needs of our students,” Barnard said.

OCEANFIRST FOUNDATION MODEL CLASSROOM GRANT

The OceanFirst Model Classroom Grant came

to my attention at this time. The \$10,000 grant is designed to help teachers develop a model classroom for learning.

In order to secure the grant, I knew I had to think outside the box. How could I approach the needs of my students in an innovative way? After consulting with my principal, Teresa McGaney-Guy, we felt this was an opportunity to address the literacy needs in my classroom as well as other primary classrooms at North Main Street School. Once a reading facilitator herself, McGaney-Guy has always understood the importance of helping students become proficient readers.

“We’ve been struggling with cracking the code, with teaching our students how to read,” she said.

A previous collaboration I had enjoyed with Stockton University School of Education while teaching middle school came to mind. Could another collaboration with Stockton be the answer? I already understood how the university students could benefit my students, but how could North Main benefit Stockton and their students?

I recalled a recent conversation with my principal regarding prospective teachers coming to interviews unable to address interventions, especially reading interventions, in the classroom. I knew this was the avenue to take.

North Main would provide the Stockton students, who themselves were preparing to be teachers, with experience and training in areas of early reading instruction, but with a focus on interventions. Once contacted, Stockton Associate Professor of Literacy Susan Cydis, Associate Professor of Special Education Priti Haria and Associate Professor of Education Shelly Meyers, gave their immediate support to another collaboration.

THE MODEL CLASSROOM COLLABORATION PLAN

The Stockton and North Main team met to refine our approach, and I submitted the grant application. If awarded, the \$10,000 grant would go toward the purchase of an explicit phonics-based program, professional development and flexible furnishings. At an event in early October 2018, I was fortunate enough to be one of the 25 grantees selected out of 144 proposals.

Now the real work would begin, but what exactly was the plan?

Originally Stockton was to provide five uni-

versity students to work with the students in my second-grade inclusion classroom. In turn these university students would be invited to attend professional development in an explicit phonics-based program, benchmark assessments, progress monitoring and running records. However, it quickly became clear to Stockton that this was an opportunity they wanted to take full advantage of and by the time I was awarded the grant the program had expanded. Stockton would now commit 10 university students (preservice teachers), to be placed into my second-grade inclusion classroom as well as a first-grade inclusion classroom.

Each Stockton student would provide 50 clinical hours. In addition, Stockton decided to hold a three-credit undergraduate Literacy Development course directly in my classroom. This began in January 2019.

By June, the commitment had grown, and Stockton now provided us with 25 university students, including 50 clinical hours, in addition to continuing the Literacy Development course. Now even more classrooms and students would benefit from the collaboration.

SITUATED LEARNING

According to Shelly Meyers, associate professor of special education, situated learning is defined as a means for preservice teachers to apply the skills and knowledge from college coursework to the school setting. Learning occurs in an authentic setting and provides students with a more holistic approach to learning as they are taught the theory and immediately put that theory into practice under the supervision of university faculty and expert mentor teachers.

Several components of situated learning are integral to the effectiveness of the model. The teaching and learning environments are highly structured, and university faculty and mentor classroom teachers are consistent in their instructional approaches, teaching research-proven strategies with integrity. University faculty and mentor classroom teachers provide support and scaffold preservice teachers throughout the teaching and learning process and offer immediate feedback so that the preservice teachers reflect and modify their methods immediately.

“Situated learning is a real-world approach for preservice teachers to practice their skills and knowledge with school-aged students that

directly links college coursework to classroom practice,” says Meyers.

This type of immersion into the classroom has allowed the Stockton students to learn and experience so much, firsthand, in an abbreviated amount of time. They go through the process of theory, professional learning and implementation.

This hands-on experience that is being played out in the classroom is also what is showing up on the Praxis teaching exam. More subtle and nuanced are the benefits a flexible learning environment has on students’ motivation to learn and how classroom management is implemented in these whole-group and small-group lessons. Preservice teachers come to realize that things won’t always go as planned; you have to be able to adapt to the moment.

A TYPICAL LANGUAGE ARTS BLOCK

Three preservice teachers enter the classroom, readily joining the students at their tables as they finish breakfast and wait for the morning announcements, catching up on anything new in their lives. This personal check-in has our students smiling and giggling with a sparkle in their eyes as the soak up this attention.

As the ELA block begins, one preservice teacher will take a student and their phonics kit to the carpet for a 20-minute phonics intervention lesson. This will be followed by some special time to read together in a student-selected independent reading book.

Another preservice teacher will take a small guided reading group. Lively conversations always follow as the preservice teacher activates background knowledge or discusses vocabulary words, allowing the students to make personal connections as they are drawn into the lesson.

The third preservice teacher will accompany a small group of students to the library to monitor progress for fluency. As they return hand in hand, students are begging for more time to read with the preservice teacher.

“My experience at North Main Street School has further shaped my outlook on the teaching profession,” says preservice student Lucero Chavez. “In Mrs. Alford’s class I was able to witness the tremendous impact she, as well as the environment of the school, had on the students. I truly appreciate the opportunity I had to create meaningful relationships with the students as well as learn valuable skills I can transfer to my own teaching in a future classroom.”

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT COURSE

The course, embedded in an authentic setting is

designed so the university students are immersed in an actual classroom and can experience specific, focused lessons in action. They are able to observe the teacher and student interactions. They see a lesson through from anticipatory set, minilesson, guided practice, independent practice and formative assessment. They observe and support the students.

The last hour of our school day is the first hour of the preservice teacher’s Literacy Development course. After the elementary students are dismissed for the day, the professors and preservice teachers debrief what they observed and then delve even more deeply into the topic.

As a follow-up, they practice what they are learning with the elementary students during their clinical hours under the supervision of a mentor classroom teacher.

Dr. Susan Cydis has recognized a difference in her Literacy Development students.



A Stockton University student practices teaching literacy with a Pleasantville student. Photo by Diane D’Amico/Stockton University.

“The students coming here are developing more confidence and competence,” she says.

Dr. Cydis and Dr. Haria have also delivered modeled lessons in our classrooms. As a classroom teacher, I am now able to observe how another professional would deliver a lesson, yet another perspective. I see best practices in action and that can only help me improve my own instruction.

BENEFITS FOR EVERY PARTICIPANT

Just who benefits the most from this collaboration? Talk to any party involved and we could each make a case.

Preservice teachers are receiving invaluable, authentic, hands-on experience with exposure to the components and language of early reading skills. The professors are able to provide a real-world learning experience that allows them to teach a topic more deeply than ever before. Classroom teachers can target their interventions more precisely because they now have more hands, ears and eyes to work with their readers.

What about the North Main students?

Admittedly, the North Main students didn’t recognize the bigger picture in this collaboration. However, they now have older students in their classroom every day who care about them and their reading—and who, by the way, are amazing role models for our students when we talk about setting goals for their own future. These university students help them set goals, encourage them and give them confidence. They check in on how they are feeling. The bonds they forged were stronger than I could have imagined.

Many times, a challenging student is challenging because they require more attention than you are able to provide. These Stockton and North Main student partnerships alleviated such situations. Our students created connections and relationships that motivated them, every day, to want to become better readers.

SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE

Our next step at North Main is to build a professional learning community (PLC) around this program, where teachers and professors work even more closely together to design and demonstrate lessons revolving around best practices in literacy. Stockton’s next step is to expand this program into another elementary school in Pleasantville.

While I am grateful to an organization like OceanFirst Foundation, the beauty of this collaboration is that it doesn’t rely on any dollar amount to move into the future. It does require commitment, communication, planning, organization and the willingness to mentor others.

This type of valuable programming requires a true commitment, not just at the teacher and professor level, but at leadership levels. I have welcomed Dr. Claudine Keenan, Dean of Education, into my classroom as well as leadership from Pleasantville School District and OceanFirst Foundation to see firsthand the difference this type of collaboration can make in the lives of elementary and university students.

“Teaching reading is rocket science,” writes Dr. Louisa Moats, a nationally recognized authority on reading instruction. This quote says it all. There is no magic wand that we can wave over our students to make them become proficient readers. In fact, we can all be struggling readers at some point in our life depending on the demands of the text.

Research tells us that if a child isn’t reading on grade level by the end of kindergarten, each year the gap increases. As a child enters fourth grade the curricular focus shifts from learning to read to reading to learn. These early years are crucial, and I am attempting to set a strong reading foundation for elementary students and university students. 📖

EDUCATION IN FINLAND

WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

BY DRS. TRACEY GARRETT
AND SHARON MCKOOL

What comes to mind when you think of Finland?

For many, it is the fact that Finland is often considered the educational powerhouse of the world. This remarkable reputation is primarily attributed to the consistently high scores that Finnish students earn on the PISA Survey. The PISA Survey, conducted every three years by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) compares 15-year-olds in different countries in reading, math and science.

Tracey Garrett, Ed.D. is a professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Rider University. She can be reached at tgarrett@rider.edu.

Sharon McKool, Ph.D is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Teacher Education at Rider University. She can be reached at smckool@rider.edu.

Finland has ranked at or near the top in all three competencies on every survey since 2000, neck and neck with other educational powerhouses such as Singapore and South Korea. These consistently high marks along with the country's reputation as one of the happiest places in the world indicates that Finland is doing something right.

What is the secret to their success? What can a group of future New Jersey public school teachers learn from a visit to Finland and an opportunity to explore its school system?

Rider University, a private university located in Lawrenceville, graduates approximately 100 new teachers every year of which the majority will obtain teaching positions in New Jersey public school classrooms. The school has a thriving study abroad program. For eight years, Rider University has annually conducted short-term (10-14 days), faculty-led study abroad experiences for preservice teachers to explore educational and cultural differences in other countries. The program has included experiences in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Spain, Germany, Austria and Italy. The most recent trip this past May brought the preservice teachers to Finland.

This trip afforded 20 preservice teachers and two full-time faculty members the opportunity to spend 10 days in Finland. The group divided its time between two major cities including Helsinki, the capital, and Turku, the former capital. Students visited cultural sites such as Turku Castle and Suomenlinna, a 250-year-old fortress that is included on UNESCO's World Heritage sites.

The main draw was the opportunity to explore the educational system. The group visited the University of Helsinki and several primary and middle schools. The group also heard presentations from the Education Divisions in each city.

Our main goal for the trip was to explore the educational system and try to figure out what Finland is doing right. However, we quickly

realized that there isn't any one thing that is key to the nation's success. Rather, there are several beliefs and practices at the heart of the Finnish educational system that resonated with our future teachers because they appeared in sharp contrast with current beliefs and practices in the United States.

KEY BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN EDUCATION IN FINLAND

Structure of teacher education

Teacher education in Finland has some striking differences with teacher preparation programs in the United States. First, there are extremely competitive entrance requirements for admission to a teacher preparation program in Finland.

Although admission criteria vary slightly at different universities, generally, applicants are assessed based on their upper secondary school record, their extracurricular activities, and their score on the Matriculation Exam, which is taken at the end of upper secondary school. Applicants must also take the Vakava entrance exam, a take-home, multiple-choice exam that assesses their ability to think critically and evaluate arguments in the education sciences.

Once an applicant makes it beyond this first round of screening, they are observed in a teaching-like activity and interviewed. Only candidates with a clear aptitude for teaching in addition to strong academic performance are admitted. According to the City of Helsinki Education Division, only approximately 10% of teachers are accepted into teacher prep programs each year.

Getting into a teacher preparation program is often considered as competitive as entrance to medical or law school, which is in sharp contrast from entry to teacher preparation programs in the United States, where entrance requirements are often not considered very rigorous.

A second difference is that all teachers in Finland are highly trained. Specifically, all primary and secondary teachers are required to hold a master's degree before beginning their career. This means that all teachers in Finland receive extensive and rigorous training in both content knowledge and pedagogy for approximately five years.

In the U.S., however, there are a growing number of fast-track programs such as Teach for America and various alternate-route programs that allow teachers to teach in classrooms after minimal preparation. Some of these programs provide as little as 10 weeks of pedagogical training before teachers are placed into a classroom.

Societal respect for teachers and the teaching profession

Teaching in Finland is an esteemed profession. According to the National Center on Education and The Economy, primary school teaching is one of the most sought after and prestigious careers in Finland. Teachers are respected, trusted and encouraged to be autonomous and craft their own pedagogical style. Their professional judgments are trusted to a degree that is rare among countries

around the world. As a result of the effective preparation and the positive working conditions, according to Pasi Sahlberg, a leading Finnish expert on education, the retention rate amongst Finnish teachers is between 85-90%.

In sharp contrast, American teachers often feel disrespected and devalued in society when compared to other professions. According to researchers Richard Ingersoll, Lisa Merrill and Henry May in *What Are the Effects of Teacher Education and Preparation on Beginning Teacher Attrition*, 42% of American teachers leave within the first five years of their careers.

Approach to learning and school

The Finns approach schooling and learning differently than Americans. Finnish students start school at a later age, receive less homework, have shorter school days, spend more time at recess and have more free time than American students.

One of the most striking differences with

Finland's approach to school is that compulsory education ends after ninth grade. At that point, students are required to choose one of two paths. The first path is to continue on a traditional academic path for 10th through 12th grade. The other option is to acquire a skill or trade through the vocational path. Each path is equally valued by society. In fact, according to the City of Helsinki Education Division over the last few years, the percentage of students selecting the traditional academic path versus a vocational path is 52% to 48%, respectively.

This is in contrast with views on schooling in our culture where students are highly encouraged to follow a traditional academic path through college graduation while choosing a vocational path often carries a negative societal stigma.

High value on independence

The Finns place a high value on creating independent children both inside and outside the classroom. It is customary that when 7-year-olds begin school, they are responsible for getting themselves to and from school without parental

Primary school teaching is one of the most sought after and prestigious careers in Finland.

In addition to exploring public education in Finland, 20 preservice educators from Finland also explored the cities of Turku and Helsinki.





Rider University students learn what it takes to become a teacher in Finland.

assistance. Often this involves navigating a public transportation system independently. In addition, when children are approximately 9 or 10 years old, they also begin to care for themselves before and after school, which involves tasks such as preparing lunches and after-school snacks and getting themselves to after school activities.

During school hours, many students are allowed to come and go during lunchtime and free periods. There is a high degree of trust and a belief that students are capable of taking care of themselves.

One instance that resonated with many of us took place during a field trip. A class of 9-year-olds was visiting Suomenlinna, a 250-year-old fortress at the same time as our group. The nine-year-old students were free to decide if they wanted to purchase a snack from the vendor. If they chose to do so, students were permitted to walk over to the vendor, select an item, pay for it and count their change without any parental or teacher assistance. This is in stark contrast with what many of us have experienced when we spend time in elementary classrooms or on class trips where numerous parents are on hand to assist for even the simplest tasks.

PERSONAL TAKEAWAYS

Much of what resonated with Rider's preservice educators is likely beyond their control to change. For example, they can't singlehandedly change the structure of teacher education or influence how society views the teaching profession. However, observing these fundamental and societal differences did inspire these future teachers to become more intentional in several areas of their practice including:

- Take ownership of one's own professional development: Whether choosing to continue to pursue a masters' degree, attending educational conferences or participating in self-selected professional development workshops, it is essential to embody the mindset of becoming a lifelong learner and continually increasing one's knowledge and honing one's teaching skills.

- Be an outstanding model of professionalism: Despite the current conditions under which American educators work, our future teachers understood the value of presenting an exemplary model of professionalism when interacting with students, parents, and the general public, and when using technology and social media as a means to portray teaching as a professional and respected profession.
- Advocate for a renewed emphasis on the importance of vocational education: With the increasing need for skilled labor in our society, it is critical that educators begin to support the value of a vocational educational path.

CLASSROOM TAKEAWAYS

The Finns' commitment to fostering independence in young children caused us to reflect on classroom practices that are commonly implemented in New Jersey and how these practices affect our ability to foster independence in our students both inside and outside the classroom.

For example, it is not uncommon to witness the use of group bathroom breaks, assigned lunchroom or classroom seating and extrinsic, reward or bribery-based classroom management systems. Another common practice in early childhood is the use of a rope with handles for each child to take hold and be safely led even a minimal distance.

These and other common practices undermine students' ability to become independent because they rob children of the opportunity to have freedom, make choices (good and bad) and learn from their mistakes. In contrast, here are some classroom practices that can help foster independence including:

- Implement a proactive classroom management approach: Build your classroom management plan around the idea of preventing misbehavior through effective classroom rules and routines, strong interpersonal

relationships and engaging instruction rather than utilize an extrinsic, reward-based system such as Class Dojo or other similar systems. These systems bribe or intimidate students into behaving rather than providing opportunities for students to develop the ability to make good decisions about their behavior without the use of extrinsic control methods.

- Provide freedom: Permit students to use the bathroom at their discretion rather than with the whole class. Consider having students move through the hallways without walking in a line from point A to B. Allow students to choose where to sit in the lunchroom and who to sit next to during class. Trust students to rise to high behavioral expectations and use their mistakes as a learning opportunity to make better choices the next time a similar situation arises.
- Include opportunities for choice: Schedule time into your day where students can exercise choice. For example, instead of starting the day with a "Do Now" activity, consider allowing students 10 minutes to use any way they choose such as playing a quick game or socializing. Allow time for students to choose self-selected texts or write about topics that interest them rather than assigned prompts. Opportunities such as these allow students to practice decision-making skills.

Practices such as the ones discussed above allow students freedom and provide them with opportunities to make choices and learn from their mistakes. They will help students develop independent thinking and decision-making skills that will serve them well for many years both inside and outside the classroom. This is a key takeaway from the Finnish educational system that would benefit American students.

In this school year, why not take some time to reflect on how you can incorporate opportunities for students to become more independent in your classroom? 🇫🇮



Finnish educator and scholar Pasi Sahlberg, addressing the 2014 NJEA Convention.



The **New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership (NJEXCEL)** Program is offered by NJPSA's Foundation for Educational Administration (FEA). NJEXCEL is the state-approved, innovative, non-traditional **certification program** with distinct models leading to a Certificate of Eligibility for Principal, Supervisor, Director of School Counseling Services, or School Administrator.



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New Cohorts begin each January and July in the following locations:

- North - Parsippany-Troy Hills, NJ
- Central - FEA Conference Center in Monroe Twp., NJ
- South - Timber Creek High School in Erial, NJ

To learn more about the **NJEXCEL** certification program and get started, call **(609) 860-1200** or visit www.njexcel.org

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JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Did you know that NJEA has affiliated groups representing educators and educational support professionals in specific fields, including all content and curricular areas and other job titles such as guidance, world languages, library and media, technology, school psychologists, teachers of the gifted, office professionals, Holocaust education, and many others?

In many small districts, and at your school building, you may be the only one tasked with a special area of expertise. Especially if others don't understand what you do, it is wonderful to share strategies and meet educators from other districts who are doing the same job.

Joining one or more of these groups may provide you special opportunities through a newsletter, website or social media groups. You may also find discounts for workshops, conferences and webinars. You'll discover recognition opportunities and sharing sessions.

Through these organizations you can advocate for your students and your position in Trenton and in Washington. Numbers count when addressing elected officials. When a politician asks, "How many educators belong to this group?" you can help show your support by being a member.

Several times a year, each NJEA Affiliated Group sends a representative to NJEA headquarters to meet with other groups' representatives to discuss key issues impacting public education, as well as for sharing ideas and services. Many workshops at the annual NJEA convention in Atlantic City are hosted by NJEA affiliated groups and offer up-to-the-minute research and practices for you to use in your classroom or work setting.

Connect with colleagues who "get it" and do what you do, by joining an Affiliated Group of NJEA. It is a professional responsibility and service that will benefit you, not only on your annual evaluation, but in your classroom.

Titles, descriptions and contact information for NJEA's many affiliated groups follow.

Roberta Braverman, the vice president for advocacy at the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children, provided this introduction.

Note: While every effort has been made to produce an accurate listing, we recognize that some descriptions or contact information may have changed. In those instances, please contact Liz Murphy, Communications Division at lmurphy@njea.org so that the information may be updated.



CONNECT WITH OTHERS IN YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION

ART

ART EDUCATORS OF NEW JERSEY (AENJ)

AENJ.ORG

The Art Educators of New Jersey (AENJ) is the state's professional association for visual arts educators teaching in public, private, parochial and charter schools, colleges/universities, museums and art centers.

AENJ provides quality professional development and advocates for visual arts educators throughout the year. This includes an annual conference, lectures and workshops, publications, member and student exhibition opportunities, and scholarships and grants to arts educators and their students.

Dues: \$50; \$20 for retired, first-year professional and student members

Contact: Tamika Diaz;
membership@aenj.org

BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

N.J. BUSINESS/ TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION ASSN. (NJBTEA)

NJBTEA.ORG

NJBTEA advocates for business/technology education and provides opportunities for professional growth leading to quality business/technology education programs.

NJBTEA offers many avenues to fulfill these purposes including, but not limited to, a fall convention; conferences, workshops, tours and seminars; newsletters; award programs for students and professionals; and professional opportunities.

Dues: \$40 for professionals and associate members; \$20 for retired professional or associate members; \$10

for undergraduate students enrolled in a business/technology education program

Contact: Robert Carson;
njbtea@comcast.net

N.J. ASSN. FOR EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY (NJAET)

NJAET.ORG

NJAET is dedicated to helping teachers use technology to improve learning. Membership provides newsletters from NJAET and Big Deal Media, professional development activities, technology project mini-grants for teachers.

Dues: Membership is free.

Contact: Sharon Julien;
sjulien@njaet.org

N.J. TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING EDUCATORS ASSN. (NJTEEA)

NJTEEA.ORG

NJTEEA is a professional organization for K-12 design, technology, engineering, and other STEM educators that promotes the goals and objectives of technology education and technological literacy as well as STEM initiatives.

NJTEEA provides various high-impact, hands-on professional development opportunities at model schools as well as at supportive industry locations. It also provides email updates to members three to four times a month, a STEM Boot Camp in the beginning of the academic year and an annual spring conference and expo.

Dues: \$50; \$12 for undergraduate or retired members

Contact: Matthew Emmett;
njteea@njteea.org

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS

ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY OF N.J. (ATSNJ)

ATSNJ.ORG

ATSNJ is dedicated to the advancement and improvement of the athletic training profession. It continually strives to ensure that physically active persons receive the best possible health care.

ATSNJ members receive discounted rates for the annual athletic training conference and have access to free CEU opportunities via regional meetings. ATSNJ continues to be active legislatively to ensure appropriate health care for active persons and to ensure proper protections for the profession of athletic training. Members also receive newsletters and electronic postings about athletic training and have members-only access to various areas of the ATSNJ website.

Dues: \$65; \$20 for students

Contact: Keir Livingston;
Livingstonk@atsnj.org

CLASSICAL STUDIES

NEW JERSEY CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION (NJCA)

NJCLASSICS.ORG

NJCA is an organization for educators working to advance the cause of classical studies, the Latin and Greek languages and the study of Greco-Roman mythology. Members are teachers from elementary grades through college in public, private and parochial schools.

Members benefits include fall and spring meetings, scholarship offerings, materials, resources, mentoring and a placement service.

Dues: \$20; \$10 for retired and student members

Contact: Marlene Weiner;
marweiner@aol.com

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

N.J. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES/ N.J. BILINGUAL EDUCATORS (NJTESOL/ NJBE)

NJTESOL-NJBE.ORG

NJTESOL/NJBE is the professional organization of English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education teachers for all levels. Membership is open to all educators interested in current information on educating bilingual and English language learners (ESL students).

NJTESOL/NJBE sponsors several conferences throughout the year and keeps members informed through newsletters and online discussion of hot topics in ESL/bilingual education. The organization is deeply involved in advocacy/political action and collaborative activities with other professional organizations.

Dues: \$35/year; \$59/two years with the benefits of participating in the hotlist, receiving the *Voices* newsletter and getting discounts on the conference payment.

Contact: Representative – Alamelu Sundaram-Walters;
asundaram22@gmail.com; Membership Chair – Joan Pujol,
mabbr@njtesol-njbe.org

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

EDUCATORS OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES-N.J. (EFACS-NJ)

EFACS-NJ is dedicated to networking with K-12 family and consumer science teachers and keeping them apprised of philosophies and technologies related to Career and Technical Education, Career Readiness Practices, and STEAM curricula. The organization supports Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) and provides professional development workshops for FCS teachers.

Dues: \$20

Contact: Carol Otis; carolotis1@aol.com; 201-923-0898; or Patricia Digiioia-Laird; njfccla@gmail.com or 908-791-9906 or 732-452-2862 (school)

GIFTED CHILDREN

N.J. ASSN. FOR GIFTED CHILDREN (NJAGC)

NJAGC.ORG

The New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC) is a champion for gifted children. Its members are passionate advocates promoting programs, networks and legislative actions to meet the needs of these students statewide. NJAGC believes that a strong and supportive partnership between parents and educators increases understanding and expands opportunities for gifted children. Its Educator Division serves the needs of all educators, guidance counselors and administrators and provides regional events, an annual conference and other small workshops. NJAGC also offers a quarterly e-newsletter, NewsNet, and a website with outstanding resources.

Dues: \$40; \$25 for full-time college students; \$30 for retired

Contact: Lisa Bianchi; lbianchi@tenafly.k12.nj.us

GUIDANCE

N.J. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. (NJCEA)

NJCEA provides professional programs, services and opportunities to cooperative education coordinators and structured learning coordinators. NJCEA is at the forefront of workforce education issues, working in concert with the N.J. Department of Education, the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

NJCEA provides three membership meetings in various New Jersey locations annually, offering relevant presentations and professional development.

Dues: \$30

Contact: John Hillard, president, jvhillard74@yahoo.com; or Rob Carson, past president, rcarson@burltwpsch.org; 609-387-1713, ext. 6069

N.J. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION COORDINATORS ASSN. (NJCECA)

NJCECA.ORG

NJCECA is an organization for instructors involved in student job placement. NJCECA membership provides guidance, resources and outreach for teachers to enhance their work-study and transition programs and collaborate in program planning.

Meetings are held at sponsor sites the third Thursday of each month. Presentations are given by guest speakers

to provide two hours of professional development. The meetings are fun and informative and offer an environment of camaraderie and professionalism.

Dues: \$25

Contact: Gerry Carroll; gercar@bergen.org; 201-343-6000, ext. 4603

NEW JERSEY SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSN., INC. (NJSCA)

NJSCA.ORG

NJSCA works to advance the school counseling profession to maximize the personal, social, educational, academic and college career readiness of each student, elementary through post-secondary. It is a division of the American School Counselor Association.

NJSCA provides a bimonthly electronic newsletter, annual fall and spring professional development conferences, student and counselor recognition programs, and advocacy for school counselors.

Dues: \$40; \$30 for students enrolled in a counseling program; \$15 for retirees

Contact: Jim Lukach; jimlukach@msn.com; 732-846-6468

HIGHER EDUCATION

NEW JERSEY COUNTY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION (NJCCA)

The New Jersey College Association (NJCCA) is an interactive networking, political action and lobbying group. The goals of NJCCA are to create a forum where public higher education is promoted, advocate for exceptional standards of professional excellence and serve as a liaison among the multiple

local associations in the county colleges. The association advocates for all NJEA county college members.

Quarterly meetings are held to discuss and act on issues affecting higher education and to support affordable higher education.

We seek members who can contribute time and ideas for meaningful contributions and projects that will bring a spot light to the collective impactful work of the community college community. Association membership is open to full-time, employed community college NJEA members.

Dues: Annual local association dues range from \$50 to \$250 (based on number of members); individual memberships at \$20.

Contact: Maureen Behr, President at moseynj@yahoo.com

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

THE COUNCIL OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATORS (CHE)

CHE is a professional development organization for educators who teach about the Holocaust, genocide and human rights. CHE grew out of a long-standing need for educators to organize as professionals and to become a voice for teachers and students participating in Holocaust/genocide education. CHE is committed to the effort to instill in our students a sense of the importance of recognizing and respecting the value of each individual human life and the human dignity of all people as a deterrent to future genocide and to foster a peaceful world. CHE provides its members with the opportunity to find mutual support from colleagues in their educational

efforts and to further the instructional program and goals of Holocaust education through ongoing professional development.

CHE provides opportunities for networking and professional development designed by teachers for teachers. On Facebook search for Council of Holocaust Educators.

Dues: None

Contact: Colleen Tambuscio; ctambuscio@aol.com; 609-292-9274

KINDERGARTEN

N.J. ASSN. OF KINDERGARTEN EDUCATORS (NJAKE)

NJAKE.NET

NJAKE is an organization of kindergarten and early childhood educators. It promotes strategies to strengthen communication with the public regarding the intellectual, emotional, physical and social values achieved through developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs.

Membership provides opportunities for networking on issues and questions pertaining to early childhood education through newsletters and workshops.

Dues: \$25 for unified county/state memberships; \$10 for retired and student members

Contact: Bonnie Gentesse; BGentesse@verizon.net; 908-377-4344.

LANGUAGE ARTS

N.J. COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH (NJCTE)

NJCTE.ORG

NJCTE includes teachers of English, administrators, university faculty and those committed to applying the power of language and literacy to pursue justice and equity. The organization holds fall and spring statewide conferences, sponsors informal SPARK sessions, runs a student writing contest, publishes a blog and the New Jersey English Journal, and honors veteran, early career, and preservice English teachers.

Dues: \$25; \$15 for pre-service teachers and retirees

Contact: Denise Weintraut, membership chair, njctemembership@gmail.com; Audrey Fisch, president, njctepresident@gmail.com

N.J. LITERACY ASSOC. (NJLA) – (FORMERLY N.J. READING ASSN.)

NJLA is a professional network of educators and individuals (prekindergarten to adult levels) interested in advancing literacy, promoting effective practices and encouraging appropriate assessment through advocacy, collaboration, and professional development.

NJLA provides annual conferences, workshops and opportunities for communication among educators who share common interests in literacy education.

Dues: Free

Contact: njliteracy@gmail.com

LIBRARY/MEDIA

N.J. ASSN OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (NJASL)

NJASL.ORG

NJASL is a professional organization of school librarians teaching in public, private and parochial schools, prekindergarten to college level. It advocates high standards for librarianship and library programs to ensure that students and staff become effective users of information.

NJASL inspires excellence in the school library program by providing school librarians with educational opportunities and current information through workshops and a conference.

As allies and partners in teaching students, NJASL encourages teachers, administrators and other educational colleagues to join, with benefits including professional development and collegial networking.

Dues: \$65

Contact: Betsy Quinn; membership@njasl.org

MATHEMATICS

ASSN. OF MATHEMATICS TEACHERS OF N.J. (AMTNJ)

AMTNJ.ORG

AMTNJ encourages and promotes the growth of quality instruction in mathematics.

Annual events include a special education conference, a winter conference, a tech conference, a periodic supervisors' conference and a two-day annual conference. Membership is open to persons engaged or interested in the teaching of mathematics (prekindergarten through college) in educational institutions, public, private and parochial.

AMTNJ provides newsletters and journals, online professional development, summer institutes, student activities and contests, minigrant opportunities, mailings and e-blasts. AMTNJ will bring professional development tailored to your specific needs directly to your location.

Dues: \$30/year for professionals (\$50/two years); \$15/year for retirees and preservice teachers

Contact: Administrator Susan Landers; amtnj@juno.com; 732-788-1257

MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

N.J. ASSOCIATION FOR MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION (NJAMLE)

NJAMLE.ORG

The New Jersey Association for Middle Level Education (NJAMLE) is a professional membership organization focused on meeting the needs of young adolescents. As an affiliate of the national organization, the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE).

NJAMLE serves as a voice for middle level educators, students, parents and other stakeholders committed to excellence in middle level education. NJAMLE provides leadership, professional learning and advocacy in support of its belief that all young adolescents must be academically challenged in an educational environment that meets their unique cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs.

Dues: Individual annual membership is \$20. Institutional or school annual membership is \$99. Individuals also have the opportunity for dual

membership in both NJAMLE and AMLE. This dual membership is only \$69.99 for the year. Visit njamle.org for a membership application and more information.

Contacts: Tina Monteleone; tinamonte13@gmail.com. Follow NJAMLE on Twitter at @njamle, and like NJAMLE at facebook.com/njamle.

MUSIC

N.J. MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSN. (NJMEA)

NJMEA.ORG

NJMEA is an organization of general, choral and instrumental music educators, prekindergarten through college in public, private and parochial schools.

The organization sponsors a variety of professional development opportunities and advocacy efforts that focus on emerging trends and issues in music education. Members' students may audition for region ensembles, as well as All-State Chorus, Orchestra, Band and Jazz Ensemble. Members may also choose to participate in other NJMEA-sponsored performance activities as applicable.

Dues: \$129; \$60 for retirees; \$32 for college students. An introductory price for first-year teachers who are collegiate members: \$54.

Contact: Patrick O'Keefe; patrickaokeefe@gmail.com

NURSES

N.J. STATE SCHOOL NURSES ASSOCIATION (NJSSNA)

NJSSNA.ORG

NJSSNA provides direction for leadership and advocacy in the specialty practice of school nursing. It promotes

professional and ethical standards and guidelines through research, education and communication. Members of NJSSNA include certified school nurses, faculty at New Jersey's universities charged with preparing certified school nurses, and registered nurses working in early childhood programs or in New Jersey's private and parochial schools.

NJSSNA communicates frequently with members, sponsors an annual statewide conference featuring nationally known speakers and provides timely educational programs at the NJEA Convention and throughout the year.

Dues: For a dues schedule go to www.NASN.org. Membership in NJSSNA is included.

Contact: Executive Director Marie Sasso; njssnaexecutivedirector@gmail.com

OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

N.J. ASSN. OF EDUCATIONAL OFFICE PROFESSIONALS (NJAEOP)

NJAEOP is New Jersey's only professional organization for educational office professionals. Under a mission of "Service, Integrity, Skill," NJAEOP provides professional development and promotes the expertise and contributions of educational office professionals. Membership is open to clerks, business office personnel, central office personnel, secretaries, administrative assistants, executive assistants and others who work in public and private schools as well as colleges. NJAEOP publishes a newsletter.

Dues: \$20

Contact: President Judi Schwenger, geojud222@gmail.com

or 609-965-4181; Dawn Leek, Horizons editor at jeffdawnleek@gmail.com

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

N.J. ASSN. FOR HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, RECREATION AND DANCE (NJAPERD)

NJAPERD.ORG

NJAPERD promotes healthy active lifestyles for New Jersey's students, educators and community members. Its advocacy campaign, "Every Child Stronger, Every Life Longer," aims to improve the quality of health and physical education programs.

NJAPERD's annual events include a four-day convention that covers all aspects of health, physical education, recreation and dance. Annual, regional conferences are also held. These conferences are tailored for elementary, middle school and high school educators. Future professionals are offered an annual conference to prepare them for entry into their profession. Members receive the FYI, a biweekly e-newsletter and may apply for minigrants and awards.

Dues: \$65/year for professionals (\$120/two years, \$175/three years); \$20 retired; \$10 future professional (four years); \$60 new professional (two years)

Contact: John Russo; executive_director@njahperd.org; 732-918-9999

PRESERVICE EDUCATORS

NJEA PRESERVICE

NJEA.ORG/PRESERVICE

NJEA Preservice is organized on the college level and provides those services necessary to ensure preservice members are well prepared and ready to enter the teaching profession.

Dues: \$32

Contact: Marguerite Schroeder; mschroeder@njea.org

PSYCHOLOGISTS

N.J. ASSN. OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS (NJASP)

NJASP.ORG

NJASP is dedicated to serving and advocating for the mental health and educational growth and development of all children, the maintenance of high standards for school psychologists and the advancement of the profession.

NJASP offers two professional development conferences (winter and spring), regional workshops, a quarterly newsletter and updates on political and current trends.

Dues: \$75; \$25 for student affiliate members; \$45 for retirees; \$55 for affiliate members

Contact: Stephanie Frasier; stephfrasier@yahoo.com

RETIRED EDUCATORS

N.J. RETIREES' EDUCATION ASSN. (NJREA)

NJEA.ORG/NJREA

NJREA, the state's largest retiree organization, promotes the social, professional and economic status of retired educators and educational support professionals under a unified dues agreement with NJEA, NEA-Retired, and the 21 County Retired Education Associations (CREA) in New Jersey.

Annual events include fall and spring informational meetings/luncheons, a convention in Atlantic City in November, and CREA meetings and workshops throughout the year. Members receive up-to-date information on pension and health benefits through our award-winning quarterly newsletter as well as county mailings and emails.

Dues: Annual dues in NJREA/NJEA/NEA-R and CREA are approximately \$100 and may be paid by check or credit card. An automatic renewal option is available. Lifetime and pre-retirement lifetime membership in NJREA is available and may be paid in installments.

Contact: Walter Krichling at 609-599-4561, ext. 2300.

SPEECH/LANGUAGE

N.J. ASSN. OF SPEECH LANGUAGE SPECIALISTS (NJASLS)

NJASLS advocates for students with communication disabilities that affect their educational performance. NJASLS helps to secure conditions necessary for maximum efficacy of the speech language specialist,

advances the standards of the profession of speech language pathology in an educational setting, actively promotes the interests of members, and provides professional development at the NJEA Convention.

Dues: Two-year membership (Sept 2018-Aug. 2020) - \$35 regular members, \$15 retirees. All students will be offered free membership for this time period (with proof of student status).

Contact: Marion Glantz-president or Courtney Tacinelli, membership chair at njasls@yahoo.com

SCIENCE

N.J. SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSN. (NJSTA)

NJSTA.ORG

NJSTA promotes excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all. Its vision is to excite, empower and energize all science teachers. NJSTA strives to support and recognize science educators at all levels for their dedication and professionalism; advocates high-quality science instruction in varied and diverse settings, and seeks to generate and promote public interest in science and science education for all. NJSTA has worked hard this year to provide NGSS resources for all grade levels as teachers across the state implement these new standards in their classrooms.

NJSTA sponsors and co-sponsors various functions and activities including monthly newsletters, NJSTA Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award Summer Institute, N.J. Science Convention, NJSTA Membership Meetings, Super Science Saturday, NGSS support and resources, NJSTA Spring Meeting, NJEA Convention, and City of Science.

Dues: \$25; \$10 full-time students

Contact: Cheryl Zanone; njstapresident@gmail.com

SOCIAL STUDIES

N.J. COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES (NJCSS)

NJCSS.ORG

NJCSS includes social studies teachers, supervisors and university faculty. It advocates for the teaching and improvement of social studies instruction; supports the development and implementation of meaningful and effective social studies curriculum and instruction; provides a program of professional development for social studies educators; and provides for educational and professional interaction among social studies educators, professional organizations and government agencies.

Dues: \$25 for teachers; \$15 for pre-service teachers; \$40 for joint membership with the N.J. Social Studies Supervisors Association

Contact: Dayna Orlak; orlakd@waldwickschools.org

SOCIAL WORKERS

N.J. ASSN. OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS (NJASSW)

NJASSW.ORG

NJASSW is an organization of certified school social workers from the public and private sectors. It provides opportunities for the professional growth of its members and actively supports higher standards for school social work practice. It promotes the extension of school social work services to all children, facilitating social/emotional and educational growth, eliminating barriers to

learning, and linking school, family, and community.

Contact: admin@njassw.org or natlcswh@hotmail.com

SPECIAL EDUCATION

N.J. ASSOCIATION OF LEARNING CONSULTANTS (NJALC)

NEWJERSEYALC.ORG

NJALC is concerned with the continuing professional development and working conditions of learning consultants in public, private and parochial schools, as well as in private practice.

NJALC provides two conferences, regional workshops, newsletters, a journal, the *Main Book Summaries*, grants and a registry for LDT-Cs in public and private practice.

Dues: \$75; \$40 for retirees and students

Contact: Christine Holmes; president@newjerseyalc.org

N.J. COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (NJCEC)

NJCEC.ORG

The New Jersey Council for Exceptional Children (NJCEC) is the state division of the Council for Exceptional Children, the international/national board for special education. NJCEC/CEC is the professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. This organization acts as an advocate and guide in matters of federal legislation, professional standards, professional development, education of school personnel and families, effective classroom practice and resources available for effective professional practice. We accomplish our mission

through advocacy, standards and professional development. In addition, CEC has 17 divisions for specialized information, sponsors journals and newsletters, and hosts conferences and conventions at the local, state and national level.

NJCEC offers an annual conference, a professional publication(s) and newsletters that keeps members aware of national issues and current teaching strategies, professional and student recognition programs including scholarships for high school seniors with special needs and selection of a teacher of the year.

Dues: Premier membership \$205; Full \$115; Basic \$65 a year through International CEC.

Contact: Julie Norflus-Good at jandcgood@msn.com

SPEECH AND THEATER

SPEECH AND THEATRE ASSN. OF N.J. (STANJ)

STANJ.ORG

STANJ is the voice of advocacy for the inclusion of speech and theatre arts in educational curricula. The association includes volunteer members from elementary, middle, high school, college and professional theater who are interested in acting, directing, musical theater, technical theater, communication media, and theater education. Members may attend two professional development workshops per year as well as presentations at the NJEA Convention. Their students may participate in the Governor's Awards theatre competition in the areas of monologues, scenes and improvisation. First-place winners are honored at a ceremony held in Trenton. A college theater scholarship is also offered.

Dues: \$35

Contact: Danielle Miller; Danielle.miller@stanj.org; Chuck Miller; chuckmillermusic@gmail.com; Dan Paolucci; dcpaolucci@gmail.com

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

ASSN. OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS OF N.J. (ASAP-NJ)

ASAPNJ.ORG

ASAP-NJ is an organization of individuals employed in schools, agencies or school-based programs whose functions include advocating and developing a school-based student assistance/substance awareness program. The group meets the needs of youth in the education, prevention, intervention, and referral services for high-risk behaviors, including substance abuse and violence. A major portion of ASAP-NJ's work in schools involves mental health issues and substance abuse issues—emotional, psychological support services, crisis intervention and referrals to mental health facilities.

Members can attend a state conference, county monthly meetings, and workshops. ASAP-NJ provides specialized training on student assistance programs, substance use prevention, mental health issues, bullying, and related topics.

Dues: \$50

Contact: Lori Todd, President; asapnjboard@gmail.com

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ASSN. OF N.J. (CTEANJ)

ACTEONLINE.ORG

The mission of the CTEANJ is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive global workforce by fostering excellence in career and technical education; advocating national, state, and local public policy to benefit career and technical education; acting as a clearinghouse for education and information relating to all aspects of career and technical education, while providing access for professional development through programs, workshops, conferences, services, and opportunities that will ultimately benefit all students; and creating public awareness of career and technical education and its importance in developing a competitive global workforce.

CTEANJ hosts an annual scholarship program and members may nominate deserving career and technical education students. Thanks to unification with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), members receive additional benefits, including trade publications, national advocacy for career and technical education, legislative updates and the opportunity to attend national CTE conventions.

Dues: Membership is united with ACTE and costs \$80; \$31 for retirees

Contact: John Neyhart – jneyhart@gmail.com or jneyhart@ctemc.org

WORLD LANGUAGES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATORS OF N.J. (FLENJ)

FLENJ.ORG

FLENJ represents world language teachers (kindergarten through college). It advances and

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FLENJ offers professional development workshops as well as statewide meetings in the spring on topics of interest to the profession and latest developments in methodology, materials and technology. It also offers minigrants for teachers, a student video contest, an education abroad program scholarships, teacher and student award as well as senior scholarships.

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Contact: membership@flenj.org or FLENJ, PO Box 385, Fanwood, NJ 07023

N.J. CHAPTERS OF THE AMERICAN ASSN. OF TEACHERS OF SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE (NJAATSP)

NJAATSP.ORG

NJAATSP promotes the teaching of Spanish and Portuguese languages, culture and literature at all educational levels. It offers workshops and seminars, coordinates the National Spanish Examination and Honor Societies for middle and high school students, and holds an annual Spanish essay contest for high school seniors. Many student and teacher scholarships are available. Members receive *Hispania*, the official journal of AATSP, four times a year.

Dues: \$65 for both national and state memberships; \$25 for students

Contact: Jay Duhl; webmaster@njaatsp.org; 973-263-7001, ext. 3359. 📍

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ARTIFICIAL TURF: USE IT? BAN IT?

What are the options? Synthetic turf, or not—that is the question.

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

Government agencies, schools and parents want to know what harm artificial surfaces can cause. Present in thousands of playgrounds, athletic fields and other spaces, at least four states have considered bills to ban or restrict their use.

Concerns often center on children using the surfaces. With rapidly developing systems, their bodies are not fully ready to fend off toxic substances. They breathe more air per unit of body weight than adults. They are more likely than adults to get dirt on their hands and then into their mouths.

WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL TURF?

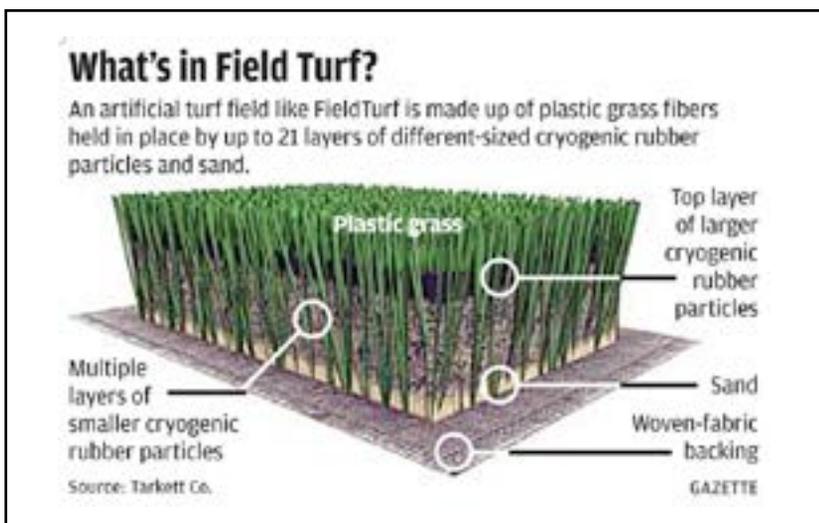
First introduced in the 1960s, current artificial turf products include playground mulch, poured-in-place playgrounds with rubber waste bases, and infill on synthetic grass athletic fields, golf courses, and indoor playing surfaces. The current generation of these products is based on the tire industry's response to the late 1990s billion-plus discarded tire problem—grind them up as an alternative for playground dirt and call it “rubber.”

There are no standards for synthetic turf content. The industry pitches its outdoor product as an “eco-friendly solution.” It also maintains there is no evidence the rubber particles are harmful, despite their many known toxic ingredients.

WHAT ARE THE QUESTIONS, CONCERNS?

It's difficult to determine everything in the rubber particles or other turf parts.

“There's an abundance of hazards baked into the material, and we know that they're not inert and are released over time,” says the Ecology Center's research director, Jeff Gearhart. “We don't think people



This graphic shows a typical multilayered structure. Plastic grass “blades” (ingredients historically included lead) attach to a fabric backing, separated by an “infill” (usually the tire “crumbs,” and sometimes sand). Below them are stones through which drainage pipes go. The infill provides “give.”
From cdn3.vox-cdn.com/assets/4335789/turfjgraphic.jpg.

Dorothy Wigmore is a long-time health and safety specialist, trained in occupational hygiene, ergonomics, work organization/stress and education. A Canadian, she has worked also in the U.S. and Mozambique, and been involved in efforts to prevent and deal with job-related hazards for many years.

fully understand the complexity of this material we're distributing into children's playgrounds and surfaces people play on."

In May, the Ecology Center reported finding very high lead levels in the shredded tire rubber waste fill in a Washington, D.C.-area school playground. Earlier this year, a study identified 306 ingredients in "crumb rubber," 192 of which are predicted to cause cancer. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are one of the main concerns. In June, the European Chemical Agency (ECHA) proposed restricting the use of PAH "granules and 'mulches' used as infill material in synthetic turf pitches and in loose forms on playgrounds and in sports applications."

We know there are many hazardous chemicals and metals in the "crumbs" and other components.

In July, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report about turf recycled crumb rubber ingredients looked for 21 metals and 80 chemicals. The Ecology Center and another nongovernmental organization want the EPA to retract its findings because of "inaccurate, incomplete, and unreliable information" and an unsubstantiated conclusion that there is little to worry about.

In contrast, Harvard University's Dr. Stuart Shalat describes the "Pippen Effect"—the cloud stirred up by activity on a synthetic surface. Based on his studies, "casual sampling of fields massively underestimates" what children likely are breathing.

Besides carcinogens, shredded tire products include known endocrine disruptors, neurotoxins, and respiratory, eye, and skin irritants. Other questions focus on the environmental

consequences of microplastics from the grass and runoff from outdoor fields.

"Turf burn" scrapes can be complicated if the surface's dust gets into an open wound. Several studies have found increased injuries on artificial surfaces, depending on the sport, footwear and other factors. The surfaces get hot easily; recorded temperatures can reach above 130 F and are more likely to give off volatile toxic chemicals. Heat-related illnesses from playing or coaching on the fields can be very serious.

"A lot of the marketing around crumb rubber fields has been very misleading," says Mount Sinai public health and pediatrics professor, Dr. Philip Landrigan. "The companies that are marketing the fields don't talk about the heat hazards, they don't talk about the chemical hazards, they don't talk about the costs that are going to be associated with dismantling the fields when they reach the end of their natural life span, when they must be treated as hazardous waste."

THERE ARE BETTER SOLUTIONS

Rather than arguing about how much exposure occurs from synthetic turf, use precaution with informed substitutes.

"A much better solution is to build fields that are properly elevated, properly drained and that are planted with tough species of grass that don't require pesticides," Landrigan says. That's doable. Most of those new substitutes have not been very carefully tested for their safety, so we don't really know what they might contain."

The Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) says the same thing. Its 2019 report concludes: "From an environmental and health standpoint, organically managed natural grass is a safer choice for sports fields. When the full product life cycle is considered, organically managed natural grass also offers lower costs over time."

For playgrounds, the Ecology Center recommends untreated virgin engineered wood fiber.



What can local associations do?

Put artificial turf on your health and safety committee's agenda. Invite coaches and other staff using artificial surfaces to discuss the hazards and short and long-term solutions. Topics should include:

-  The committee's role in any synthetic surface purchasing/replacement discussions.
-  Integrating information about synthetic turf hazards into mandatory activities about asthmatic students.
-  Setting heat limits for use of synthetic turf fields and indoor surfaces,
-  Providing shower and washing facilities for children and staff after using synthetic rubber crumb surfaces.
-  Providing information to parents about washing children's clothes separately after they've been on synthetic fields.
-  Working with parent groups and union leaders.

Conduct an inventory of synthetic turf sites in the district, their use patterns, and wear and tear. Discuss how to use the results. Bring the results to district administrators to develop policies and practices, and to the bargaining table where necessary.

Get involved in discussions about installing new surfaces. Raise the health and safety concerns, and recommendations for healthier options. Advocate for the use of wood fiber cover for playgrounds and organically managed natural grass surfaces outdoors.

Resources

US EPA: Federal research on recycled tire crumb used on playing fields.
bit.ly/epatirecrumb

Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI): Artificial turf: safer alternatives report, resources, videos, and more.
guides.turi.org/artificialturf and bit.ly/turiturf

Safe Healthy Playing Fields Coalition
safehealthyplayingfields.org

A CLOSER LOOK

...at Classroom Close-up's Emmy nominations

Nearly 2,000 "Classroom Close-up NJ" segments are viewable and downloadable at classroomcloseup.org. A searchable database makes finding an entire show or individual segments on any topic easy. Click on drop-down menu under "Categories" and select among the multiple subject areas.

This year, "Classroom Close-up NJ" has been nominated for four Emmy awards by the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Watch these segments to see why the academy believes they are worthy of honor.



3 nominated segments are:



1. FIND YOUR VOICE

Secaucus Middle School educator Toni-Ann Palmisano teaches math but her involvement with extracurricular activities is what made her a Milken Award Winner. She strives to create a school culture in which acceptance is appreciated and encouraged.



2. IRVINGTON ROTC

SFC Craig runs the Junior ROTC program at Irvington High School where he watches his students grow from undisciplined children into strong, powerful young adults.



3. BEGINNING OF STEM

Jane Silverstein looks back at a rich and rewarding 47-year career in Paterson. She coined the acronym STEM in the 1990s. Today the name and concept have exploded in the public schools.

THE NOMINATED SHOW, WHICH FIRST AIRED ON JUNE 24, 2018, CONTAINS THESE FOUR SEGMENTS:

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LEARNER ACT

In Bobbie Sobel's Learner Active Technology Infused Classroom developed by IDE Corporation, students work on learning from a felt need.

SCIENCE GEEK

Hamilton Township science teacher Steve Levin spreads his love of science with his AP Biology students.

DR. SEUSS IS ON THE LOOSE

Triangle Elementary School in Hillsborough celebrates Read Across America by emphasizing reading and writing among the 380 Kindergarten through fourth-grade students.

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classroomcloseup.org

NJEA's "Classroom Close-up NJ" has won 16 Emmy® awards. It inspires and educates the public about the great things happening in New Jersey public schools. The show airs on Sundays on NJTV at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Visit classroomcloseup.org to watch individual segments or the entire show. On Twitter, follow @CCUNJ and "like" the show at [facebook.com/crcunj](https://www.facebook.com/crcunj). On Youtube, visit [youtube.com/c/classroomcloseup](https://www.youtube.com/c/classroomcloseup). On Instagram, search Classroom Close Up.



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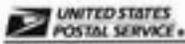
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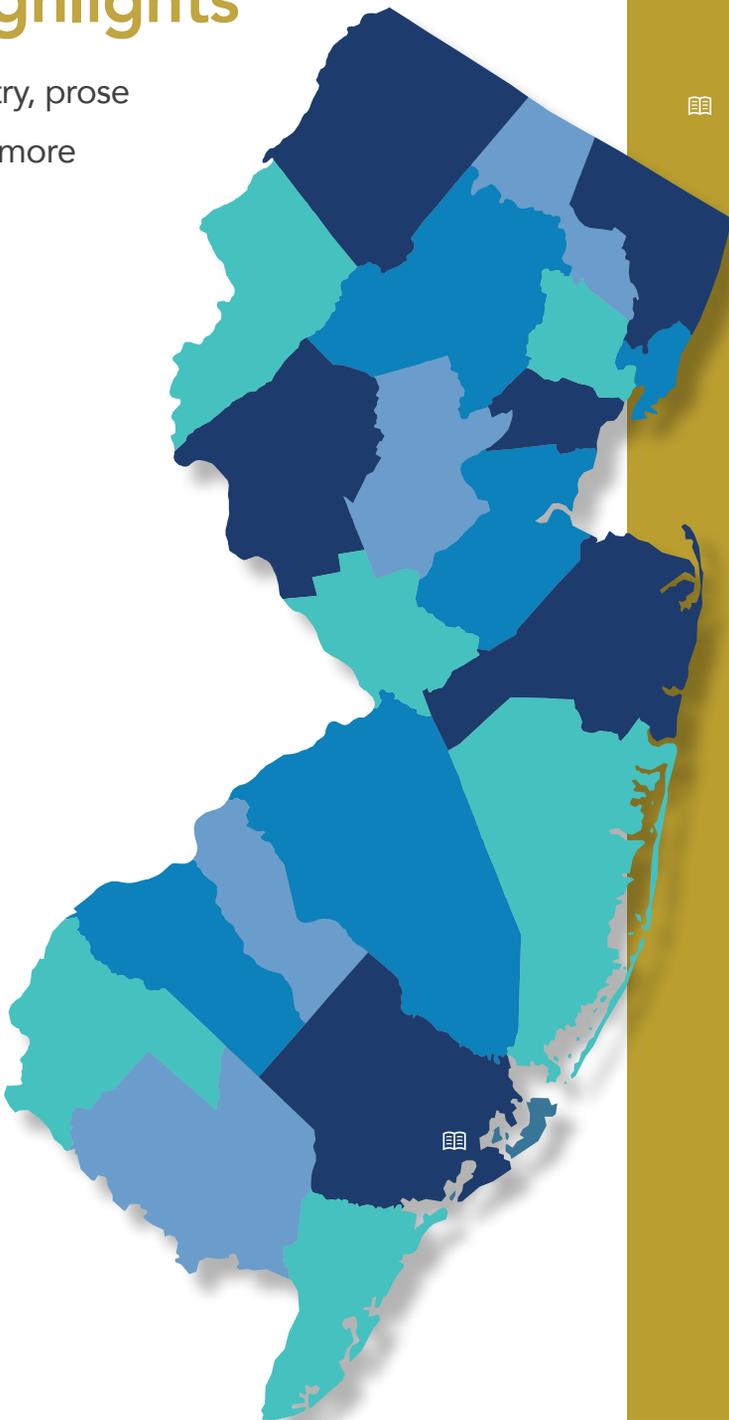
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WINTER POETRY & PROSE GETAWAY

The Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway is a three-day conference where educators hone their creative writing skills and expand their teaching strategies. Held at the Seaview Hotel near Atlantic City, Jan. 17-20, the Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway is presented by Murphy Writing of Stockton University. Now in its 26th year, the Getaway is known for its challenging and supportive workshops featuring small classes led by award-winning professionals. Pulitzer Prize winner Yusef Komunyakaa and National Endowment for the Arts fellow Denise Duhamel are this year's special guests.

The event was founded by NJEA/NJREA member Peter Murphy in the belief that when writers leave behind the distractions of their busy lives to gather in an encouraging community, they can make important breakthroughs in their art. Over the last two decades, the Getaway has become one of the oldest and largest writers' conferences in the winter season, attracting more than 200 writers from across the country.

The author of seven books and chapbooks, Murphy has received awards and fellowships from the Atlantic Center for the Arts, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, Yaddo and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars.

The Getaway is offering seven new workshops in poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, memoir and free-writing. Each offers craft discussion, writing prompts, writing time, feedback, motivation and inspiration.

The registration fee ranges from \$450 to \$525. South Jersey teachers may be eligible to have their districts pay their tuition for the Winter Poetry & Prose Getaway. Early registration and Stockton alumni discounts are available. Additionally, scholarships are being offered.

REGISTRATION ENDS JAN. 12.

For more information, contact Stephanie Cawley at stephanie@murphywriting.com or 609-626-3594. Visit www.stockton.edu/wintergetaway for registration information.

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- Oct. 22 – Choosing Functional IEP Goals

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- Oct. 16 – So, You're in Recovery: Now What? How to get a JOB, Stay Productive, Busy, and Sober!
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- Oct. 23-Nov. 20 – Famous Sociologists and Their Connections to the Present Day
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- Oct. 24-Nov. 21 – Cinema vs. Science: Something's Fishy

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- Oct. 24-Nov. 21 – Rogers and Hammerstein: Kings of Broadway
- Oct. 25-Nov. 22 – Adoration of Music: Pop and Emotion Post-Early Aughts
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**ISABELLE
HICKMAN
SCHOLARSHIP**

Bradley Ferguson, a graduate of Mainland Regional High School, is the 2019 recipient

of the NJREA's Isabelle Hickman four-year scholarship. Bradley, who lives in Northfield, will attend Harvard University.

A self-proclaimed "total science geek," Bradley had taken every AP math and science course offered by his school by the time he graduated. His plan is to be a scientist and contribute to science's understanding of the human brain, neurology and mental health. Bradley's father, an Atlantic City police officer, was severely injured in a car crash, which left him with chronic pain. This accident inspired Bradley to become interested in new research and treatments that might alleviate this pain.

While in high school, Bradley founded "Post Crashers," a club with the mission to serve local veterans and other community members experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. Using \$176,000 in grant money, the club renovated the local American Legion Post and turned it into a community center, building gardens where they raised more than 5,000 pounds of produce to donate to people in need.

In addition to his passion for science, Bradley was involved in several extracurricular activities including rowing, Mustangs Against Hunger—of which he was the founder—and Dr. Jane Goodall's Roots and Shoots National Youth Leadership Council.

He has contributed letters and articles to the New York Times, New Jersey Herald, New York Daily News, the Boston Globe, and TeenInk. Simon was awarded honors and scholarships by the National Council of Teachers of English, the American Council of Teachers of Russian, the Horatio Alger Association, the Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Program, the New Jersey Russian Olympiad and numerous others. In addition to his scholarly endeavors, Simon was a proud member of the marching band.

Simon advocated the inclusion of CRISPR—a new, revolutionary genetic engineering technology—in the curricula at Sparta High School. In the 2017 summer, Simon was a CRISPR biological engineering intern at Hofstra University.



**FRED AUG
SCHOLARSHIP**

Toni Castellani, the recipient of the two-year Fred Aug scholarship, plans to attend Raritan Valley

Community College to attain an associate degree in marketing. She graduated from North Hunterdon High School. She plans to transfer to a four-year college when she completes her studies at Raritan Valley. Toni is an excellent photographer who will put her artistic skills to good use in her marketing work.

When not in school, Toni visits retirement homes with her two therapy goats. She plans to train her recently adopted dog as a therapy animal that will visit hospitals, schools and retirement homes. Toni is planning to obtain certification as an equine specialist in mental health and learning. Employing this certificate alongside a therapist or counselor, she intends to use horses to help those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Throughout her high school years, Toni has been a volunteer with A Bit of Love, which brings therapy animals to anyone with a disability who needs a boost. She has volunteered as a groom and a stable hand for different organizations and has been an intern for several years with Paws and Rewind, LLC.



**ELIZABETH ALLEN
SCHOLARSHIP**

The 2019 Elizabeth Allen four year scholarship winner, Simon Levien, a graduate of Sparta High School,

plans to become a science writer/journalist when he attends college. Simon's mother encouraged him to find reason in science journalism. It was from these journals that he learned to counter misinformation and appreciate scientific writing.



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Around the counties

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ATLANTIC COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 3 at the Mays Landing Country Club in Mays Landing. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Linda Young at **609-226-6202**.

BURLINGTON COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 17 at Marco's at the Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. The cost is \$20. To make a reservation, call Doriann Dodulik-Swern at **856-722-8952**.

CAMDEN COUNTY REA'S fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Friday, Oct. 25 at the Tavistock Country Club in Tavistock. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Dottie Williams at **856-234-2045**.

THE REA OF CAPE MAY'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 16 at the Avalon Links Restaurant in Cape May Court House. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Sharon Popper at **609-602-0046**.

ESSEX COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 23 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Beverly Johnson-Showers at **862-955-4133**.

MERCER COUNTY REA'S fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Oct. 17 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. NJEA staff will be the guest speakers. The cost is \$27. The registration form is found in the MCREA newsletter. For questions, call Susan Karalkjewicz at **609-223-2570**.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 24. NJEA updates will be provided and local Middlesex County legislators will be the guest speakers.

MCREA's holiday meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Dec. 5. A local public school choir will provide the entertainment. Both events will be held at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge, and each will cost \$32. To attend either, call Anne Chomko at **732-675-1734**.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA welcomes you to its fall meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 15 at the Radisson Hotel in Freehold. A meet-and-greet with legislators will be held. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Sue Shrott at **732-995-7754**.

Join **MORRIS COUNTY REA** for its fall meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 10 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. A member benefit fair will be held, and NJEA staff member Fran Pfeffer will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$35. To attend, call John Beekman at **973-936-2242**.

OCEAN COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Oct. 10 at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at **732-477-1711**.

PASSAIC COUNTY REA welcomes you to its meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at the Brownstone House in Paterson. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at **201-445-7577**.

The **SALEM COUNTY REA** will hold its fall meeting/luncheon on Monday, Oct. 21 at the Alloway Municipal Building. Salem County Freeholder Ben Laury will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at **856-467-4796**.

SUSSEX COUNTY REA will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Monday, Dec. 2 at the Lafayette House in Lafayette. Harmony in Motion, an a cappella chorus, will provide the entertainment. The cost is \$33. To attend, call Linda Adams at **973-714-1646**.

UNION COUNTY REA fall meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 22 at The Westwood in Garwood. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Donna Mertz-Burkhardt at **908-686-2390**.

WARREN COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. For more information, visit www.wcrea-njea.org To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at **908-319-1995**.

NJRE-CENTRAL FLORIDA will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 6 at Chesapeake Bay Grille at Arlington Ridge Golf Club in Leesburg. A discussion of the latest pensions and benefits news will be the focus. To attend, call Steve Mockus at **352-638-2609**.

NJRE-SOUTHWEST FLORIDA next meeting/luncheon of is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 21 at DeRomo's Gourmet Market in Bonita Springs. The cost is \$31. For details, contact Ron Winsett at ronmarfl@comcast.net or call **239-948-2982**.

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The role of teacher leaders in trauma-informed care

BY AMANDA ADAMS

Every day, children come to school with their own unique worldview shaped by their experiences and relationships. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study confirms, with scientific evidence that adversity during development increases the risk of physical, mental and behavioral problems later in life. What gets experienced the most tends to lead to more robust connections in the brain. Over time, these connections grow stronger while the neural connections from what gets experienced the least tend to diminish at about the time of puberty.

Educators are in children's lives during a critical time of development. Children between the ages of 3 and 17 years old spend the bulk of their day at school with educators who create experiences for their students in their school buildings. Teacher leaders build those experiences with the knowledge that relationships matter. Trauma-informed care and practice builds on strengths rather than deficits. It is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma. It emphasizes physical, psychological and emotional safety for both providers and students. This creates opportunities for rebuilding a sense of control and healing.

By recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma in students, families, staff and others involved in the system, teacher leaders can respond. By developing skills and abilities and fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices those skills and abilities will promote resiliency to resist the recurrence of trauma, contribute to healing from trauma and improve educational outcomes.

ACE Interface, the leading experts in the ACE study, identify three core protective systems that interact and guide positive adaptation to trauma:

- The positive individual capabilities in staff, students, and parents.
- The attachment and belonging of children to a caring and competent adult
- Collective efficacy within the community, and a sense of agency in their faith, and cultural processes.

Teachers also come through the school doors with their own worldview. Very rarely are teachers called to build relationships with each other through a trauma-informed lens. The NJEA Teacher Leadership Academy identifies teacher leaders as educators who lead from the classroom, and many components of the program are aligned with the three core protective systems previously identified above. Teacher leadership supports the personal growth of educators by cultivating their

self-awareness of their strengths and challenges in developing strategies for personal growth and in the development of new knowledge.

When teacher leaders create a community of educators who learn together through authentic dialogue, a sense of collective efficacy develops, and the entire school community flourishes. Collaborative conversations begin to elicit curiosity, wisdom, and clarity around how to best meet the needs of their students and their families.

Because of their close contact with students, the teacher leader is in a unique position to effectively analyze their needs and be a resource to the community. Teacher leaders are making the shift to become liaisons that identify leaders in the community and create safe and regularly scheduled ways of coming together for belonging and cooperative action.

True collaboration between educators and their students' families produces rich results in complex situations where multilayered challenges need to be met simultaneously.

Educators already have many of the skills needed to help traumatized children learn. Some teachers are particularly skilled at presenting information in a variety of ways, others are quite consistent, some are highly organized, and there are those who form positive ongoing relationships with students beyond the classroom. All these are among an array of strengths that teacher leaders can reinforce and expand upon with an awareness of how they can be useful in dealing with traumatized children.

Amanda Adams is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She is the coordinator of the NJEA Priority Schools Initiative. She can be reached at aadams@njea.org.

Teacher leadership is a unique opportunity to not only improve teacher practice but also to support the building of a thriving community. By acknowledging and addressing the impact of trauma, and developing individual, cultural, and community agency among the staff, students and families, everyone in the school benefits—those whose trauma history is known, those whose trauma will never be clearly identified, and those who may be affected by their traumatized classmates and students. 🌱

MY MISSION

AS A LEADER AND PRESERVICE EDUCATOR

BY HEATHER SPIRKO, THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, NJEA PRESERVICE PRESIDENT

I've discovered that everyone defines a leader differently. Some individuals may say a leader is someone who is in charge, someone who orders others around, or someone who leads others in a specific direction. Growing up, I would define a leader in all the ways I've listed above, however, through research and my experience in college and NJEA Preservice I've realized that a leader is someone much bigger.

I define leadership as anyone who recognizes the potential in others and encourages individuals to find their passion and voice.

Throughout my personal life and college career, I've encountered countless leaders in my community and in NJEA, NEA and the classrooms in which I have had my field experiences. I was inspired by the women leaders in those settings who motivated me to find my voice and become the leader they saw in me before I did. These women motivated, inspired and supported me during my journey as the NJEA Preservice president, as a preservice educator and as a leader in my personal life.

If I listed all the women who inspired me during my leadership journey, this article would turn into a novel. It's because of these women that I have become the leader that I always was, but had not recognized before.

The novel *Dare to Lead* by Brené Brown, profoundly influenced how I defined leadership. Brown, defines a leader as, "anyone who takes responsibility for finding the potential in people and processes, and who has the courage to develop that potential." As the NJEA Preservice president, discovering the potential in people and

encouraging those individuals to continuously develop their potential is vital to being a great leader. I define leadership as the ability to recognize the potential in others and encourage individuals to find their passion and voice.

After attending the Leader and Organizer Convening at NEA headquarters in Washington D.C., I discovered a lot about myself and my mission as a preservice educator and leader. During the convening, we were asked to create our mission statement. As I reflect on my mission as an educator and leader, I refer to the leaders who had an impact on my life and how they made me feel.

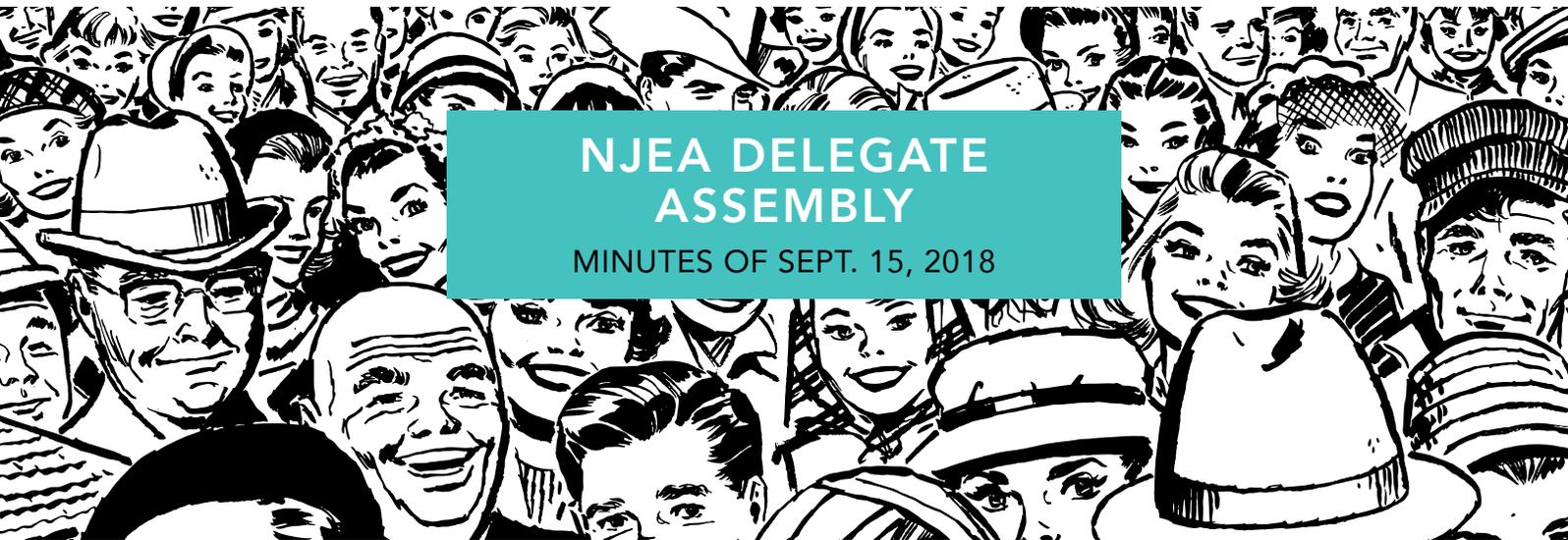
My mission as a preservice educator and leader is to advocate, support, inspire and encourage my prospective students and peers by providing a comfortable environment to allow them to continuously develop themselves and dare greatly. In order for me to advocate, support, inspire and encourage I must, as Theodore Roosevelt would put it, be the one standing in the arena with those individuals to challenge them to dare greatly. 🙌

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

– Theodore Roosevelt



Three inspiring women serve as leaders of NJEA Preservice. From left: Secretary Emma Murphy, Vice President Amber Ingram and President Heather Spirko.



NJEA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF SEPT. 15, 2018

The NJEA Delegate Assembly met on Sept. 15, 2018, at the Hyatt Regency, New Brunswick, N.J., at 9:30 a.m. President Marie Blistan presided.

Dennis Carroll (Passaic) delivered the inspirational message and led the body in the flag salute.

Roll call was taken. There were 115 out of 124 delegates present. Alternates were seated as follows: Hicks for Siegel (Mercer); Strzykalski for Lewandowski (Middlesex); Brache for Rordrick (Monmouth); Finnigan for Fox (Ocean); Smith for Raye (Sussex), and Brown for Kruczek (Warren).

Absent were representatives Chau (Atlantic), Stinson (Camden), Carbonara (Cumberland), Robertson (Essex), Shibli (Hudson), Williams (Mercer), Lawler (Union), Hodge (Higher Education), and Capodice (Non-classroom).

Blistan asked if there was objection to adopting the agenda with flexibility. There was no objection.

HONORING LARRY FIEBER

The chair recognized Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, who led a presentation honoring Dr. Larry Feiber upon his retirement from The College of New Jersey, where he served as the program coordinator for the Center for Future Educators. Dr. Fieber spoke briefly.

DA RULES COMMITTEE REPORT

The chair called on John Zurka (Union) to present and move amendments to the Standing Rules, as proposed by the committee. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Blistan began her report by noting the recent death of former delegate and leader, Michele Yakopic, for whom there was a moment of silence.

Blistan presented the remainder of her report as a State of the Union message, highlighting the following achievements from the prior year:

- The election of a pro-education, pro-union

governor, and appointment of an education commissioner who works well with NJEA.

- The commitment by the state to transition away from PARCC to a new assessment system.
- The reduction in the weight of Student Growth Percentiles in teacher evaluations from 30% to 5%.
- The appointment of Blistan and Gayl Shepard as co-chairs of the governor's education transition committee, and several other members and partners named to the committee.
- Holding a majority of seats on the TPAF Board for the first time.
- A new steering committee of both leaders and staff to guide the Chapter 78/ESP Job Justice Campaign.
- Stopping bills that would have forced county college members into a different health plan, and accelerated the erosion of public schools in Camden.
- The first increase in state school aid in eight years, and a record state pension contribution of \$3.2 billion.
- Successful local elections in Jersey City, Paterson and elsewhere, with 60 affiliates conducting local or county endorsements.
- A new training program for Executive Committee members, designed and conducted by Executive Committee members.
- A new Charter School Task Force to review and communicate NJEA's policies.
- A new PAC fundraising committee.
- The creation of the Equity Alliance, joining together the social justice work of five NJEA committees.
- Achieving 3-1(g) status at the NEA RA for the first time in years.
- Embarking on a review of the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws by the Constitution Review Committee.

- Continued success with the NJEA Priority Schools Program and the Labor Management Collaborative.
- The development of Teacher Leader regulations, enabling NJEA to create a Teacher Leader Academy.

Blistan concluded by acknowledging the challenges ahead, but expressing confidence because of these and other successes across the state and NJEA's legacy of success.

Blistan then introduced UniServ-South Director Patrick Manahan to present NJEA's new campaign to seek relief from Chapter 78, prevent subcontracting, and obtain due-process rights for ESP members. Manahan reviewed the broad parameters of the campaign, focused on asking every legislator to co-sponsor three bills in these areas, and then introduced representatives of the Statewide Steering Committee who would be working on the campaign. Bethanne Augsbach (Middlesex), Sue Clark (Gloucester), Eric Jones (Union), and Lois Yukna (Middlesex) each presented information on the campaign, including a kickoff meeting for all local association presidents.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spiller reported on the State Board of Education meeting, including the commissioner's decision to set the Student Growth Percentile at five percent for teacher evaluations, the lowest level ever. He noted this was in line with the governor's commitment to end the use of student test scores for teacher evaluations.

The commissioner also proposed dramatically scaling back the PARCC test, which met with opposition from some board members as well as the unusual occurrence of the Senate Education Committee chair addressing the board, also in opposition. He encouraged delegates to contact the State Board members to express their support for the proposal.

NONDELEGATE SPEAKERS

The following nondelegate member was provided an opportunity to address the body:

John Coniglio (Morris) noted the persistent negative information in the media regarding educators and called for more factual information.

SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Steve Beatty reported on membership trends, based on the recent U.S. Supreme Court Decision in *Janus v. AFSCME*, which eliminated the ability of public employee unions to charge fair-share fees to non-members in their bargaining units. He focused on NJEA's new ticketing system for tracking member drop requests, following the *Janus* decision.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

For the benefit of new delegates, Ed Richardson introduced the leadership team, staff, and consultants working at the DA meeting, and briefly summarized their roles. He also reviewed written information provided to the delegates on the use of tablet devices to access DA documents. He introduced Communications Director Steve Baker, who reviewed how to participate in NJEA's text service.

Richardson reported on litigation filed in federal court by anti-union plaintiffs seeking to expand the impact of the *Janus* decision. He also noted that some school districts are misinterpreting the decision, which NJEA has successfully fought, and

urged delegates to report such cases immediately so they can be addressed legally. He reviewed the provisions of the new Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act and urged delegates to share information with their local leaders.

Richardson reported on activities in response to a new business item on charter schools that had been adopted during the previous year, and a lobby day on student assessment policy.

Lastly, he noted that online registration for the NJEA Convention was open to delegates, as well as Executive Committee members.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Elections Committee presented a report without recommendations.

Barbara Rheault (Atlantic) presented the report of the Working Conditions Committee and moved recommendations 1-6. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Carrie Odgers Lax (Passaic) moved New Business Item 1: That the NJEA Secretary-Treasurer provide a financial report to the full Delegate Assembly at each meeting, to include a copy of the most recent monthly Secretary-Treasurer's report as an upload to Good Reader. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Chris Cannella (Essex) asked for an update New

Business Item 2 from the November 2018 meeting. The chair indicated that it had been referred to the Leadership Committee, which would report on it at an upcoming meeting. Cannella also announced the first SOGI Committee mini conference, Oct. 6, at NJEA's headquarters, and encouraged members to attend.

Odgers Lax (Passaic) asked for an update on her new business item regarding charter school accountability from March 2017, and the chair indicated she would look into it.

Lois Infanger (Essex) noted that some Pride handout items are made in China and are not union-made and suggested that DA badges be handed out on site rather than mailed. She also asked about the continuation of "Classroom Close-up, NJ." The chair indicated "Classroom Close-up, NJ" is on the air for the entire year and would be used in other ways in the future.

Melissa Tomlinson (Atlantic) encouraged delegates to participate in the Black Lives Matter at School webinar.

Brian Rock (Essex) asked delegates to help recruit for the next class of the New Leaders Council.

At 12:13 p.m., Ryan Griffin (Gloucester), moved to adjourn. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

Submitted by:

Edward Richardson

Executive Director



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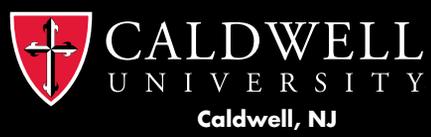


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- Ed.D./Ph.D. in Educational Leadership – K-12, Special Education, and Higher Education Leadership Specializations
- M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction – Supervisor, Principal, ESL Certificate and TOSD Endorsement Options
- M.A. in Educational Administration (on campus and online) – Principal and Supervisor Certification
- M.A. in Higher Education (online)
- M.A. in Literacy Instruction (Reading Specialist Certificate)
- M.A. in Special Education (TOSD Endorsement, LDT-C Certification and ABA Course Option)
- Off Campus Leadership Development (OCLD); Fast Track M.A. in Educational Administration
- Post-Master LDT-C Certification
- Post-Master Reading Specialist Certification
- Post-Master Superintendent Certification (on campus and online)
- Post-Master Principal Certification (on campus and online)
- Post-Master Supervisor Certification (on campus and online)
- Post-Master English as a Second Language (ESL) Certification (NOW ONLINE!)
- Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification
- Special Education Certification

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT
INFORMATION SESSION
OCTOBER 19 • 10:00 A.M.
 RSVP caldwell.edu/visit



STAFF NEWS



NJEA congratulates **Tamika Elder** on her promotion to program assistant in the association's Organizational Development office in July. Prior to her promotion, Elder had been principal clerk in the NJEA Membership Division. She had initially joined NJEA staff in May 2006 as a clerk in that division. Elder lives in Cinnaminson with her husband Ronnie. They have two children, Nyla, 21, and Morgan, 14.

Employment Opportunities at NJEA

Visit njea.org/jobs regularly for the latest postings.



Questions? Call the NJEA Human Resources office at 609-599-4561.

NJEA is an equal opportunity employer.

OCTOBER & beyond

for more information go to NJEA.org

10/4-5

Fri. & Sat.

**NJEA
Health and
Safety
Conference**

10/16

Wednesday

**NJEA
Executive
Committee
Meeting**

10/19

Saturday

**NJEA
LGBTQ+
Conference**

10/25-26

Fri. & Sat.

**Jim George
Collective
Bargaining
Summit**

11/6-7

Wed. & Thurs.

**NJREA
Convention**

11/7-8

Thurs. & Fri.

**NJEA
Convention**

12/9

Monday

**NJEA
Executive
Committee
Meeting**

1/3

Friday

**Executive
Committee and
County Presidents'
Council Meetings**

1/4

Saturday

**Delegate
Assembly**

1/10-11

Fri. & Sat.

**Equity
Alliance
Conference**

SAVE THE DATE! 5.2.20

njea

Exceptional
Children
Conference



**HYATT REGENCY
New Brunswick**

Theme: Creating Learning
Environments for ALL Students

Keynote: LeDerick Horne—Speaker,
Poet and Special Education Advocate

LeDerick Horne is a NJ native.
More info about him may be found here:
www.lederick.com or on YouTube.

deadlines

10/11

Jim George Collective
Bargaining Summit
Event date: Oct. 25-26

10/12

LGBTIOA+ Mini Conference
Event date: Oct. 19

10/23

NJREA Convention Registration
Event date: Nov. 6-7

SAVE THE DATE

NJEA EQUITY ALLIANCE WEEKEND

JAN. 10-11, 2020

DELTA WOODBRIDGE, ISELIN

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: KERON BLAIR

ENTERTAINMENT: TONI! TONY! TONÉ!

INVEST IN EDUCATORS

PRESERVE NJ PUBLIC SCHOOLS' BEST-IN-THE-NATION STATUS

September brought some very good news about New Jersey's public schools. *Education Week* released its annual Quality Counts ranking of the nation's public schools and New Jersey came out on top. After several years of taking the number two spot behind Massachusetts, the Garden State edged ahead of the Bay State to finally claim the crown.

It's an accomplishment we should all be proud of. It reflects the professionalism and dedication of 200,000 NJEA members, the hard work of our students, and the commitment our state has made to public education. We have every right to feel good about and celebrate this accomplishment. In fact, we should celebrate it and talk about it, because everyone in New Jersey should know what a treasure we have in our public schools.

But while we celebrate, another report that came out this month reminds us that we cannot

To keep our hard-won place at the peak of American public education, we need to double down on our commitment to the educators—in every job and every role

rest. Around the same time that *Education Week* released its report, New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP), a leading policy think tank in the state, released a report on New Jersey's teacher workforce with the subtitle, "Diversity Lags, Wage Gap Persists."

That report painted a troubling picture of some

of the challenges facing our best-in-the-nation schools and pointed to challenges we must address to keep our perch.

Among its findings are that "teachers in New Jersey make substantially less than similarly educated workers" and that "benefits—pensions and health care—do not appear to make up for the gap in wages." That's hardly a surprise to NJEA members, who know that public school employee compensation across the board, for educational support professionals as well as teachers and other certificated staff, often lags the private sector and fails to keep up with the cost of living in our high-cost state.

Equally troubling is the report's finding that "New Jersey's teachers don't look much like the state's student population," which is among the nation's most diverse. In 2017-18, students of color comprised 55% of New Jersey's public school enrollment, while teachers of color made up only 16% of the state's educator workforce. Further, according to the NJPP report, "there is little indication the state's teaching workforce is becoming more diverse."

That is very concerning. It indicates that New Jersey's schools are missing out on the benefits of a diverse workforce that reflects the makeup of our state and draws from the talent and experience that reside in all New Jersey communities. As our state grows more diverse, our public schools must ensure that they are hiring well and benefiting from that diversity.

Those two challenges, the pay gap and the diversity gap, should be addressed together, by taking steps to make a career in public education more attractive to any potential candidate. That includes closing the pay gap so that educators in every community can support their own families while providing world-class public schools for all of New Jersey's families.

And it involves working to ensure that public school employee benefits, including pensions and health benefits, remain affordable and attractive, so that the most talented professionals will enter

and remain in the profession.

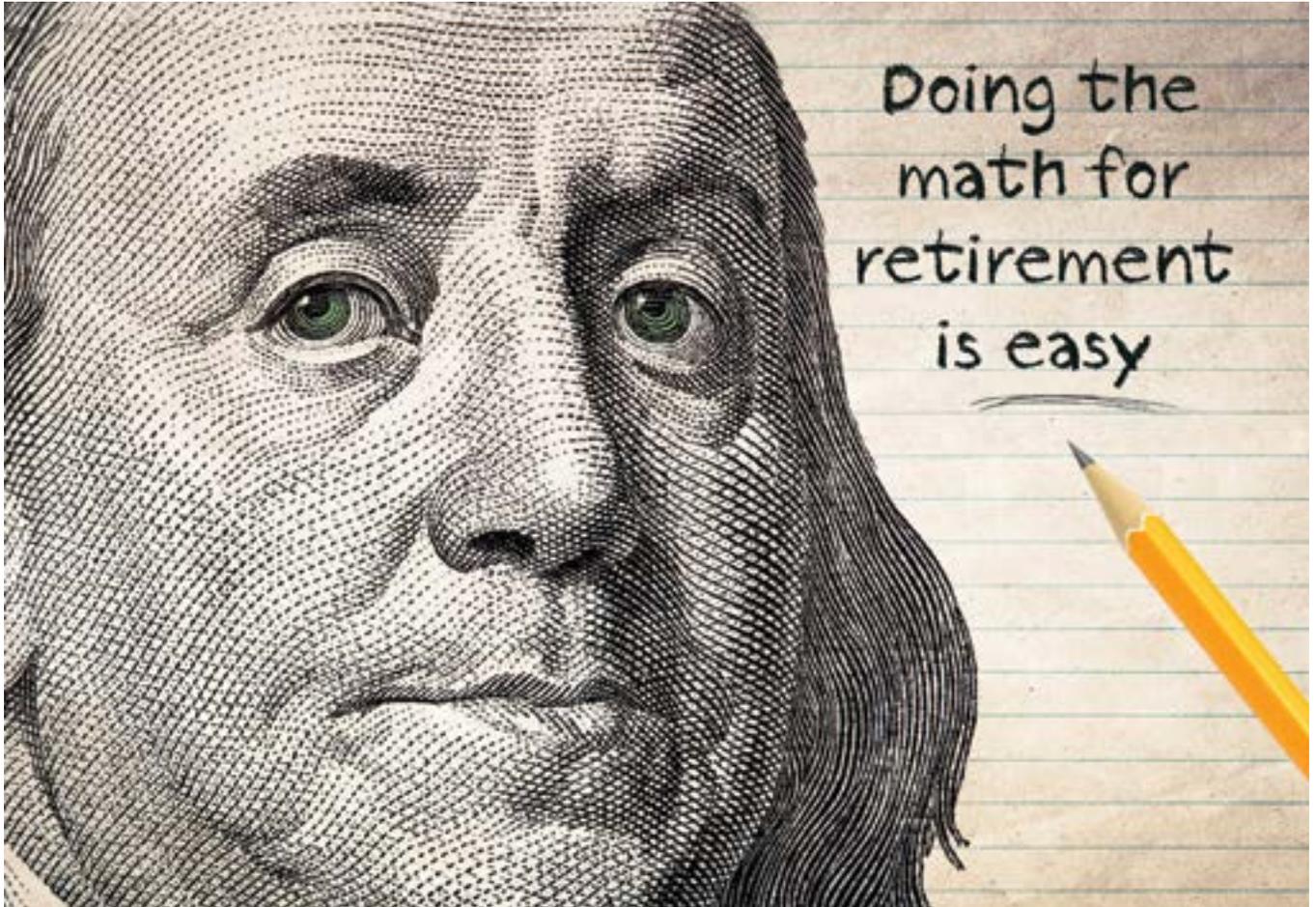
That is why our campaign to get real relief from the burden of Ch. 78 is so important. By ensuring that high-quality health insurance is once again affordable for public school employees, New Jersey will be in a better position to attract and retain highly qualified people for every job.

It is also why our concurrent campaign to achieve job justice for educational support professionals is just as urgent. Those who fulfill some of the most important roles in our schools, keeping students safe and healthy, supporting their learning and keeping our schools functioning smoothly, deserve the fundamental respect of knowing that their contracts will be honored and that they will have basic due-process rights if their employment is on the line.

And it is why we will continue to fight for the pensions we have earned, and to ensure that those entering the profession can achieve a secure retirement as well. That helps make a career in public education a destination for the best and brightest, rather than just a stepping stone along the way to other things.

To keep our hard-won place at the peak of American public education, we need to double down on our commitment to the educators—in every job and every role—who led us up that mountain. And we must ensure that the generation that replaces them reflects the diversity that, along with our great public schools, makes New Jersey such a great place to live, work and raise a family. 🏡





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Find the link in mid-October at njeaconvention.org or search for NJEA Events in your app store.

