

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW

JANUARY  
2020

njea.org

*an education and advocacy resource*

**18** NJREA  
CELEBRATES  
100 YEARS

**24** SMALL  
CHANGES  
BIG  
DIFFERENCES

**34** LITTLE FERRY  
MEMBERS  
WIN BIG

**36** CARTERET  
TEACHER  
HONORED

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# I AM NJEA

Two proud Morris Hills Regional District secretaries, Sue Kellner (l) and Liz Piccinini, joined their fellow educational support professionals (ESP) at the Morris County Council of Education Association's annual ESP Celebration on Nov. 13.



The Clifton Teachers' Association hosted a K-2 Pumpkin Craft Night at School 12 on Oct. 21. Students and their families decorated their pumpkins while talking and listening to music with staff members.



The Mine Hill Education Association showed up in force on Mine Hill Day in September, with nearly two-thirds of their members participating. MHEA members ran a 5K in the morning and hosted a Pride in Public Education booth in the afternoon.

The Pinelands Education Association participated in the annual Trunk or Treat in Little Egg Harbor. Members took "The Teal Pumpkin Pledge," in handing out nonfood treats so children with food allergies could enjoy the festivities along with their peers. Members of PEA handed out glow necklaces and bracelets along with a copy of the pledge in the hopes that some of the community would do the same on Halloween.



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



### 18 | NJREA CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Since its founding in 1920, NJREA, the organization that represents retired school employees, has been a beacon of service to public educators and public education. To commemorate this milestone, NJEA is taking a look back at everything NJREA, the “Daytime Face of NJEA,” has accomplished, from political action to community service to philanthropic efforts and scholarship funds to social activities.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



### 24 | SMALL ACTIONS, BIG DIFFERENCES

As educators and union members, it's often easy for us to talk about the progress we've made, but it's often hard to articulate what we actually did during an academic year to make that progress. We're so busy working after hours so our students can learn we often forget all the day-to-day union actions we do. When we add up small, simple actions, they make a big difference.

BY MATTHEW STAGLIANO



### 34 | MILKEN EDUCATOR

Walking into Nikki Silva's colorful third-grade classroom at Nathan Hale Elementary School in Carteret is like walking into a hug. In 2018, Silva was named a Milken Educator for her outstanding work with her students, her school, her district and the whole Carteret community. She calls teaching in Carteret, where she was born and raised, a dream come true.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

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### 32 | LITTLE FERRY

For the 80 members of the Little Ferry Education Association, one workshop had mighty consequences. That workshop revealed that 23 members had been misplaced on the guide over the course of several years. With guidance and resources from NJEA, the local association took action to set things right.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



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## GOOD NEWS!

*Did you know?*

**New Jersey public school eighth-grade students rank among the best in the world in science.**

Source: "US States in a Global Context: Results from the 2011 NAEP-TIMSS Linking Study, National Center for Education Statistics, October 2013.

## The number 8 & 23



For the last eight years, 23 priority projects for school facilities in districts serving the state's poorest students have not moved to construction because of a lack of funding. With the Education Law Center, students in these and other inadequate school buildings filed a motion on Nov. 12, asking the state Supreme Court to direct the Commissioner of Education and the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) to revise the SDA's construction plan for priority facilities projects and secure additional funding for those projects from the Legislature.

Source: "State's Refusal to Seek Funding for Facilities Projects Prompts Abbott Court Action," Education Law Center, [edlawcenter.org/news/archives/school-facilities](http://edlawcenter.org/news/archives/school-facilities)

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**2020 NJEA ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY**

*Learn who's who on NJEA's governing bodies, committees and staff.*

## On the Cover



NJREA members pride themselves on using their skills as educators to volunteer in their communities. NJREA member Miriam Reichenbach helps a child select a book at the West Deptford Public Library.

**PHOTO BY**

**ANDREA KANE**

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NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW

180 W. State St., P.O. Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211 • 609-599-4561 • [NJEA.org](http://NJEA.org)

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REGION 5...Burlington Co. ....856-234-2485... Michael Kaminski, Harry Zakarian, & vacancy  
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## MEMBERSHIP

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*.



# HONORING OUR PAST, MOVING FORWARD WITH PURPOSE

January is an introspective month. As one year—and decade—ends, a new year full of fresh opportunities begins.

At NJEA, we have been simultaneously looking back and looking forward, and we have a great deal to reflect upon.

Early in the new year, NJREA, the New Jersey Retirees' Education Association, marks its 100th anniversary. In this issue, you'll get a closer look at all the things our NJREA members do to keep our union and our schools strong. They are truly the daytime face of our entire membership, willing and able to step up and advocate for our members and our students when actively employed members are unavailable. We will be celebrating NJREA and its achievements at a gala event on May 3, and you will no doubt be hearing more about that and seeing other ways that we honor all that NJREA has done and continues to do.

At the same time, we take a closer look at the year we've just concluded. As educators and advocates, we take a million small steps every day. It can be hard to see the impact of each step—but all of those small steps make a big difference. The things we do every day for our students lead them to feel safe, valued, and secure in the knowledge that we

are invested in their success. The small steps we take as advocates, from calling a legislator to registering people to vote to talking to our colleagues about current issues, all combine to make a difference in our schools and our communities.

As author Robert Collier wrote, "Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out." That dedication is exhibited in the work that NJREA members do every day and in the work that you do with your students. It is not always glamorous, but it is truly the essence of a well-lived, honorable life.

Thank you for all that you do for New Jersey's public school students, and for your colleagues in education, from preservice through retirement.

*Marie Blistan*



NJREA and NJEA leadership attending the NJEA Equity Alliance weekend in January 2019. From left: NJREA First Vice President Joan Wright, NJREA President Judy Perkins and NJEA President Marie Blistan.

## OFFICERS ONLINE

### MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: Our members are working hard to advocate for our profession by holding elected office! Kudos to our most recent class who completed the Educators RUN training by NEA! Thank you, all!

NJEA President Marie Blistan shared a group photo with NJEA members who completed the National Education Association (NEA) program, Educators Run, a three-day training program from NEA experts and top political consultants. Trainees learn how to prepare to become a candidate for office, fundraising basics, how to communicate effectively with voters, tips for recruiting volunteers and running a field operation, policy talking points to use on the campaign trail, and the nuts and bolts of running a campaign.

### SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerForNJEA: Sussex County ESP Celebration Dinner just a wonderful night! Congratulations to all the honorees and to Stacy Yanko as both the Sussex ESP as well as NJEA ESP of the Year!

On Nov. 21, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller attended and shared pictures from the Sussex County Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Celebration Dinner, where ESPs of the year from local associations in the county were honored. Sussex County ESP of the Year Stacy Yanko has been named the NJEA ESP of the year. She will be featured in the February NJEA Review and honored at the NJEA ESP Conference, Jan. 31-Feb. 2.

### STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Great day spent having lunch with the members of the Pemberton Education Association at Marcus Newcomb Middle School. Advocates and activists in the classroom—and for our campaign! Engaging on #Chapter78relief & #ESPJobJustice!! And members serving their community, which includes Fort Dix, with students whose parents are serving, and many who are deployed! Together, we can do anything!

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty visited members in Pemberton, sharing pictures from his visit. During his day there, Beatty listened to members' concerns. Members also wrote postcards to their legislators demanding fair treatment for educational support professionals and relief from the onerous payroll deductions caused by Chapter 78.



# KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

## NEA RA DELEGATES HEAD TO ATLANTA



At the 2018 NEA RA in Minneapolis, NJREA member Gloria Cook delivered the inspirational message to delegates and led delegates in the flag salute at the July 2 New Jersey caucus meeting. Cook's inspirational message reminded delegates to let their light shine and that every student deserves the opportunity to learn.

Over 9,000 delegates attend the National Education Association Representative Assembly (NEA RA). The delegates are charged with setting policy for the 3 million member organization. New Jersey sends between 500 and 600 delegates to the NEA RA, which this year will be held in Atlanta from July 2 to July 6. Delegates are expected to arrive in Atlanta on July 1 and return home on July 7.

At the NEA RA, Delegates vote on amendments to the NEA Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules. They also vote on proposed resolutions and new business items, setting forth NEA's policy and position statements. Many of these actions have a direct impact on NEA members in New Jersey.

Delegates will also elect NEA's president, vice president and secretary-treasurer, as well as elect members to the NEA Executive Committee. If any vacancies occur in NEA officer or other Executive Committee positions, these may also be filled at the NEA RA.

### Delegates must be elected

All delegates must be elected—either by members of their local association, a cluster of smaller local associations, or as state delegates. Open nominations for all delegates are mandatory. Every member must have a reasonable opportunity to make nominations, to be nominated, or to self-nominate.

Each local association may elect one delegate to the NEA RA for every 150 members, or major fraction thereof. If a local affiliate has fewer than 76 NEA members, it may join with one or more other local affiliates, each with fewer than 76 members, to form units for the purpose of representation. Allocation of delegate credentials is based on active membership in NEA as of Jan. 15.

All local affiliates must hold elections for local delegates and successor local delegates and inform NJEA of the results no later than April 10.

In addition to local association delegates, NJEA members will elect state delegates and successor state delegates this spring. Candidates nominate themselves for these positions online. Candidates are placed on the ballot

according to the county where they are employed or their unit of representation (e.g., higher education).

To complete the online self-nomination form, go to [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).

### Ensuring ethnic-minority representation

NEA Bylaw 3-1.g requires each state affiliate to develop a plan to send a state delegation to the NEA RA that reflects the state's ethnic-minority proportions. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, 41 percent of New Jersey residents identify themselves as part of an ethnic-minority group. Thus, it is NJEA's goal to achieve at least that level of ethnic-minority representation in its delegation.

To assist in meeting the requirements of NEA Bylaw 3-1.g, the NJEA Delegate Assembly established ethnic-minority-concerns positions. One state delegate seat is set aside from every four seats allocated.

While it is anticipated that the establishment of these minority-concerns positions is likely to increase ethnic-minority participation at the NEA RA, members need not be a member of an ethnic-minority group to be elected to minority-concerns positions.

All NJEA members can self-nominate for both regular and minority-concerns positions. If elected in both positions, a member must decide which seat to represent so that a successor delegate can take the open position.

Similarly, members may place themselves in nomination at the local level and at the state level. Members who win both local and state delegate seats must decide which seat they will represent so that successor delegates can take the open positions.

For complete rules and procedures, and to self-nominate for state delegate and minority-concerns positions, visit [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).

## NJEA NOMINATION PROCEDURES AND ELECTION RULES

### For county and unit affiliates and NEA RA

For county and unit affiliate elections, such bodies may conduct regular nominating meetings, however, all information will be transmitted to NJEA electronically and each candidate will be contacted to validate his or her candidacy.

All self-nominations for the NEA RA will be conducted online. Members wishing to self-nominate will go to [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections) to be linked to the self-nomination site.

Upon successful completion of the declaration of candidacy form, each nominee will receive a validation email, which when completed will confirm his or her candidacy.

For all election-related rules, visit [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).



# NJEA 2020 ELECTIONS CALENDAR

Under the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws the Rules for NJEA Elections and the established rules and procedures of the NJEA Elections Committee, the following are the tentative deadlines and other dates related to NJEA county and unit elections.

## Jan. 15

- Official Membership Count
  - o Initial membership file sent to election –vendor (Intelliscan) and Elections Committee Staff Contact
  - o Determination of Governance Positions to be filled (Exec./DA/DAA)
- Deadline for notifying NJEA of a change in unit of representation
- Petitions for Governance Positions available (Exec./DA/DAA)

## Jan. 22 (Jan. 23 is inclement weather back-up)

- Election Committee Mandatory Meeting
  - o Rules, Procedures, and Calendar reviewed and finalized
  - o Announcement of membership numbers, governance and RA positions by County/Unit
  - o Review of nominating committee requirements, filing dates, electronic nomination process

## Feb. 1 to Feb. 28 (As established by NEA)

- Feb. 1: NJEA RA self-nomination begins at 12:01 a.m.
- Feb. 28: NJEA RA self-nomination closes at 11:59 p.m.

## Feb. 25

- NJEA deadline for county and unit nominating committees to convene

## Feb. 28

- NJEA deadline for county and unit nomination registration for NJEA Executive Committee, Delegate Assembly, and Delegate Assembly Alternate with election-vendor (Intelliscan) by county or unit designee
- Deadline for receipt of on-line self-nomination forms for state delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly (11:59 p.m.)

## Feb 28

- Petition Deadline for nominations of county and unit elections, NJEA Governance positions, and constitutional amendments (5 p.m.).
- Deadline to make new nominations, in the event of a vacancy
- Deadline for candidates to withdraw their names from nomination (must notify NJEA Headquarters by 5 p.m.)
- Deadline to register to vote online and not receive a mail ballot

## March 5

- NEA Representative Assembly: Election vendor: (Intelliscan) conducts random drawings for ballot positions for statewide units, drawings for state NEA R.A. ballot positions.
- Deadline for candidates to verify correct spelling and format of names and school districts for ballots

## April 1 to April 15

- Balloting
- Ballots due by noon April 15, 2020 at the address supplied with the ballots

## April 30

- Election Committee mandatory meeting to validate election results
- Election Dispute Hearings on challenge of actions related to the elections

## May 1, 2020

- 2020-2021 election cycle begins

All dates are subject to change.

Failure of a candidate to properly validate their nomination online will result in disqualification.

Local NEA RA election results MUST be received at NJEA HQ no later than Wednesday, April 10, 2020.

In accordance with NJEA Bylaws, the Election Committee may change the balloting period. In the event the balloting period is changed, the new balloting period will be published in the March issue of the NJEA Review and posted at [njea.org](http://njea.org).

## CHANGES TO THE 2020 NEA RA NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

The Labor Management Reporting Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA) is a federal law that regulates the internal affairs of private-sector labor organizations. In 2017, the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) announced its intent to implement the LMRDA to public-sector unions as well. The National Education Association (NEA) includes members employed in both the private and public sector and is therefore subject to the requirements of the LMRDA. Accordingly, in 2020, all NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) elections conducted by state affiliates will comply with the LMRDA.

NEA recently announced the key requirements for all elections for the NEA RA delegates. These requirements are based on NEA's governing documents and Title IV of the LMRDA. In addition, the USDOL has announced its intent to implement regulations to compel public-sector unions that are affiliated with a parent organization that is already covered by the law.

Nominations and voting for delegates to the NEA RA must be open to all NEA Active, Active Life, Aspiring Educator (preservice), and Retired

*To ensure compliance with USDOL guidance, NJEA will conduct the 2020 elections via mail ballots only.*

members (eligible members)

All eligible members must receive notice of the date, time and place and nomination process as well as notice of the election. The election notice must be sent by U.S. mail to the eligible members' last known home address, at least 15 days prior to the election.

To ensure compliance with USDOL guidance, NJEA will conduct the 2020 elections via mail ballots only. Though electronic voting systems have been used by NJEA in the past, the USDOL has made clear through enforcement actions against unions and its guidance that compliance with the LMRDA is challenging when electronic voting systems are used. Additional election information will be made available on [njea.org](http://njea.org) and through electronic postal mail notification to members.

# COOL STUFF



## STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM OFFERS FREE CURRICULUM, \$10,000 GRANT

The Lead4Change Student Leadership Program is a free curriculum that includes leadership lessons and a community service project. Since 2012, more than 1.5 million students have participated and over 10,000 educators across the U.S. are registered in the program. Lead4Change lessons integrate into any class or club for students in grades 6 through 12.

Students learn to create and implement service projects that drive real change, while developing their leadership and social-emotional skills. Lead4Change lessons align with 21st-century skills and satisfy most educational standards, including literacy, social-emotional learning, project-based learning and more.

Student projects can be submitted in the Lead4Change Challenge, with the chance to win a grant up to \$10,000 for your school or charity. The 2020 Challenge deadlines are Feb. 7 and May 15. Visit [lead4change.org](http://lead4change.org) to get started today.



## AID-NJEA CAN HELP

The AID-NJEA helpline has served NJEA members and their families for nearly 20 years. NJEA members and their families have access to this free and confidential service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Educators and school counselors are on the line from noon until 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and until 6 p.m. on Fridays to provide peer-to-peer support and information to callers. In addition, University Behavioral Health Care provides mental health professionals who answer the helpline during all other hours for 24/7 coverage.

Callers seeking help from AID-NJEA can count on:

- Help from a staff of education support specialists experienced in education and trained in behavioral health.
- Immediate personal response — a “real voice” with no buttons to push.
- Access to thousands of resources from the AID-NJEA Information Directory.
- High quality help by telephone with personal, family and school-related demands.

Why handle tough times alone? Whether you are a new teacher, a support staff member, or a retired school employee, AID-NJEA has people on the line who can provide guidance and information to help. Dial 866-AID-NJEA (243-6532) or email [helpline@njea.org](mailto:helpline@njea.org).

AID-NJEA is a program or partnership between the NJEA and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care.

## NJHOF ACCEPTING ARÊTE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

A \$5,000 New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHOF) Arête Scholarship will be awarded to a male and female student graduating in 2020 from a New Jersey high school.

Arête is a concept from Plato, Socrates and Aristotle that refers to achieving one's highest sense of self with a moral excellence of character. Arête means that the individual should strive to pursue their passions in life and realize their dreams regardless of their circumstances and adversities.

Arête scholarship recipients are young people who demonstrate pride in New Jersey and a willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty. Successful applicants must demonstrate qualities such as academic engagement, moral character and a commitment to their communities. Recipients do not have to be at the very top of their class from an academic standpoint, but should demonstrate a focus in school and life, and have a well-thought-out plan on how they intend to realize their highest sense of self: their Arête.

Each student will be recognized at the NJHOF's annual induction ceremony. Find the application [njhalloffame.org/Arête](http://njhalloffame.org/Arête). The application deadline is June 1.

## SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTS RESEARCH OF NEW JERSEY

New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance's (NJSAA) mission is to bring together individuals involved in the study of New Jersey and act as a clearinghouse for information about teaching and research on New Jersey. The alliance promotes the teaching of New Jersey studies, collaboration on projects and sharing of materials.

The NJSAA is offering a scholarship of \$300 to support research on any aspect of New Jersey studies. It is open to high school and college students.

Applications will be accepted until March 1. For more information, visit [njsaa.org](http://njsaa.org) and look for the student research scholarship under the awards tab.



## CENSUS EDUCATION RESOURCES FROM NEA

The National Education Association (NEA) has launched a comprehensive, multifaceted campaign to help educators teach about the U.S. Census. NEA has also partnered with Los Angeles-based artist Victor “Marka27” Quiñonez to create a series of posters that depict different, undercounted groups, such as students who are of Middle Eastern descent, Latinx, African American, or those who have a disability, with the words “I Count.” These posters will be a visual inspiration in classrooms across the country and provide an opportunity to ensure all residents are counted in the census. Educators can receive stickers for their students to wear that say, “I Count,” free lesson plans and activities, and sample handouts in multiple languages to send home. Learn more at [nea.org/census](http://nea.org/census).



# US Supreme Court hears cases that affect LGBTQ+ rights in employment

BY KAITLYN DUNPHY, ESQ.

On Oct. 8, 2019, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments for three cases filed under Title VII, the federal law prohibiting discrimination in employment. This law bans employers from terminating employees from their positions “because of sex,” which has been traditionally applied to protect both men and women. In the three cases before the court, the plaintiffs allege that they were improperly terminated from their employment “because of sex” when they were fired because of their sexual orientation or their gender identity.

In *Altitude Express Inc. v. Zarda*, the plaintiff alleges that he was dismissed from his job as a skydiving instructor because of his sexual orientation. In *Bostock v. Clayton County*, the plaintiff asserts that his employer terminated his employment as a county child welfare services coordinator upon learning he was gay. In the last case before the court, *R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes v. EEOC and Aimee Stephens*, the plaintiff was discharged from her employment at a funeral home after informing her employer that she was transgender and would begin presenting at work as the woman that she is.

The court agreed to hear these cases to determine the question of whether Title VII’s

***“New Jersey’s Law Against Discrimination specifically includes protections from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression and will continue to provide those protections regardless of the court’s rulings in the federal cases.”***

prohibition on discrimination “because of sex” extends to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and transgender status.

Among other arguments, the plaintiff employees in *Zarda* and *Bostock* argued before the court that discriminating against individuals for being attracted to persons of their own sex—rather than a different sex—constitutes discrimination “because of sex.” Plaintiffs in all three cases contend that it violates Title VII to fire someone when they fail to conform with stereotypes about how a person of a certain sex should identify, appear or behave, and who they should have relationships with.

The defendant employers argued that Congress did not intend for Title VII to prohibit discrimination because of sexual orientation or gender identity. They believe that the law’s language “because of sex” does not encompass or protect against discrimination based upon sexual orientation or transgender status.

The current makeup of the court includes five justices who are considered conservative and four who are considered liberal. Often, in politically charged cases such as these, the justices will vote in line with those labels. However, court watchers have commented that based upon Justice Neil Gorsuch’s questioning at oral argument in the *Zarda* and *Bostock*, his vote may be an important swing vote in the plaintiff’s favor. The plaintiff in the *Stephens* case may have a tougher battle, as the attorneys fielded questions from the justices that show their concern on how

their ruling would affect other employment and school-related issues, such as bathrooms, dress codes and college athletics.

It is likely that the court will issue decisions in these cases in June, which is the end of the court’s term. While the court issues decisions throughout May and June, it historically issues decisions on important cases in late June, which it may do in these matters.

Luckily, New Jersey’s Law Against Discrimination specifically includes protections from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression and will continue to provide those protections regardless of the court’s rulings in the federal cases. New Jersey continues to be at the forefront of protecting our workers, which is in no small part due to the advocacy and involvement of our members in the political process. 🏡

***“Plaintiffs in all three cases contend that it violates Title VII to fire someone when they fail to conform with stereotypes about how a person of a certain sex should identify, appear or behave and who they should have relationships with.”***

Kaitlyn Dunphy is an associate director of NJEA Legal Services and Member Rights in the NJEA Executive Office. She can be reached at [kdunphy@njea.org](mailto:kdunphy@njea.org).

# NJEA Report

## NJEA Convention Boardwalk Run and Fun Walk results



From left: Boardwalk Run and Fun Walk Committee (BRFWC) Co-Chair Eileen Kelley, Danielle Fudala, Peter Ianacone, and BRFWC Co-Chair Marilyn Weeks.



The George M. Adams Boardwalk Run and Fun Walk is an annual highlight for early risers at the NJEA Convention.

The George M. Adams Boardwalk Run and Fun Walk is an annual highlight for early risers at the NJEA Convention. Runners **Danielle Fudala** and **Peter Ianacone** were the first female and male runners to cross the finish line. Fudala is a physical education teacher at Octavius Catto Community Family School in Camden and a member of the Camden Education Association. Ianacone, who also came in first last year, is a fourth-grade teacher at Salome Long Memorial School in Saddle Brook and is a member of the Saddle Brook Education Association.

1	Peter Ianacone	20:56
2	Ted Gaydos	22:07
3	Danielle Fudala	22:47
4	Lou Grasmick III	22:57
5	Maggie Muir Shylock	23:11
6	Cleaven Smith	23:50
7	Maureen Baldwin	24:14
8	Francesco Barquin	24:21
9	Julia Penzaic	24:26
10	Mark Edelstein	25:06
11	Stephen Whitehead	25:27
12	Meredith Pisaeno	27:07
13	Tom Resch	27:20
14	Ryan Griffin	27:35
15	Chuck Salmon-Lowden	27:55
16	Gary Mazurek	28:07
17	Enrique Manlapid	28:09
18	Diane Laboy-Rush	28:58
19	Emiliy Whitehead	29:24
20	Scott Sirotz	29:31
21	Scott Merritt	30:06
22	Gary, Thomas	30:25
23	Michael Bussow	31:24
24	Jen Reischer	33:04
25	Cristy Fergesen	33:07
26	Ted Tympanic	34:45
27	Kristin Smith	35:07
28	Joseph Cozzi	36:10
29	Annelly Rodas	36:27
30	Scott Beaton	36:31
31	Lisa Rose Johnson	37:15
32	Naomi Avner	37:51
33	Ronald Burgess	37:56
34	Barbara Kase-Asner	37:57
35	Marianne Paoli	38:33
36	Susan Misdorn	40:56
37	Pam Caucino	40:58
38	Nicole Stanhus	41:59
39	Dawn Burgess	44:00
40	Bill Indek	44:17
41	Jean Burgess	1:02:50

### Fun walkers

Mary MacRae	44:17
Lori Ramsey	44:56
Jenni Mazetta	47:54
Amy Allen	57:05
Kelly Lindenfeser	1:02:47
Katie Goya	1:02:48



# Seven New Jersey Schools receive 2019 music and arts grant from California Casualty



From left: Hawthorne Public Schools Superintendent Richard Spirito, Passaic County Education Association President Susan Butterfield, Hawthorne Teacher's Association VP Elizabeth Farkas, California Casualty Account Relations Manager Alina Fayerman, Grant Recipient Devin Frederickson, Hawthorne Teacher's Association President Pamela Fadden, Washington School Principal Joseph Piscane

Students at seven New Jersey schools will benefit from the \$250 California Casualty Music and Arts Grant. The grant was created to aid educators in fostering creativity in schools through choir, band, dance, film, theater, computer arts and graphics, or any K-12 curriculum that employs art for learning.

The funds were awarded to the following recipients and their programs to:

- Energize the Atlantic City High School band and orchestra program with new sheet music and supplies with the help from applicant Craig Martin.
- Add a new step to Highland Park's Bartle Elementary School's band program by repairing and purchasing beginner instruments with applicant Keith Presty.
- Acquire extra sheet music and music stands for Cape May's Carl T. Mitnick Elementary School's annual band concert thanks to applicant Deborah Pruitt.
- Keep things in tune by providing rosin for Hillside's Hurden Looker Elementary School's band and strings program with support from applicant Alissa Valiant.

- Add new beats with the purchase of percussion instruments for third graders at the East Rutherford's McKenzie School thanks to applicant Willa Alvarez.
- Make art more colorful at Paterson's Panther Academy with tools and art supplies with the help from applicant Pam Moya.
- Obtain new instruments and music for the fourth- and fifth-grade music program at Hawthorne's Washington Elementary School thanks to applicant Devin Frederickson.

Washington Elementary music teacher Devin Frederickson said acquiring new sheet music will enhance student performances and give new life to the program.

"Thank you for your support in helping provide the best education and environment for our community's children," Deborah Pruitt, grant recipient for Carl T. Mitnick School said. "I am incredibly grateful."

Panther Academy's new art teacher, Katie Machere, said she is thrilled to be offering students a more comprehensive art experience.

"It feels amazing to receive this grant as funding

has gone down for our program the past few years," said Keith Presty, band director and president of the Highland Park Education Association.

The New Jersey schools are among 139 public schools in 31 states receiving a total of \$34,750 to provide materials, supplies and instruments for art, music and performance programs at the schools.

***"Public K-12 schools in the Garden State needing funding for an arts or performance program can apply for the 2020 Music and Arts Grant from California Casualty, at [calcasmusicartsgrant.com](http://calcasmusicartsgrant.com)."***

California Casualty has partnered with education associations since 1951 and NJEA since 2009, and understands the importance of music and arts education for children. Numerous studies have concluded that sharing a love of the arts enhances students':

- Brain development
- Creativity
- Classroom involvement

Music and art curricula have also been shown to reduce disciplinary issues and dropout rates.

Unfortunately, many schools have reduced or eliminated music and arts education because of budget cuts. California Casualty hopes to fill the need with the Music and Arts Grant.

"Students love to showcase their creativity, and helping educators keep music and arts in the forefront of everyday learning is absolutely the right thing for us to do," said California Casualty AVP Brian Goodman.

Public K-12 schools in the Garden State needing funding for an arts or performance program can apply for the 2020 Music and Arts Grant from California Casualty, at [calcasmusicartsgrant.com](http://calcasmusicartsgrant.com). 📄

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## NJREA announces new trade, vocational scholarship honoring Walt Krichling



Walt Krichling with NJREA officers at the NJREA Fall Luncheon in 2018. From left: Dianne Papadinec, Krichling, Judy Perkins, Joan Wright, and Kitty Sausa.

The New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) has announced a new \$1,000 scholarship opportunity for New Jersey public school students who are graduating seniors and intend to earn certification in a trade or vocational field.

The scholarship is named in honor of Walter P. Krichling, Jr. a social studies teacher and coach in the Hopewell Valley School District for 38 years. Krichling passed away in Sept. 2019. During his professional career, Krichling held leadership positions in the Mercer County Education Association, NJEA, and NEA, where he served on the Board of Directors. Krichling joined NJREA as a lifetime member well before his actual retirement, and when he transitioned to retirement, he assumed leadership positions in

NJREA. At the time of his passing, Walter was NJREA's 1st vice president.

The Walter P. Krichling, Jr. Trade, Vocational, or Career and Technical Program Scholarship joins three other scholarships offered by NJREA. They include the Isabelle Hickman four-year scholarship, the Elizabeth Allen four-year scholarship, and the Fred Aug two-year scholarship. Information about how to apply for these scholarships was found on Page 48 of this December edition of the NJEA Review and at [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea).

Donations to the Walter P. Krichling, Jr. Trade, Vocational Certification Scholarship may be sent to the NJREA Philanthropic Fund, c/o Dianne Papadinec, Treasurer, PO Box 671, Turnersville, NJ 08012. 🏠

## ICYMI

NJEA officers honored with advocacy award Nov. 25, 2019

NJEA applauds Congressman Norcross' commitment to public employees Nov. 25, 2019

NJEA VP Spiller named to Public Bank Implementation Board Nov. 21, 2019

Solidarity with Little Rock Education Association Nov. 12, 2019



# Spiller named to Public Bank Implementation Board



Gov. Phil Murphy announced the formation of a 14-member Public Bank Implementation Board on Nov. 12. NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller (l) is one of the four public members of the board.

Gov. Phil Murphy announced on Nov. 12 a Public Bank Implementation Board and has signed an executive order creating the 14-member body. Chaired by Marlene Caride, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance, the board has four members from the public, including NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller. The board is tasked with developing an implementation plan for a public bank within one year.

"I'm proud to serve on the implementation board and am eager to help figure out how we can turn an innovative idea into a positive reality that promotes economic justice and economic security for New Jersey residents," said Spiller. "If some of the profit that currently goes to Wall Street can make it to Main Street instead, we should do the work necessary to set this up and help New Jersey. Done right, a state bank has tremendous potential to make capital work for working people and not just for the wealthy investing class."

To oversee the implementation of the bank, the board's objectives will include assessing capital needs for New Jersey's small businesses, students, and local infrastructure and affordable housing projects; conducting at least three public meetings to better understand how the state can better reduce those capital needs, with a special

***"If some of the profit that currently goes to Wall Street can make it to Main Street instead, we should do the work necessary to set this up and help New Jersey."***

emphasis on supporting low-income and minority populations; enhancing the coordination and services of state authorities; identifying how a public bank can strengthen the capacity of local financial institutions and nonprofit entities; developing a business plan for a public bank that determines capitalization needs and outlines a governance and operation structure; and consulting with experts or other knowledgeable individuals in the field of public banking.

"Leveraging state resources to provide greater access to capital for our communities, small businesses, municipalities, and students is an important component of building a financially inclusive New Jersey," Gov. Phil Murphy said. "With the creation of this implementation board, I am proud to take the first step toward ensuring that our taxpayer dollars are invested here in New Jersey."

## The 14 board members are:

- Marlene Caride, commissioner, New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance (chair)
- Liz Muoio, New Jersey state treasurer
- Matt Platkin, chief counsel to the governor
- Kathleen Frangione, chief policy advisor to the governor
- Derrick Green, senior advisor to the governor for diversity and urban affairs
- Deb Cornavaca, deputy chief of staff to the governor for outreach
- Joe Kelley, deputy chief of staff to the governor for economic growth
- Kevin Quinn, chair of the EDA Board
- Christy Van Horn, chair of the HESAA Board
- Lieutenant Governor Oliver, chair of the HMFA Board
- Phyllis Salowe-Kaye, executive director, New Jersey Citizen Action (public member)
- Joan Bartl, co-director, Banking on New Jersey (public member)
- Dr. William M. Rodgers III, professor of public policy at Rutgers University (public member)
- Sean M. Spiller, vice president, NJEA (public member)



# Blistan honored by NJ Work Environment Council

The New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC) honored NJEA President Marie Blistan at its 2019 Awards Dinner at The College of New Jersey.

Blistan was honored alongside other labor, environmental and community leaders at the annual event. She is one of the founding members of the Healthy Schools Now Coalition and was recognized for her history of leadership in ensuring safe and healthy working and learning conditions for educators and students across New Jersey.

“Marie’s focus as NJEA President is for all of the association’s members to continue to take the lead on the discussion of New Jersey’s education progress in order to provide the best experience possible for all public school children,” WEC Executive Director Debra Coyle McFadden said. “Our organizations have worked together for more than 15 years, and I want you to know how much we value it and how much we appreciate your leadership. Marie stands on the side of justice and fairness.”

Blistan explained that she accepted the award on behalf of the members she proudly represents.

“We don’t just nurture and educate children, we are charged with the responsibility of protecting them,” said Blistan. “We are experts in teaching and in learning, but we are not experts in these other areas, and if it were not for WEC, who has provided the experts and the advocates, we would not be able to do this alone. To me, WEC is the unsung hero for all of us. It has been WEC that has enabled us to stand up and do the right thing, to stand up and do what needs to be done. We congratulate WEC and all of our members who do this work every single day.”

WEC is frequently a partner with NJEA, providing guidance to local associations facing workplace safety and health issues. WEC also provides

training to NJEA members at local and county association events and at statewide conferences. WEC writes a monthly column on health and safety issues in the *NJEA Review*. All of these articles are accessible at [njea.org](http://njea.org). Slide over to “Issues” and select “Health and Safety” from the drop-down menu.

WEC is an alliance of labor, community, and environmental organizations working together for safe, secure jobs, and a healthy, sustainable environment. WEC links workers, communities and environmentalists through training, technical assistance, grassroots organizing, and public policy campaigns to promote dialogue, collaboration, and joint action.



NJEA President Marie Blistan  
and WEC Campaign Organizer Heather Sorge

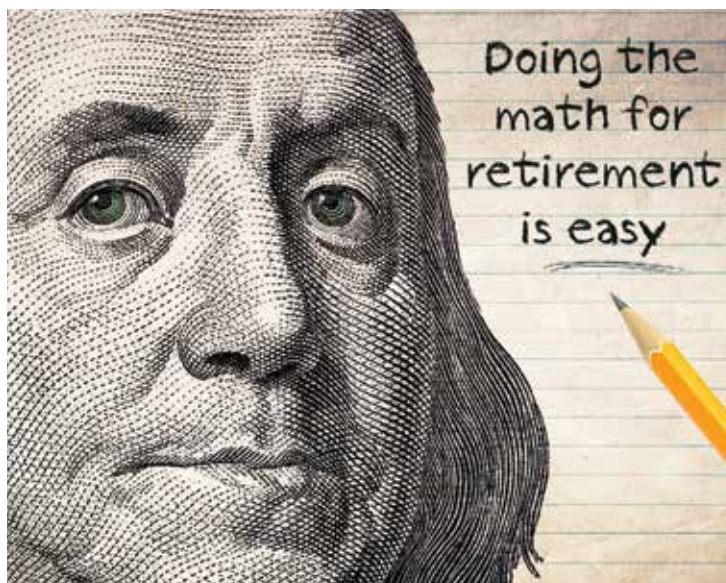
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NJREA President Judy Perkins reminds us that retired members are the Daytime Face of NJEA, available during the school day to advocate on behalf of all members and the students they serve.





# NJREA CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF SERVICE, ACTIVISM, EXCELLENCE

KATHRYN COULIBALY

On Jan. 13, 2020, NJREA will celebrate its 100th anniversary advocating for retired, preservice, and currently employed NJEA members—as well as the students they serve.

To commemorate this milestone, NJEA is taking a look back at everything NJREA members have accomplished, from political action to community service to philanthropic efforts and scholarship funds to social activities. They are truly NJEA's daytime face across the state and their contributions to New Jersey's public school system—which ranks the best in the nation—have continued throughout their years of active employment to their robust involvement in retirement.

## CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO ADVOCACY

If you have ever attended an NJEA Lobby Day or rally in Trenton, you know that one of the most visible ways NJREA members maintain their involvement is by coming out in force when

politicians threaten to dismantle the excellent system of public education members have tirelessly built over decades.

Because the Legislature meets during the day when most NJEA members must be at work, our retired members are the faces legislators most often see crowding the corridors, stopping them for a quick chat outside committee rooms, and sitting in the galleries, ensuring that no move that has an impact on retirees, school employees, or public education goes unnoticed.

NJREA members are also an important part of NJEA's Get-Out-the-Vote efforts, as well as phoning members to educate them about important issues, meeting with legislators in their district offices, and calling, emailing, and tweeting elected officials. Annually, retirees donate close to \$100,000 to the NJEA Political Action Committee (NJEA PAC) and participate in the screening and endorsement process in each legislative election. In short, they are relentless in their advocacy and much of NJEA's legislative success has been a direct result of their efforts.

This vigilance and commitment to public schools, employees, and students, is one of the hallmarks of NJREA. And legislators have come to recognize—and respect—the dedicated NJREA members who take on the responsibility of political engagement.

## ONGOING INVOLVEMENT IN NJEA

NJREA members' engagement in the current political and educational environment extends to ongoing involvement in NJEA. Thirty-six NJREA retirees serve a two-year term on NJEA committees, such as Certification, Evaluation and Tenure; Health Benefits; Human Rights; Technology; and Working Conditions and participate in discussions with active professional

*Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to [njea.org](http://njea.org). She can be reached at [kcoulibaly@njea.org](mailto:kcoulibaly@njea.org).*



NJREA members are among the NJEA affiliated organizations who walk with Team NJEA, raising funds for cancer research and for services to those living with breast cancer through Susan G. Komen's More Than Pink Walk. From left: Sue Maurer, Joan Wright, Pat Provnick, Peggy Yatauro, Judy Perkins and Charlie Moses.

and support staff.

Retirees share their classroom or union experience and get involved in the NJEA Convention, Summer and Winter Leadership conferences, and the Equity Alliance Conference. NJREA representatives submit a short report following each committee meeting and emphasize issues that may affect retirees.

"I have a waiting list of retirees who would like to serve on an NJEA committee," says Judy Perkins, NJREA president. "They want to stay involved with NJEA and have extraordinary talent and experiences to share."

NJREA also has its own committee structure. With 15 committees, members can participate in areas that build and maintain NJREA's capacity to support members. Committees include Budget, Government Relations, Health Benefits, and Member Benefits, among others.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

Through NJREA and their county retiree education associations, hundreds of NJREA members participate in some form of community service throughout the year. Here are just a few of the charities and organizations they support, financially, through donations, and by volunteering their own time and talents:

- Community Food Bank of South Jersey
- Ronald McDonald House
- Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Mentoring children and reading to youngsters in public libraries.

#### SHHHHHH! DON'T TELL

Have you ever wondered who inhabits the Cat in the Hat costume and delights thousands of New Jersey public school students at Read Across New Jersey events throughout the state? Four NJREA members have taken on the task. They log thousands of miles every spring to help instill a lifelong love of learning—and, possibly, of cats—in students. But keep it a secret. We wouldn't want to spoil the magic!

#### SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

NJREA offers four scholarships for upcoming college freshmen: two four-year scholarships, one two-year scholarship and one one-year scholarship. Scholarships are renewable based on the recipient's cumulative grade point average at the end of each academic year and continued enrollment as a full-time student.

Most county retiree education associations offer scholarships. Since 2017, these associations have disbursed more than \$280,000 to 128 deserving students. Scholarship recipients and their families are invited to attend county association meetings to share their post high school plans and to be recognized for not only their academic achievements but also community service.

#### CONTINUING EDUCATION AND ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS

NJREA offers spring and fall luncheons for members where they hear from NJEA staff about issues that affect their lives. In addition, the NJREA Convention, held the day before the NJEA Convention every November in Atlantic City, provides members with additional up-to-date resources, support and an opportunity to participate in their association.

County retiree associations also offer a variety of speakers on topics relevant to NJREA members. These periodic luncheons provide general



**“ Gifting an NJREA membership is a wonderful idea! Local school district associations can do this to honor their retiring staff instead of giving them a plaque or clock. Children, grandchildren, friends can gift a membership for a relative, a colleague, a retired educator—especially for an elderly retiree on a fixed income who doesn’t really need another sweater or flannel shirt. ”**



Save the May 3, 2020 for the NJREA 100th Anniversary Celebration. Pictured above is the celebration planning committee.



The Daytime Face of NJEA staffs a table at the Summer Leadership Conference. From left: Barbara Toczko, Fran Davis and Susan Vigilante.



## Who is NJREA?

- NJREA represents all retired school employees who worked in a New Jersey public school, as well as some who worked in universities and community colleges.
- NJREA has a membership of more than 30,000 retired public school employees, with more joining every year.
- NJREA is composed of 21 county organizations that meet two to four times annually and host speakers who provide up-to-date information on important retiree issues.
- NJREA members advocate for pension, medical and legislative issues that affect retired school employees, as well as current educational issues.
- NJREA has trained legislative action teams who regularly contact—in person and in writing—state and congressional legislators to communicate issues of importance to members.
- NJREA publishes a quarterly newsletter filled with pertinent information on national, state, and county-related topics.
- NJREA sponsors an annual convention in Atlantic City and participates in both the NJEA Convention and NEA Representative Assembly.
- [NJEA.org/njrea](http://NJEA.org/njrea) allows retirees to access timely information on education and benefits issues.

# The benefits of membership

When you join NJREA, you belong to one of the largest retired public school employee organizations in the nation as well as maintaining your membership with NJEA, NEA, NEA-Retired, and your CREA, which can be in the county in which you worked or in which you reside, or you can pay to join both.

In addition, you will receive the *NJREA Newsletter*, an award-winning quarterly publication with information that keeps you informed about your pension, medical benefits, and more. You will also receive the *NJEA Review*, which has a section on retiree issues every month, as well as *NEA Today, Retired Edition*.

Most importantly, you will receive assistance from NJEA professional staff on pension and medical benefits questions, in addition to assistance on all retirement concerns. This service is only available to dues-paying NJREA members.

#### Members also receive:

- Personal Legal Services – free consultation and 30 percent discount on services.
- Buyer's Edge, Inc. – guaranteed best prices negotiated on your behalf on major purchases.
- NEA Members Insurance Trust – term life insurance.
- Association sponsored auto and home insurance.
- NJEA Member Discount Program.
- Access Discounts – more than 315, 000 discounts and counting.
- Lowest prices on eyewear.
- NJEA travel discounts.
- NEA financial programs.

NJREA Member Benefits also apply to the immediate family of an NJREA member, which means that you get even more value from your membership.

#### RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

NJREA's webpage, [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea), provides a wealth of valuable information for retired public school employees, from information about Medicare to tips on benefits coverage while traveling to assistance for surviving spouses. One of the most frequently asked questions concerns the rules governing retired public school employees who would like to work or volunteer in New Jersey's public schools. The information on working after retirement while collecting a pension provides many answers on post-retirement employment.

NJREA has compiled all the information you will need to make the right decisions to protect yourself and your pension during what will hopefully be a long and happy retirement.



Don't tell the kids, but the Cat who visits their schools is an NJREA member in disguise.

overviews on important issues for members, but also cover topics such as Social Security, Medicare, cyber security, estate planning, laws on elder care, how to stay healthy in retirement, and much more.

#### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AND TRAVEL

One of the best reasons to join NJREA is to maintain and create new friendships. Through social activities organized by county retiree associations, members have seen:

- Broadway shows
- Atlantic City shows
- The Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.
- Longwood Gardens
- Grounds for Sculpture
- Hunterdon Playhouse
- Maryland's Eastern Shore
- Las Vegas
- Lancaster, Pa.
- The New York Botanical Gardens
- An Underground Railroad tour in South Jersey
- Boston, Mass., Branson. Mo., and many other destinations

Internationally, some groups have toured Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Greece, the Canadian Rockies, Budapest and Prague.

#### JOIN THE CELEBRATION!

NJREA is a vital, vibrant, active, and essential organization, thanks to the members who demonstrate those qualities every day. After 100 years of service to New Jersey's public school employees, students, and our state, it's time to say thank you and celebrate their achievements.

On May 3, 2020 nearly 600 people will join NJREA's 100th Anniversary Celebration at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. There will be food, live entertainment, and NJREA will honor nearly 80 members who are 100 years old or older. For more information, go to [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea).





From left: Judy Perkins, John Carlson, Kitty Sausa, Joan Wright, and Dianne Papadinec.

***"NJREA is a vital, vibrant, active, and essential organization, thanks to the members who demonstrate those qualities every day."***

#### MEET NJREA'S OFFICERS

President Judy Perkins – Judy retired from Mainland Regional High School where she taught English.

First Vice President Joan Wright – Joan was a middle school mathematics teacher who retired from Piscataway Township.

Second Vice President John Carlson – John retired from Egg Harbor Township where he taught reading, language arts and social studies in the middle school.

Secretary Harriet "Kitty" Sausa – Kitty taught physical education in grades five through eight before she retired from North Haledon School District.

Treasurer Dianne Papadinec – Dianne retired as a guidance counselor from Highland Regional High School.

Immediate Past President Patricia Provnick – Pat taught early elementary grades in Winslow Township until her retirement. 🏡

## How to join **NJREA**

Any actively employed professional or educational support staff member who is eligible for a New Jersey state pension may join NJREA prior to retirement at the current lifetime dues rate. The active employee becomes a preretired lifetime member of NJREA, NJEA, NEA-R, and a county retirees' education association (CREA) and begins to receive publications and information about retirement issues.

Some local associations or friends of the retiree purchase memberships for retiring NJEA members. Gifting an NJREA membership is a wonderful idea! Local school district associations can do this to honor their retiring staff instead of giving them a plaque or clock. Children, grandchildren, friends can gift a membership for a relative, a colleague, a retired educator—especially for an elderly retiree on a fixed income who doesn't really need another sweater or flannel shirt.

For more details about this opportunity, and payment information, call the NJEA Membership Division at 609-599-4561, ext. 4123.



#1of10k



#FIXTHEUNFAIRNESS

WE ARE WORTH IT



I am njea

Freehold Borough Education Association President Heidi Brache

# small actions make a

# BIG

# DIFFERENCE

BY MATTHEW STAGLIANO

Last year, NJEA members from local associations in every county worked together to fight for our students and for the future of our profession. As more members become involved in their local, county and statewide associations, our union becomes stronger. As our union grows in strength, it becomes better equipped to support public schools, the educators who work there, and the children who attended them.

It's no surprise then, after a year where NJEA and its local and county affiliates saw record levels of member engagement, that *Education Week* named New Jersey's public schools the best in the nation.

From professional practice to political action, NJEA members showed up, stepped up, and stood arm-in-arm for a common cause: a brighter future for public schools in our state. Whether it was talking to parents in your school's community at a PRIDE event, holding a sign at a rally for a fair contract, or attending an association meeting, your involvement made a difference.

NJEA members have always stood up for the respect and dignity that all educators deserve; this year was no different. Through the fight for quality,

affordable health care and common-sense job protections for educational support professionals, NJEA members fought for the dignity of a profession that has been demonized much too often by state and national leaders. For too long, the state's past mistakes have been balanced on the backs of educators, and this year NJEA members said "enough!"

As educators and union members, it's often easy for us to talk about the progress we've made, but it's often hard to articulate what we actually did during an academic year to make that progress. We're so busy working after hours so our students can learn we often forget all the day-to-day union actions we do. When we add up small, simple actions, they make a big difference.

*Matthew Stagliano is an associate director in the NJEA Communications Division. He can be reached at [mstagliano@njea.org](mailto:mstagliano@njea.org).*





NJEA members joined their fellow union members in the Communication Workers of America, which represents the state's public employees, to demand the passage of a fair and responsible budget and to call for Chapter 78 relief and ESP job justice.

# FIXING THE UNFAIRNESS

Last year NJEA members engaged in an unprecedented campaign to Fix the Unfairness. The goal of the campaign, which was led by a team of NJEA members and staff, was to see three important bills passed into law. One of the bills addresses the problems associated with the ever-rising cost of health care that has caused the take home pay of thousands of educators to go down. The other two bills aim to put common-sense job protections into place for educational support professionals (ESPs). The campaign saw thousands of members get involved with union-action and garnered statewide media attention throughout the year.

A-3395, which will prevent school boards from privatizing ESP jobs during an active collective bargaining agreement, passed the Assembly by a vote of 70-6.

A-3664, which will provide due process rights to ESPs, passed the Assembly by a vote of 75-5-1.

The Senate companions to these bills, S-296 and S-3089 respectively, await a vote in the Senate, and the bills currently have 17 and 18 sponsors respectively.

A-5814/S-4104, which would provide relief from Chapter 78 for NJEA members and end the annual decrease in take-home pay by more fairly calculating health care contributions, awaits a vote in both houses of the state Legislature. The Assembly version of the bill is sponsored by, among others, Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin, who noted that he sponsored this bill after hearing from thousands of NJEA members.

Member actions to Fix the Unfairness yielded results:

- More than 116,000 members signed a single petition.
- Members sent 50,000 post cards.
- We sent 182,000 text messages to NJEA members.
- More than 500 members met with legislators.
- Members sent more than 55,000 emails to legislators last year.
- NJEA ran digital and TV advertisements that's were viewed more than 158 million times.

# POLITICAL PROGRESS

## *Elections*

Educator involvement in the political process is important for the future of profession.

For the 2019 Election Year:

- Fifty-one out of 59 NJEA PAC-endorsed legislative candidates, or 86%, won their elections.
- NJEA's endorsements local elections helped propel pro-education candidates to widespread success on Nov 5. A record 270 members ran for office—for school boards and municipal and county office, and for county offices—the most in a single election year, and 197 won their seats.

## *Legislation NJEA and its members helped succeed*

When it comes to passing laws that matter, our voice matters. When NJEA members call, legislators answer because they understand your passion, value your expertise and respect your power.

Over the past year, NJEA supported many bills that Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law, including:

**Student Loans:** S-1149 – This bill provides for the licensure and regulation of student loan servicers by the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance and creates a Student Loan Ombudsman in the department.

**Teacher Certification:** S-858 – This bill requires public school health and physical education teachers in grades kindergarten through six to possess a health or physical education endorsement or a school nurse endorsement on their instructional certificate.

**Gun Safety:** The package of four common-sense gun safety bills outlined below reaffirms New Jersey's commitment to institute the strongest gun safety laws in the nation.

- A-4449 – This bill combats “straw purchases” of firearms. Under the bill, any person disqualified from owning a firearm under state or federal law and who acts to obtain a firearm through another individual would be guilty of a crime of the third degree, which is punishable by a three-to-five-year term of incarceration, a fine of up to \$15,000, or both.
- S-101 – This bill establishes a commission to approve personalized handguns and requires firearm retailers to sell personalized handguns.
- S-3897 – This bill criminalizes the purchase, transfer or possession of certain weapons and ammunition by persons convicted of certain crimes and establishes the crime of transferring or possessing firearm without a serial number.
- A-3896 – This bill requires the state attorney general and commissioner of health to establish a suicide prevention training course and informational materials for firearm retail dealers.

- A-764 – This bill requires that all public elementary and secondary schools in the state be equipped with at least one panic alarm that is directly linked to local law enforcement (or State Police, if the municipality does not operate its own police department) for use in an emergency.
- S2293 – After Gov. Murphy signed this bond issue in August 2018, New Jersey voters approved the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act on Nov. 6, 2018. The \$500 million bond measure includes funding for school security, among other school infrastructure improvements.

**Minimum Wage:** A-15 – The bill establishes several multiyear schedules for gradually raising the state minimum wage to not less than \$15 per hour.

**Social Justice:** S-1569 – This bill requires boards of education to provide instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle school and high school students as part of the district's implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

## *Legislation NJEA and its members helped stop*

**County College Health Benefits:** S-2455 – This bill would have transferred New Jersey county college employees and retirees from membership in the School Employees' Health Benefits Program to membership in the State Health Benefits Program and would have diminished the voice of higher education members in protecting their health benefits.

**PARCC/Assessments:** S-3381 – This bill would have amended the provisions of current law concerning the graduation proficiency test to provide for the development or designation of a statewide assessment or assessments in reading, writing and computational skills.

## *Regulatory achievement*

NJEA and its members advocated to ensure that the median Student Growth Percentile (mSGP), which was at 30% in 2017-18, was reduced to 5% for teacher evaluations during this 2019-20 school year.

## *Funding for education*

Gov. Murphy added \$15.4 billion to funding for public education, including:

- \$55 million for special education.
- \$206 million in additional formula aid as defined under the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA).
- \$2 billion to higher education.
- \$5 million to support tuition-free county colleges.
- \$3.8 billion to our state's pension systems—this payment comes after an extended period of neglect and will go a long way toward fully funding the state's pension

**School Safety:**



# PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE



Trenton science teacher and Science Committee Chairperson Vondalyn Fannin at the Franklin Elementary School Science Fair in 2017.



From "Narratives of Courage" segment on "Classroom Close-up NJ," Watchung Borough music teacher Liz Thompson (now retired).



Irvington educators—teachers, ESP and administrators work collaboratively—at the NJEA Priority Schools Initiative. Speaking is Principal Nicole Gilmore.

## *Convention*

Thousands of NJEA members attended the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. Hundreds of workshops and other professional learning experiences were offered. Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi, authors of *Tell Me Who You Are*, delivered Thursday's keynote address. Dr. Cornel West professor from Harvard University keynoted the NJEA Convention on Friday.

## *Amistad Commission and Amistad Journey*

The 17 year-old New Jersey Amistad Commission, charged with ensuring that the history and contributions of African Americans and the descendants of the African Diaspora are integrated into school curricula was strengthened by NJEA through the creation of the Amistad Stakeholder Group and the development of the Amistad Journey—a program to allow educators to travel to the historic sites of the trans-Atlantic slave trade both in the U.S. and Africa.

## *Teacher Leader Academy*

The NJEA Teacher Leader Academy launches this year after the association helped write the bill that created the teacher leader endorsement and lobbied its passage into law. Now the association is leading the way by being one of the providers through which teachers can earn the endorsement.

## *Trauma-informed care*

Several full-time NJEA staff, 23 professional development consultants, and two NJEA apprentices are trained in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), changing the way educators work with children. Thirteen counties and seven locals have trauma-informed workshops planned for the 2019-20 school year.

## *Educational support professionals*

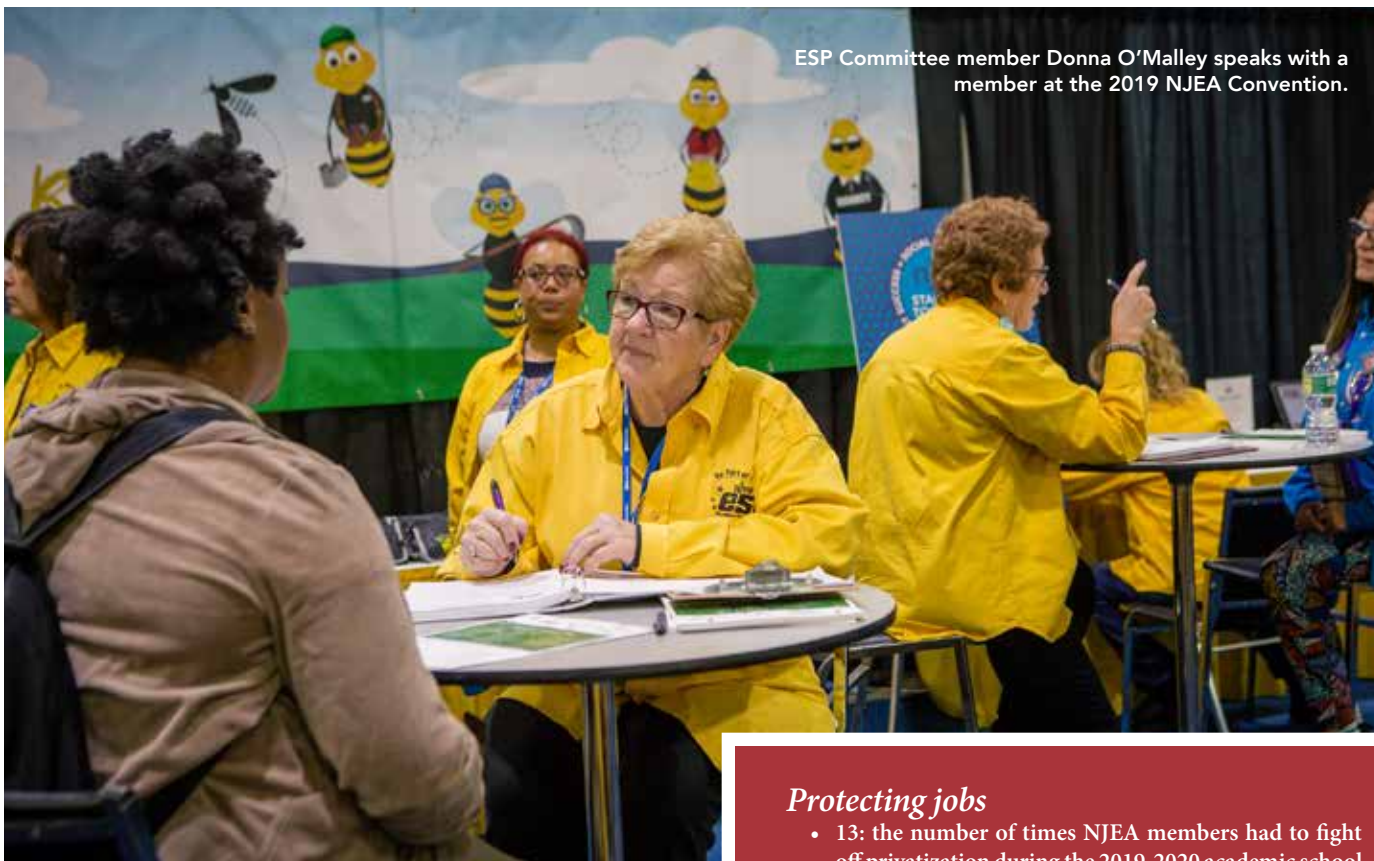
More than 500 educational support professionals attended the NJEA ESP Conference and hundreds more attended ESP programs at the NJEA Convention. NJEA also offered dozens of workshops for ESPs through county and local associations.

## *Priority Schools Initiative*

Last year, seven schools graduated from the NJEA Priority School Initiative. This year, eight new schools from Camden, Irvington, Plainfield, Hillside and Trenton, joined the initiative. Since its inception in 2012, 54 schools have participated in the three-year program.

## *Design Practice and Collaborative Problem Solving*

More than 6,600 members engaged in design process protocols to give more NJEA members voice and ownership of their local associations.



ESP Committee member Donna O'Malley speaks with a member at the 2019 NJEA Convention.

# ADVOCATING FOR OUR MEMBERS

## *Protecting jobs*

- 13: the number of times NJEA members had to fight off privatization during the 2019-2020 academic school year.
- 3: the number of locals that negotiated with their school boards to fend off privatization.
- 0: the number of privatization fights led to loss of work for NJEA members.
- 23: the number of privatization fights the South Jersey Anti-Privatization Coalition (SJPAC) has won since its founding in 2017.
- 0: the number of fights the SJPAC has lost

## *Progress at the bargaining table*

85% of all New Jersey school have starting salaries above \$50,000.

- 18 school districts have starting salaries above \$60,000.
- No school district starting salary is below \$40,000.

Sample average salaries for Educational Support Professionals

- Custodians average salary up to \$49,706
- Secretaries average salary up to \$50,021

By August 2019, staff at 19 public charter schools had organized into local associations represented by NJEA.

The New Jersey Public Schools Labor Management Collaborative hosted the first Labor Management East Coast Institute in June, with two dozen districts and local associations represented. Six new districts are joining in the program this year.





# East Windsor Education Association





The East Windsor Education Association has a strong relationship with the community enhanced by EWEA's use of Pride and FAST grants.



# PUBLIC RELATIONS, MEDIA CAMPAIGNS AND GRANTS

NJEA invested its resources into sharing with the public the amazing things and important work that educators do:

- 158,594,792 = the total number of times NJEA videos were viewed.
- 24,452,827 = the number of times NJEA's content was viewed on social media.

## ***NJEA Pride in Public Education and NJEA FAST***

- 413 local associations and 17 county associations used NJEA Pride grants for community outreach in the 2019-20 school year.
- 55 local associations used NJEA Family and Schools Work Together for Children (FAST) for family involvement programs in the 2019-20 school year.
- \$4,798,045 in NJEA Pride and NJEA FAST grants were dispersed to those local and county associations in the 2019-20 school year for community outreach and family involvement programs.

## ***NJEA Fredrick L. Hipp Grant Awards continue to Support NJEA members supporting children:***

- 17 grantees were awarded more than \$84,000.
- Since its founding in 1994, the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education as awarded 411 Hipp Grants giving back more than \$2.2 million to educators.



# **\$ALARY GUIDE WORKSHOP**

**YIELDS BIG BENEFITS FOR  
LITTLE FERRY EA MEMBERS**

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



*"This experience showed every member in our association the value of being members of the NJEA."*



The LFEA negotiations team with NJEA staff support. Seated from left: Team member Milissa Connolly, LFEA President Debbie Leopold, team member Elaine Kronyak and LFEA Negotiations Chair Karen Lavery. Standing from left: Team member Michele Malki, NJEA UniServ Field Rep Richard Loccke, NJEA Associate Director for Research Denise Policastro, and team member Elaine Shields.

For the 80 members of the Little Ferry Education Association (LFEA), one workshop had mighty consequences. In October 2018, NJEA and the LFEA offered a salary guide workshop to help educate members about guides and prepare them for the bargaining process they were about to embark upon. For LFEA Negotiations Chair Karen Lavery, it just made sense to ensure that all members understood their salary guide and to explore how bargaining could improve it.

"But once we dug into the information in the workshop, we quickly recognized we had a problem," Lavery recalled. "We realized that 23 of our members were on the wrong step of the salary guide, and some members had been on the wrong step since the 2010-11 school year."

NJEA Field Representative Rich Loccke and NJEA Research and Economic Services associate director Denise Policastro quickly discussed the problem and potential solutions with the local leadership.

Because the local association had excellent relationships with the administration and board of education, LFEA began with a meeting with the superintendent, Frank Scarafile in November. They then went back and met with the affected staff and asked them to complete a salary guide worksheet that listed their years in the district, how they moved on the guide, and what the correct movement should have been.

After collecting everyone's worksheets and analyzing the data, Lavery and her team, which included the negotiations team of LFEA President Debra Leopold, Elaine Shields, Milissa Connolly, Elaine Kronyak, and Michele Malki, met with Loccke to discuss the magnitude of the problem.

"Even though we had a great relationship with the administration, and they were eager to resolve the issue, the magnitude of the problem and the amount of money involved meant that this process would not happen quickly," Loccke said.

Working with NJEA, the LFEA consulted with network attorney Colin Lynch. Loccke and Policastro also met with the affected members to explain the situation and detail how they would work to resolve it.

It was determined that the best mechanism for resolution would be working through the grievance process, even though LFEA had administrative support. Through a grievance settlement, all affected members were placed on their proper steps on the salary guide and the members who had been shortchanged received a share of the \$125,000 settlement.

After this issue was resolved, the association and board began bargaining and were able to reach a successor agreement in just one meeting, held during the summer, that provided a four-year agreement that included Ch. 78 relief.

"In most of the places I work, we are usually just battling the board," Policastro said. "This was a place where board members appreciated their staff and wanted to do the right thing by them. The overall theme was 'we just want to make it right.'"

For the members of LFEA, it was also a lesson in the value of membership.

"This experience showed every member in our association the value of being members of the NJEA," Lavery said. "NJEA was behind us 100 percent. I spoke to Rich Loccke on a regular basis and he was always available to answer questions,


give advice, and to speak directly to the business administrator. He and Denise Policastro did whatever they could to help resolve this matter. It was great to see firsthand their knowledge and expertise at work for members."

Lavery also saw a big impact on her members.

"We had a lot of things going for us, not the least of which was our members' unity and willingness to resolve the problem in a way that was fair to everyone," Lavery said. "Everyone supported the affected members, even when they knew that it would likely be a long process and would delay bargaining. But our members rallied behind each other, and we've seen that positive attitude and unity extend into the current school year. We are all just relieved that both issues were settled, and we could concentrate on making the year a great one for our students."

For Lavery, being a member of NJEA made all the difference.

"NJEA membership is invaluable," Lavery said. "This was a fight we would not have won on our own. Members would not have received the settlement they did, as quickly as they did, if not for having NJEA behind them."

NJEA offers salary guide workshops, among many other topics, to local associations. If your local association wants to plan a salary guide workshop, have your local president contact your UniServ field representative. Make your dues work for you by using NJEA resources to get the information and support you need. 

*Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to [njea.org](http://njea.org). She can be reached at [kcoulibaly@njea.org](mailto:kcoulibaly@njea.org).*





# AN EDUCATOR COMES FULL-CIRCLE IN CARTERET

MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARDS  
RECOGNIZE NIKKI SILVA  
FOR EXCELLENCE

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

*Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to [njea.org](http://njea.org). She can be reached at [kcoulibaly@njea.org](mailto:kcoulibaly@njea.org).*



Third-grade teacher Nikki Silva, a Milken-award winning teacher, creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere in her classroom.

Walking into Nikki Silva's colorful third-grade classroom at Nathan Hale Elementary School in Carteret is like walking into a hug. The students, most of whom are smiling broadly, are either engaged in a "do now" at their desks, handing in homework or flocking to their teacher's desk to tell her about something that happened last night, share a funny anecdote or find some comfort on a tough morning.

Silva expertly balances the personal one-on-one attention her students crave with keeping the entire class on task and motivated. As Silva says, by this point in the school year, the students know there is a time for them to talk and a time for them to focus on tasks.

Silva is focused on creating a differentiated classroom where every student is reached and everyone feels successful. She works to cultivate a family atmosphere. Social-emotional learning is a major component in her practice.

"I make sure that we set a tone of respect right from the beginning," Silva said. "Respect for each other, for me, and for their classroom."

At the beginning of the school year, Silva convenes a class meeting and the students develop a classroom pledge that they recite every morning to remind them of their commitment to themselves, to learning, and to each other.

While most mornings look like this one, Silva experienced a very different kind of day on Dec. 7, 2018.

"We had an assembly and the commissioner of education was coming, so we were all so excited to meet him," Silva recalled. "We had a flash mob all ready to go. He started to talk and said he had

a special guest. Before we knew it, he introduced Jane Foley, the senior vice president of the Milken Family Foundation."

The Milken Family Foundation Awards honor outstanding educators. Recipients receive \$25,000 to do with whatever they like and an opportunity to network with other Milken recipients at a conference.

As Foley spoke, Silva's students and colleagues nudged her and said she was going to be the one named, but Silva vehemently disagreed.

"But then my heart started pounding and I thought, what if it is me? Then they said my name, and time stood still. It was the biggest shock of my entire life," Silva remembered.

#### AN AMBASSADOR FOR THE DISTRICT

Silva does not know the criteria for the award, why she was named, or how the foundation even found her. However, Silva's colleagues are confident they know why she was selected.

"Nikki Silva is an extraordinary teacher," said Rosa Diaz, superintendent of schools in Carteret. "She epitomizes the title of teacher. She believes in encouraging her students and she motivates them by creating lessons that are engaging. But perhaps most importantly, she creates a loving atmosphere that enables the kids to be critical thinkers while also challenging them. It is all about the atmosphere that she creates in her room."

Nathan Hale Elementary School Principal Erika Barrett agrees. "Nikki makes a tremendous difference, not only in the lives of her students, but also in her school community," Barrett said.





A sneak a peek at Silva's classroom: Nikki Silva's classroom is colorful and energetic. Take a peek inside in an NJEA Review video. Watch it online at [njea.org/Silva](http://njea.org/Silva).

"We know what a talent we have in her. She's a role model for her students as well as her peers. She's just an amazing ambassador for our school district, as an educator and as a product of Carteret public schools."

"Students need to know that they are valued," Silva said. "Growing up, my parents were my biggest cheerleaders. I want to be that for my students."

One of the activities that Silva does with her students is based off a book they read together called *No Excuses* by Wayne Dyer.

Silva says that moral of this book is that no matter what gets in their path, students need to know that they can overcome it.

"I get teary-eyed when I read it to them because I really do believe in them. I'm not just teaching them math, English or social studies. I'm teaching the whole child. If they come in and seem sad, we're not starting the lesson until I talk to them

***"She's an amazing ambassador for our school district, as an educator and as a product of Carteret public schools."***



Silva's commitment to Carteret is lifelong. She attended schools in the same district in which she teaches.

***"I'm not just teaching them math, English or social studies. I'm teaching the whole child."***

and find out what's going on."

Silva's students have embarked on extremely ambitious projects. They have built their own Olympic games with recycled materials. They used basketball mini hoops to learn statistics and fractions. Using Google Expeditions, students have been able to "visit" the solar system.

Students also take an active role in their education. Working with Silva, they set goals for their learning and work to be included on her "Wall of Fame" for students who reach their goals.

When things get too stressful for them, Silva lets her students use the "cooldown backpack," a backpack filled with relaxation aids such as putty and glitter-filled water bottles.

#### **A LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO CARTERET**

Silva grew up in Carteret, so teaching at Nathan Hale Elementary School has brought her life full-circle. She is proud to teach alongside teachers who taught her.

As a senior in college, she interviewed for a teaching position at Nathan Hale and could not believe that she was going to get to teach in her hometown. In an amazing coincidence, New Jersey Commissioner of Education Lamont Repollet hired Silva in Carteret in 2005 when he served there as principal. Diaz was the vice principal at the time.

Today, Silva serves on committees addressing curriculum, data, school climate, district strategic planning and English/language arts. She and previous Milken recipients in the state helped the New Jersey Department of Education plan the first statewide equity conference, which was held last July. She also mentors new teachers and is actively engaged in professional development in the district.

Silva, a graduate of Montclair State University, balances all this with her responsibilities as a wife and mother of two daughters, but she has other dreams that the grant money will help her pursue.

"It's really not about the money; the honor is enough and more than I ever dreamed of," Silva said. "But thanks to the financial award, I'm going to get an opportunity to work on a book idea I have and have been trying to pursue. I was also able to donate some money to the Carteret School District, paid off some student loans, and put money toward my daughters' educations."

"I truly love my job and getting to teach here is my dream come true." 🌟

## **Meet NJ's other Milken Award Winners**

Since 2002, 30 New Jersey educators have been named Milken Award winners. The most recent, Daniel Willever, a geography and history teacher at Ramsey High School, was named a Milken Award winner in December 2019. NJEA applauds Willever, and all his fellow Milken Award winners, on this achievement.

Several Milken winners have been featured on "Classroom Closeup NJ." Asterisks appear next to the names of those who have appeared on the show. You can watch their episode online at [classroomcloseup.org](http://classroomcloseup.org). Search "Milken" to find their segments.

#### **2019 Honorees**

Daniel Willever

#### **2018 Honorees**

Nicole Silva

#### **2017 Honorees**

Toni Ann Palmisano \*

Maria DeBruin \*

#### **2016 Honorees**

Lindsay Frevert \*

#### **2015 Honorees**

Allison Cuttler

Kimberly Moreno

#### **2014 Honorees**

Tracy Espiritu \*

#### **2013 Honorees**

Robert O'Donnell

#### **2012 Honorees**

Patrick O'Neill \*

#### **2011 Honorees**

Frank Iannucci

#### **2010 Honorees**

Rachel Tonkovich

#### **2009 Honorees**

Baruti Kafele \*

#### **2008 Honorees**

Kimberly Jacquay

Renee Richardson Bachia

#### **2007 Honorees**

Jamal Dickerson \*

James Gleason

#### **2006 Honorees**

Carla Bittner

Tonya Breland

#### **2005 Honorees**

Camile Earle

#### **2004 Honorees**

Theresa Bordo

Jill Stauffer

#### **2003 Honorees**

Amy Biasucci

Beverly Plein \*

#### **2002 Honorees**

James Aquavia \*

John Bormann

Stephen Liddawi

Theresa Licitra

April Lowe

Patricia McGee \*



# Hot topics in special education

BY CAMY KOBYLINSKI

The NJEA Exceptional Children Committee is charged with overseeing and promoting NJEA actions related to the needs of exceptional children and the NJEA members who serve them. The committee members welcome your suggestions and concerns as they endeavor to represent you. Log in to [njea.org](http://njea.org) and slide over to "My NJEA" to identify your county representative on the committee. Here are just a few of the current special education issues that the Exceptional Children Committee is considering.

## RESTRAINT

Questions are coming in from districts around the state regarding the practice of using physical restraint with students with disabilities. In January 2018, then-Gov. Chris Christie signed Public Law 2017, Chapter 291, defining restraint and seclusion and establishing requirements for their use. As a result, most school districts created or updated existing board policy. Below are the highlights about the use of restraint in the law. Similar language pertains to the use of seclusion.

- Physical restraint is used only in an emergency that places the student or others in immediate physical danger.
- A student is not restrained in the prone position, unless authorized in writing by the student's primary care physician.
- Staff members involved in the restraint of students receive training in safe techniques from an entity determined by the board of education to be qualified to provide such training, and that the training is updated at least annually.
- The parent or guardian of a student is immediately notified when physical restraint is used. A full written report of the incident shall be provided to the parent or guardian within 48 hours of the occurrence.

*Camy Kobylinski is an associate director in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She is the staff contact for the NJEA Exceptional Children Committee. She can be reached at [ckobylinski@njea.org](mailto:ckobylinski@njea.org).*

*The members of the NJEA Exceptional Children Committee welcome your suggestions and concerns. Visit [njea.org/njea-committees](http://njea.org/njea-committees) to identify your county representative on this committee and every NJEA committee.*

- Each incident in which a physical restraint is used is carefully and continuously visually monitored to ensure that it was used in accordance with established procedures set forth in a board policy.
- Each incident is documented in writing to enable the staff to develop or improve the behavior intervention plan.
- School districts shall attempt to minimize the use of physical restraints through inclusion of positive behavior supports in the student's behavior intervention plans developed by the individualized education plan team.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has developed guidance about the use of restraint and seclusion. That guidance may be found by searching online using the terms "NJDOE guidance restraint." Exceptional Children Committee members look forward to bringing your feedback to the next committee meeting about any challenges you are encountering with the application of the law and NJDOE guidance.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSURANCES UNDER IDEA, PART B

Districts receive IDEA, Part B funds to provide special education services to students. These dollars are reported as revenue in district user-friendly budgets. To receive these funds, districts must assure that they are complying with 19 conditions in NJAC 6A:14-1.2(a). Among those requirements is the delivery of in-service training to professional and paraprofessional staff who provide special education, general education or related services. The requirement emphasizes inclusion of content knowledge, collaborative skills, behavioral intervention strategies and use of educational research to adopt promising practices, materials and technology.

While districts are required to provide professional development, NJEA aims to supplement and exceed the requirements through local, county and statewide program offerings throughout the year. The NJEA Exceptional Children Committee provided valuable input

for the planning of the May 2, 2020 Exceptional Children Conference. Register for the conference at [njea.org/ecc2020](http://njea.org/ecc2020).

## SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY GROUPS

Under the same subchapter of the special education regulations NJAC 6A:14-1.2(h), districts are required to ensure that a special education parent advisory group, or SEPAG, is in place in the district to provide input on issues concerning students with disabilities.

Among the many benefits to districts of an effective SEPAG is the development of positive and collaborative relationships.

When parents and community members are informed and empowered, they can influence improvements and enhancements to programming and services. Local associations have partnered with the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN) to provide training and support to parents. More information about effective SEPAGs will be offered at the NJEA Exceptional Children Conference.

These are just a few of the areas that the Exceptional Children Committee is studying. NJEA members can access committee agendas and minutes on the committee's web page at [njea.org/njea-committees](http://njea.org/njea-committees). Become an active participant in the process by contacting your representative to provide your input and information about your needs. 📢

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## NJEA OFFICERS



**President**  
**Marie Blistan**



**Vice President**  
**Sean M. Spiller**



**Secretary-Treasurer**  
**Steve Beatty**

## NJEA ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The NJEA Executive Committee includes the three statewide officers, plus one or more representatives elected from each county or equivalent unit of representation, based on membership enrollment. County and unit representatives serve for three-year terms, except as necessary to stagger terms of office. Weighted voting is utilized to reflect the one-person, one-vote principle. The committee meets monthly to conduct association business.

Atlantic County: Elizabeth A. Miller; Bergen County: Susan A. McBride; Andrew Policastro; Burlington County: Andrew M. Jacobs; Camden County: Laurie T. Gibson-Parker; Cape May County: Stacey Salerno; Cumberland County: Aaron P. Honaker; Essex County: Jacqui Greadington; Gloucester County: Christine Onorato; Higher Ed: Peter A. Helff; Hudson County: Ronald F. Greco; Hunterdon County: Susan

R. Vala; Mercer County: Christine Sampson-Clark; Middlesex County: Marilyn Weeks Ryan; Lois Yukna; Monmouth County: Jo-Anne A. Montanti; Morris County: Kerri Lee Farrell; NEA Directors: James R. Frazier; Anita Kober; Robert M. La Morte; Susan A. McBride; Deanna J. Nicosia-Jones; Ashanti T. Rankin; Kimberly L. Scott; Ann Margaret Shannon; Marilyn Weeks-Ryan; Non-Classroom Teacher: Francisco C. Barquin; NJREA: Judith C. Perkins; Ocean County: Beverly A. Figlioli; Passaic County: Susan S. Butterfield; Preservice: Amber M. Ingram; Salem County: Susan C. Maniglia; Somerset County: Amy L. Salinger; State Officers: Marie E. Blistan; Sean M. Spiller; Steve Beatty; Sussex County: Susan J. Davis; Union County: Richard F. D'Avanzo; Warren County: Valerie C. Reynolds

### DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) formulates association policies. The DA includes 127 representatives proportionately elected from the counties for two-year terms. Each county is represented by its affiliated county association president plus one delegate for each 1% of the state total of active members of the association. In addition, one delegate each represents retired, student, and administrative members who do not otherwise have the representation through normal channels.

Atlantic County: Erland V. Chau; Latanya E. Elias; Cassandra Montague; Barbara B. Rheault; Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen County: David M. Bradler; Rommy Buttafuoco; Jennifer B. Clemen; Susan J. Dziob; Esther A. Fletcher; Mariann Kronyak; Howard D. Lipoff; Barbara J. Michels; Mary Ellen B. Murphy; Allyson M. Pontier; Darren Vaniskhian; Burlington County: Tamara Y. Beatty; Patricia S. Bland; Christopher K. Bowman; Catherine L. MacManiman; Brenda D. Martin-Lee; Nancy W. Meyer; Anthony M. Rizzo; Camden County: Rosemarie Casey; Danielle M. Clark; Kathleen Howley; Arden E. Niessner; Charles W. Poldis; Nancy Turner; Larry Zahn; Cape May County: June E. Camizzi; Kathleen Parker; Cumberland County: Valerie J. Carbonara; Mildred C. Johnson; Eileen J. Roche; Essex County: Peter C. Blodnik; Christopher F. Cannella; Lois E. Infanger; Rocio Lopez; Sharon L. Ortiz; Petal T. Robertson; Anthony M. Rosamilia; Gloucester County: Desirée E. Brennan; Lynn Cianci; Susan E. Clark; Christina V. Dare; Roberta Rissling; Higher Ed: Michael E. Frank; Laurie W. Hodge; Hudson County: Andrew C. Bove; Jill A. Crawford; Lynn

M. Fedele; Andrea A. Pastore; Kevin Reed; Edwinta L. Rhue; Beth C. Tomlinson; Hunterdon County: Edward Dubroski; Joann Gitto; Carol Rocha; Mercer County: Sandra Herrington; Shirley Hicks; Grace E. Rarich; Daniel A. Siegel; Patricia A. Yaple; Middlesex; Patrick E. Comey; Noelle Ebler; Jennifer Herrick; Jennifer M. Johnson; Marleen Lewandowski; Jeremias Salinas; Francine Wilden; Cheryl Willis; Monmouth County: Heidi C. Brache; Denise W. King; Steven C. Koumoulis; Gail F. Maher; Kathleen M. Quinn; Mary S. Scott; Tracie M. Yostpille; Morris County: Brian M. Adams; Eugene M. Behme; Mark Eckert; Sara J. Kozlowski; Kathleen L. Paterek; Laurie A. Schorno; Anne M. Simon; NEA Director: Ann Margaret Shannon; NJEA Preservice: Heather E. Spirko; NJREA: Barbara J. James; Patricia A. Provnick; Joseph Santo; Non-Classroom Teacher: Shareen Shibli; Ocean County: Joshua Eckersley; Lorraine A. Griffin; Susan R. Morgan; Carol A. Mould; Gina Pizzuto; Richard M. Ryan; Passaic County: Dennis P. Carroll; Javier Fresse; Patricia A. Kerbrdle; Lori E. Lalama; John E. McEntee; Carolyn McKinney-Croix; Tara M. Temprano; Salem County: Colleen C. Gilmartin; Carmen W. Porter; Somerset County: Jamie Cameron; Daniel R. Epstein; Gayle K. Faulkner; Mary J. MacRae; Gayle Nelson; Sussex County: Michael D. Bussow; Gillian E. Raye; Susan J. Sawey; Union County: Lillian G. Alston; Michael L. Boyd; Linda A. Cortinas; Angela R. Lawler; Gary S. Mazurek; Kelee A. Mitchell-Hall; Lisa D. Palin; John R. Zurka; Warren County: Janie J. Brown; Ann M. Kaspereen

## DELEGATE ASSEMBLY ALTERNATES

Members of the Delegate Assembly who cannot attend a meeting may designate an alternate from their county to act in their respective places. Alternates must bring written statements from the Delegate Assembly member whom they represent.

Atlantic County: Gretta L. Bohren; Mary Jane Hurley; Jeannine D. Ingenito; Stacey B. Sweeny; Bergen County: Kathleen J. Arlin; Susan Avallone; Debra J. Kwapniewski; Shari R. Mendelson; Thomas R. Papaleo; Marie F. Papaleo; Michael S. Warren; Burlington County: Lisa M. Chiavuzzo; Concetta Giacoppo; Donna R. O'Malley; Alamelu Sundaram-Walters; Camden County: Larry F. Blake; Jeffrey S. Emerson; Cape May County: Cynthia Rosenberg; Cumberland County: Ashanti T. Rankin; Cynthia D. Weil-Panas; Essex County: Sidney E. Flournoy; Avis Price; Gloucester County: Stephen J. Balaity; Sonya Cramer; Robert Sheridan; Stephen L. Whitehead; Higher Ed: Stephen Kaifa; Alvin Williams; Hudson County: Danielle C. Curry; Gerald M. Lyons; Frank R. Mazzone; Donna R. Middlebrooks; Anna

M. Picca; Joseph Roman Torres; Hunterdon County: Fiona DeScala; Robin D. Kiefer; Mercer County: Christopher W. Carpenter; Talithea R. Duncan; Antoinette S. Hopkins; Middlesex County: Bethanne Augsbach; Kevin A. Bloom; Scott C. Heeney; Andrew M. Lewis; Keith T. Presty; Timothy F. Simonitis; Maureen A. Strzykalski; Monmouth County: Christopher M. Collins; Mary J. Fabiano; Michael T. Marino; John P. Napolitani; Diane Vistein; James A. Weldon; Morris County: Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Linda C. Calandra; Joan G. Jensen; Joanne M. Palladino; Ocean County: Ronald B. Donnerstag; Jaclyn D. Finnigan; Annette Ruch; Susan M. Wiemken; Passaic County: Pamela B. Fadden; Charles A. Ferrer; Lauren R. Spiller; Charles E. Wilson; Salem County: Jennifer L. Lehr; Somerset County: Kimberly A. Bradshaw; Ryan P. Cullinane; Marisol Espinoza; Stefanie Myers; Sussex County: Debra Simmons; Ann V. Smith; Union County: Carmen Amanda Cortinas; Fern Perez-Gani; Brenda J. Pryor; Catherine I. Sharp; Warren County: Scott C. Elliott

## ALL NJEA COMMITTEES

### AFFILIATION

The Affiliation Committee: 1. reviews, investigates, and makes recommendations on the applications of local, county, and special interest associations requesting NJEA affiliation; 2. periodically reviews affiliation standards and a random sampling of local and county affiliates to ensure compliance with NJEA and NEA affiliation and Local Association Financial Assistance Program (LAFAP) standards; 3. reviews problems involving disaffiliation; 4. makes recommendations for appropriate action by the Delegate Assembly.

**Chair:** Sandra Beals, Salem

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Bergen: Thomas Schram; Camden: Rosemarie Casey; Gloucester: Felicia Seigel; Hudson: Keith Olkewicz; Middlesex: Gerard Campione; Monmouth: Heidi Brache; Morris: Laurie Schorno; NJREA: Barbara

### BUDGET

Working with data and suggestions provided by staff, officers, the Executive Committee, the Delegate Assembly, and other committees, the Budget Committee: 1. prepares and recommends an annual budget for consideration by the Delegate Assembly (DA); 2. examines trends related to membership growth, revenues, and program expenditures; 3. regularly reviews the expenditures within cost centers for compliance with DA policy; 4. makes recommendations to the DA or Executive Committee, as appropriate, for transfers between cost centers; 5. reviews the auditor's report on all NJEA accounts and expenditures; 6. reviews NJEA investment policy; 7. reviews NJEA capital assets.

**Chair:** Steve Beatty, Somerset

**Staff contact:** Karen Kryven

Atlantic: Brenda Brathwaite; Bergen: Thomas Papaleo; Burlington: Andrew Jacobs; Camden: Janelle Mungro; Cape May: Stacey Salerno; Cumberland: Tiffanie Thrbak; Aaron Honaker;

Essex: Christine Candarella; Gloucester: Traci Davis; Higher Ed: Peter Helff; Hudson: Kevin Reed; Hunterdon: Peter Moran; Mercer: Ryan O'Donnell; Middlesex: Michael Wildermuth; Monmouth: Daniel Fallon; Morris: Lisa Lamendola; NJREA: Kathleen Howley; Ocean: Beverly Figlioli; Passaic: Gregory Panas; Salem: Susan Maniglia; Somerset: Amy Salinger; Sussex: Debra Simmons; Union: Ann Margaret Shannon; Warren: Valerie Reynolds

### CERTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND TENURE

Certification, Evaluation and Tenure Committee: 1. studies, reports on, and makes recommendations concerning program improvements, training opportunities, and problems in preprofessional education, certification, evaluation, and tenure; 2. monitors State Board of Education and other agencies related thereto; 3. develops strategies to educate the general population about the purpose and necessity of tenure, academic freedom, and the evaluation process; 4. works in conjunction with the Instruction and Professional Development committees to disseminate information to the profession.

**Chair:** Monica Herits, Middlesex

**Staff contact:** Richard Wilson

Bergen: Dayna Orlak; Burlington: Lisa Chiavuzzo; Camden: Jennifer Tan; Cape May: Catherine Krause; Cumberland: Terra Dower; Gloucester: Shannon Pizzuta; Hudson: Charlene Bini; Mercer: Karen Pouria; Middlesex: Hannah Pawlak; Monmouth: Heidi Brache; Morris: Mark Henaghen; NJREA: Martin Sharofsky; Passaic: Christine Lehman; Salem: Stacey Pino; Somerset: Fontella Best; Sussex: Elizabeth Delfino; Union: Chrystal Par-Allen

### CONGRESSIONAL CONTACT

Composed of at least one representative from each county, the Congressional Contact Committee: 1. maintains contact with New Jersey's congressional delegation regarding NEA/NJEA's legislative program; 2. makes NJEA members aware of the association's federal legislative program and the need for membership activity in support of that program; 3. chairs screening committees in congressional races; 4. maintains a close working relationship with NJEA lobbyists and NJEA Government Relations.

**Chair:** Patricia Kebrdle, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Sean Hadley

Atlantic: Heather Flaim; Bergen: Julia Guttilla; Debra Kwapniewski; Burlington: Patricia Bland; Camden: Ryan Strothers; Cape May: Tammi McGarrigle; Cumberland: Stephen Garavento; Essex: Jennifer Bailey; Cameron Parke; Gloucester: Laurie Boyle; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson: Rosanne Versaci; Hunterdon: Christine Lewis; Mercer: Carl Romero; Middlesex: Christopher Finnegan; Monmouth: Christopher Collins; James Weldon; Morris: Shawn Danunciacao; NEA Director: Richard D'Avanzo; James Frazier: Anita Kober; Robert LaMorte: Susan McBride; Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Ashanti Rankin; Kimberly Scott; Ann Margaret Shannon; Marilyn Weeks Ryan; Amber Ingram; NJREA: Carol Friedrich; Ocean: Joshua Eckersley; Passaic: Tara Temprano; Salem: Jesse Stemberger; Somerset: Theresa Fuller; Sussex: Justine Giovanetti; Union: Diego Alvear; Joanne Barrett; Warren: Janie Brown

### CONSTITUTION REVIEW

The Constitution Review Committee: 1. reviews and coordinates suggestions for study of constitution or bylaw changes; 2. works in conjunction with other NJEA committees requiring their review of amendments; 3. prepares language for proposed constitutional changes; 4. reviews



and makes recommendations to the Delegate Assembly concerning proposed amendments to the constitution or bylaws.

**Chair:** Christopher Carpenter, Mercer

**Staff contact:** Martha DeBlieu

Atlantic: Stacey Sweeny; Bergen: Esther Fletcher; Burlington: Yolanda Boyd; Camden: Crystal Love; Cape May: Christopher Vitale; Cumberland: Heather Musto; Essex: Donna Sabol; Gloucester: Annmarie Dunphy; Hudson: Lynn Fedele; Mercer: Deborah Goodkin; Middlesex: Daniel Cyckowski; Monmouth: Gail Maher; Morris: Lee Brensinger; NJREA: John Carlson; Ocean: Lorraine Griffin; Passaic: Tanisha Barkley-Johnson; Salem: Amy Tighe; Somerset: Robert Fenster; Union: Patricia Frazier; Warren: Scott Elliott

## CONVENTION

The Convention Committee: 1. reviews themes and general convention program plans; 2. promotes and evaluates member participation and attendance; 3. develops procedures for and evaluates programs offered by NJEA-affiliated groups; 4. develops standards for exhibits and evaluates compliance of exhibitors; 5. evaluates overall program scheduling; 6. recommends to the Executive Committee the NJEA Convention dates, location, and program.

**Chair:** Susan Davis, Sussex

**Staff contact:** Janet Royal

Atlantic: Cassandra Montague; Bergen: Susan Marinzulich; Burlington: Catherine MacManiman; Camden: Dianna Morris; Cape May: Stacey Salerno; Cumberland: Jaclyn Conahey; Essex: Michael Munley; Gloucester: Robert Sheridan; Higher Ed: Mickey Dickenson; Hudson: Nadine Collins; Hunterdon: Peter Moran; Mercer: Marlena Ventura; Middlesex: Devin Menker; Monmouth: Leah Hardaway; Morris: Jessica Hoertel; NJREA: Doriann Dodulik-Swern; Passaic: Lauren Spiller; Salem: Rosemary Poliski; Somerset: Patrick Frain; Union: Tonya Scott-Cole

## DELEGATE ASSEMBLY RULES

The DA Rules Committee considers and recommends the rules under which the Delegate Assembly conducts its business.

**Chair:** John Zurka, Union

**Staff contact:** Martha DeBlieu

Burlington: Patricia Bland; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; Morris: Kathleen Paterek; NJREA: Joseph Santo; Passaic: Lori Lalama; Salem: Jennifer Lehr

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award Committee considers and evaluates candidates for the NJEA Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service Award for Education and makes appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee

**Chair:** Danielle Clark, Camden

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Bergen: Argine Safari; Camden: Ana Sanchez; Gloucester: David Walls; Monmouth: Margaret Watkins; NJREA: Stacy Morgan Santo; Passaic: Brenda Carswell-Avery; Somerset: Mary MacRae; Union: Lillian Alston

## EDITORIAL

The Editorial Committee: 1. supervises the NJEA Review and other association publications designed for internal communications with the membership, within the framework of policy laid down by the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Committee; 2. reviews printing contracts, advertising rates, and policies; 3. sets and maintains a continuing evaluation of standards for articles, illustrations and style; 4. reviews polling and survey data to determine and recommend issues to be addressed to the membership.

**Chair:** Erin Howe, Camden

**Staff contact:** Patrick Rumaker

Atlantic: Alphonso Harrell; Bergen: Shari Mendelson; Camden: Holly Drew; Essex: Lauren Greenfield; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Higher Ed: Donald Reilly; Hudson: Larissa Lentini; Mercer: Hussain Haqq; Middlesex: Andrew Lewis; Monmouth: Steven Tetreault; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Miriam Reichenbach; Ocean: Christine Smith; Preservice: Sachel Bise; Somerset: Robert Fenster; Union: Tia Reid

## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Consisting of representatives from support and teaching staff, the Educational Support Professionals Committee: 1. examines and makes recommendations on active-supportive member needs, services, and programs; 2. recommends activities and programs to organize groups not yet affiliated with NJEA; 3. reviews efforts to develop all-inclusive local organizations; 4. gathers and reviews data related to privatization initiatives and reports these findings to the Delegate Assembly and Executive Committee; 5. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Joann Houck, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Robert Antonelli

Atlantic: Gretta Bohren; Bergen: Rommy Buttafuoco; Burlington: Donna O'Malley; Camden: Marguerite Vallieu; Cape May: Gary O'Shea; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Essex: Jaime Fonesca; Gloucester: Traci Davis; Higher Ed: Laura Kirkwood; Hudson: Marquisha Reynolds; Hunterdon: Fiona Descala; Mercer: Antoinette Hopkins; Middlesex: Nancy Cogland; Monmouth: Regina Jagoo; Morris: Mark Eckert; NJREA: Barbara Newman; Ocean: Annette Ruch; Salem: Jennifer Jenkins; Somerset: Christopher James; Sussex: Gillian Raye; Union: Michael Boyd; Warren: Scott Elliott

## ELECTIONS

The Elections Committee: 1. sets standards and procedures, subject to the general policies of the Delegate Assembly, for all elections under the NJEA

Constitution, and for the conduct and eligibility of candidates for elective office; 2. oversees NJEA elections procedures within counties or units; 3. conducts any necessary state elections; 4. provides oversight for the tabulation and certification of ballots; 5. resolves state elections disputes.

**Chair:** Eda Ferrante, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Atlantic: Mary Jane Hurley; Bergen: David Walsh; Burlington: Michael Dunlea; Camden: Ryan Strothers; Cape May: Judy Sholtis; Cumberland: Sophia Amaranto; Essex: Christine Candarella; Gloucester: Stephen Whitehead; Hudson: Diane Mackay; Hunterdon: Donna Pontoriero; Mercer: Patricia Jones; Middlesex: Leslie Anderson; Monmouth: Kimberly Tuccillo; Morris: Samantha Westberg; NJREA: Toni Guerra; Ocean: Mike Mannion; Passaic: Rosalind Abreu; Salem: Amy Tighe; Somerset: Peter Rosenberg; Sussex: Theresa Snyder; Union: Joanne Barrett

## EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The Exceptional Children Committee: 1. proposes and reviews legislation that impacts children with special needs; 2. designs NJEA efforts to implement and enforce existing legislation, rules, and regulations that require adequate programming; 3. relates such concerns to educational and community groups with similar interests; 4. disseminates information to school personnel regarding issues that affect programs and children with special needs; 5. coordinates efforts with affiliate groups on areas of concern; 6. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Sarah (Sally) Blizzard, Cumberland

**Staff contact:** Camy Kobylinski

Atlantic: Stacey Sweeny; Bergen: Rick Gladstone; Burlington: Marcia Stetler-Klock; Camden: Elizabeth Holsman; Cape May: Alice Barnes-Vasser; Essex: Christina Licitra; Gloucester: Brianna Hanson; Hudson: Amanda Mitchell; Hunterdon: Jack Kimple; Mercer: Leah Durastanti; Middlesex: Francine Wilden; Monmouth: Karen Brower; Morris: Sharon Enea; NJREA: Shirley Chamberlin; Ocean: Ronald Donnerstag; Passaic: Francis Koterba; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Viktoria Wargo; Union: Linda Weinberg; Warren: Clorimar Rios

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The Government Relations Committee: 1. reviews and considers state and national legislation; 2. carries out the legislative policy of the association; 3. lobbies legislators and other political leaders and decision makers; 4. works with county and local education associations to establish continuous lobbying efforts with legislators and representatives of state agency policy-making boards and commissions; 5. oversees county and local legislative action team efforts; 6. educates leaders and members about the necessity of

political action efforts to make legislative advances; 7. maintains a close working relationship with the NJEA lobbyists and NJEA Government Relations Division; 8. networks with other unions, organizations, or special interest groups to secure legislative goals established by the Delegate Assembly; 9. chairs screening committees in N.J. legislative races.

**Chair:** Christina Dare, Gloucester

**Staff contact:** Marybeth Beichert

Atlantic: Debra Steineder; Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen: Howard Lipoff; Michael Ryan; Burlington: Christine Hewitt; Steven Nahill; Camden: Dianna Morris; Larry Zahn; Cape May: Cynthia Rosenberg; Gregory Young; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Temika Langston-Myers; Essex: Peter Blodnik; Jacqueline White; Gloucester: Ryan Griffin; Higher Ed: Michael Frank; Hudson: Frank Mazzone; Hunterdon: Lynn Szczeck; Mercer: Grace Rarich; Lisa Rizziello; Middlesex: Jennifer Herrick; Monmouth: Chiarina Guzik; Erin Wheeler; Morris: Brian Adams; Mark Eckert; Preservice: Kimberly Cacciato; Angelo Villarreal; NJREA: Susan Maurer; Ocean: Susan Morgan; Melissa Whitworth; Passaic: Dennis Carroll; Trent Johnson; Salem: Kenneth Buck; Salem: Colleen Gilmartin; Somerset: Daniel Epstein; Henry Goodhue; Sussex: Ann Smith; Union: Amy Brown; Nancy Lucas-Miller; Warren: Erin Durkin

## HEALTH BENEFITS

The Health Benefits Committee: 1. reviews the operations and administration of the N.J. State Health Benefits Plan; 2. recommends changes needed in the N.J. State Health Benefits Plan's administrative guidelines to ensure the highest quality coverage for NJEA members; 3. studies proposals relating to the health insurance funds and joint insurance funds offered by employers; 4. assesses members' needs related to basic health insurance coverage and supplemental coverage; 5. reviews legislation and regulations governing health insurance coverage in New Jersey and makes recommendations for changes to better meet members' needs; 6. proposes initiatives to ensure the maintenance of health benefits for retirees; 7. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Dennis Carroll, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Jim Jameson

Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Kristen Frey; Camden County: Marisol Charensook; Katrina Squire; Cape May: Catherine Krause; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Anthony Rosamilia; Gloucester: Denise Kane; Higher Ed: Alvin Williams; Hudson: Kevin Reed; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto; Mercer: Rhonda Williams; Middlesex: Matthew Hrevnak; Monmouth: Denise King; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Judith Ruff; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Carrie Odgers Lax.

## HEARING COMMITTEE ON CENSURE, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION

The Hearing Committee on Censure, Suspension, & Expulsion of Members: 1. conducts due process hearings when charges are filed against a member related to censure, suspension, and expulsion; 2. reviews and considers proposed changes to the standards and procedures for censuring, suspending, and expelling members; 3. reviews charges and hears cases, when appropriate, concerning censure, suspension, or expulsion; 4. makes recommendations, as necessary, to the Executive Committee.

**Chair:** Patricia Bland, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Camden: Rosemarie Casey; Essex: Peter Blodnik; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson: Edwinta Rhue; Middlesex: Patrick Comey; Ocean: Annette Ruch; Passaic: John McEntee; Somerset: Andrew Coslit

## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Higher Education Committee: 1. studies and reports on issues in higher education such as member advocacy, funding, regulations, and legislation; 2. monitors the Commission on Higher Education; 3. makes recommendations for appropriate strategies and actions; 4. assists in implementing NJEA policies on higher education; 5. reviews legislation impacting higher education; 6. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Alan Kaufman, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Marcia Kleinz

Atlantic: Cheryl Garwood; Michelle Perkins; Bergen: Tobyn DeMarco; Michael Echols; Mecheline Farhat; Burlington: William Whitfield; Camden: Lillie Howard; Essex: Michael Frank; Alvin Williams; Ned Wilson; Executive Committee Higher Ed Rep: Peter Helff; NJREA: Joanne Kinzy; Kerry Frabizio; Christopher Mueller; Mercer: Arthur Schwartz; Monmouth: Karyn Arnold; Brent Costleigh; Laura Kirkwood; Morris: Stephen Kaifa; Ocean: Kathleen Malachowski; Passaic: Christopher Mueller; Union: Paul Belmonte; Warren: Kerry Frabizio

## HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

The Human Rights Committee: 1. studies and recommends how members and their associations can contribute to equal opportunities and improved human relations; 2. develops and publicizes teaching strategies to promote diversity education for children and adults; 3. reviews timely issues such as diversity, ethnicity, human relations, and discrimination; 4. conducts the annual human rights conference and recommends Human Rights Award winners, if any; 5. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Kimberly Scott, Essex

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Thomas Taylor; Bergen: Yolanda Salazar; Burlington: April Newman; Camden: Kettchel

Johnson; Cumberland: Tiffanie Thrbak; Gloucester: Brittany Mason; Mercer: Paige Hinton-Mason; Middlesex: Melissa Katz; Monmouth: Bridget James; NJREA: Betty Meeks-Manning; Ocean: Lisa Simone; Passaic: Marco Martinez; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Ryan Cullinane; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall

## INSTRUCTION

The Instruction Committee: 1. recommends programs to aid members with instructional issues and accommodating student learning styles; 2. recommends programs to be presented at NJEA conferences and the annual convention; 3. monitors activities of agencies related to instructional issues; 4. stimulates and reviews research and proven innovations in its area of interest; 5. identifies instructional concerns and researches solutions; 6. considers long-range problems and policies affecting the profession and the Association; 7. works in conjunction with the Certification, Evaluation, and Tenure and Professional Development committees to disseminate information within the profession; 8. studies, reports on, and makes recommendations concerning programs addressing problems in instruction.

**Chair:** Brenda Martin-Lee, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Christine Miles

Atlantic: Kelly Petrucci; Bergen: John Sassi; Camden County: Cecil Leonard; Cape May: June Camizzi; Cumberland: Sophia Amaranto; Essex: Jean Jackson; Gloucester: Andrea Keenan; Hudson: Beth Tomlinson; Mercer: Elizabeth Brador; Monmouth: Lisa Marie Varley; Morris: Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Iris Tonti; Passaic: Melanie Vasa; Salem: Mary Quinn; Somerset: Rhonda Sherbin; Union: Vernon Spencer; Warren: Kristi Weber

## LEADERSHIP

The Leadership Committee: 1. assesses training needs of NJEA affiliates and leaders; 2. makes recommendations concerning development, evaluation, and revision of leadership training programs; 3. oversees the planning of the NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference, its programs, and logistics; 4. develops and initiates leadership training opportunities for Association members and leaders.

**Chair:** Ann Kaspereen, Warren

**Staff contact:** Michael Saffran

Atlantic: Kevin Hackney; Bergen: Allyson Pontier; Burlington: Melissa Foremny; Camden: Charles Pildis; Cape May: Tammi McGarrigle; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Stephanie Ross; Gloucester: Desiree Brennan; Higher Ed: Robert Fusco; Mercer: Twanda Taylor; Middlesex: Daniel Fields; Monmouth: Cheryle Haynes; NJREA: Minnie Mozee; Ocean: Annette Ruch; Passaic: Katherine Telschow; Salem: Renee Jost; Somerset: Andrew Coslit; Sussex: Isabella Pagan; Union: Robert Mangels; Warren: Laurie O'Brien



## MEMBER BENEFITS

The Member Benefits Committee studies and makes recommendations on: 1. insurance programs; 2. education programs on financial products; 3. car leasing or purchasing; 4. consumer buying plans; 5. travel programs; 6. any other consumer service plans benefiting the membership; 7. retailers who offer discounts to members; 8. programs available to members provided by boards of education and local, county, state, or national associations.

**Chair:** Gillian Raye, Sussex

**Staff contact:** Beth Schroeder-Buonsante

Atlantic: Robin Mottershead; Bergen: Barbara Michels; Burlington: Janene Onyango; Camden County: Kimberly Robinson-Taylor; Cape May: Jennifer Loper; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity; Hudson: Jill Crawford; Hunterdon: Carol Rocha; Mercer: Regina Meehan; Middlesex: Mary Stephanie Rogers; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; NJREA: Jenne Keifner; Ocean: Karen Schwing; Salem: Cheryl Levitsky; Somerset: Nancy Kordell; Union: Tia Reid; Warren: Tara Anderson

## MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee: 1. promotes and maintains unified association membership; 2. reviews appropriateness of membership categories and dues categories; 3. secures members for NJEA and the National Education Association; 4. reviews and studies the means used to orient members to the programs and services of NJEA; 5. gathers data on membership projections and makes recommendations for creating membership growth; 6. coordinates activities of county and local membership chairpersons; 7. reviews and maintains names, addresses, and organizational information of NJEA members.

**Chair:** Anita Kober, Hudson

**Staff contact:** Jaime Valente

Atlantic: Jayne Carmen; Bergen: Jill Schwerdt; Burlington: Anthony Rizzo; Camden: Kimberly Robinson-Taylor; Cape May: Kelly Lasher; Cumberland: Mildred Johnson; Essex: Linda Kelly-Gamble; Gloucester: Lynn Cianci; Hudson: Joseph Kelly; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto; Mercer: Patricia Yaple; Middlesex: Kevin Bloom; Monmouth: Heidi Brache; Morris: Amal Hussein; NJREA: Frances Davis; Ocean: Nancy Jubert; Passaic: Karen Cawthern; Salem: Michael Wichart; Somerset: Daniel Mayer; Sussex: Nancy Richeda; Union: Arthur Rodgers; Warren: Valerie Gary

## MINORITY LEADERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

The Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee: 1. encourages multiethnic members to become active in all levels of association work; 2. recruits multiethnic members for association involvement; 3. identifies and recommends ways to attract multiethnic members to the school employees' professions; 4. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Tiffanie Thrbak, Cumberland

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Tomeka Sanderlin; Bergen: Michelle Hammond-Dudley; Burlington: Sabrina Austin; Camden: Eva Diane Lyle-Smith; Cape May: Alice Barnes-Vasser; Cumberland: Nicole Kinsey; Essex: Evelyn Ayum; Gloucester: Joyce Farr; Hudson: Katharine Chao; Mercer: Aaryenne White; Middlesex: Shan Byrd; Monmouth: Mary Scott; Morris: Vilmary Hernandez; NJREA: Vires Simmons; Ocean: Maria DeVenecia-McFarland; Passaic: Linda Carter; Salem: Kenneth Buck; Somerset: Aida-Janet Wahba; Sussex: Isabella Pagan; Union: Michael Boyd

## NEA ACTIVITIES

The NEA Activities Committee: 1. promotes attendance and other activities of local and state association delegates to the NEA RA; 2. reviews and coordinates financial and logistical information related to NJEA's delegation to the annual NEA convention.

**Chair:** Tamara Beatty, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Heather Flaim; Bergen: Mariann Kronyak; Camden: Janelle Mungro; Cumberland: Taja Board; Essex: Philip McCormick; Gloucester: Robert Scardino; Hudson: Andrew Bove; Hunterdon: Edward Dubroski; Mercer: Renee Szporn; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; Morris: Amal Hussein; NJREA: Laura Bochner; Ocean: Gina Pizzuto; Passaic: Trent Johnson; Salem: Michael Wichart; Somerset: Marisol Espinoza; Union: John Zurka

## NEA ISSUES

The NEA Issues Committee: 1. advises the association on issues relating to the NEA; 2. initiates the screening of candidates for NEA positions; 3. provides information to the NJEA delegation regarding issues and programs being promoted by NEA.

**Chair:** Ann Margaret Shannon, Union

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

NEA Directors: Richard D'Avanzo; James Frazier; Anita Kober; Robert La Morte; Susan McBride; Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Ashanti Rankin; Kimberly Scott; Marilyn Weeks Ryan; Amber Ingram (NJEA Preservice); Resource person: Michael Wildermuth

## NJEA PAC OPERATING

The NJEA PAC Operating Committee: 1. supports candidates for state and federal offices, on a nonpartisan basis, who are proven or potential friends of education; 2. takes a leadership role in NJEA/NEA PAC fundraising; 3. coordinates candidate screening, selection, campaign, and support efforts; 4. reviews PAC guidelines for appropriateness; 5. educates the membership about the need for political involvement and the rationale and process used for selecting endorsed candidates; 6. supports the general operations in

statewide political action efforts and campaigns.

**Chairs:** Christina V. Dare, Ann Margaret Shannon, Patricia A. Kebrdle

**Staff contact:** Kevin Kelleher

The 125-member NJEA PAC Operating Committee consists of NJEA's officers; the NJEA Executive Committee; the county association presidents; the NJEA Government Relations and Congressional Contact committees, the president of NJEA Preservice, the NJREA legislative chairperson, and two NJREA regional legislative chairs.

## PAUL DIMITRIADIS RIGHTS FUND

The Paul Dimitriadis Rights Fund Committee: 1. investigates and recommends ways to raise funds for the Paul Dimitriadis Member Rights Fund; 2. oversees the expenditure of funds to locals and members in crisis; 3. identifies efforts required to raise these funds.

**Chair:** George Wood, Gloucester

**Staff contact:** Kevin Kelleher

Atlantic: Martine Robinson; Camden County: Katrina Squire; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Hudson: Keith Olkewicz; NJREA: Cynthia Colalillo; Robert Markel; Alexandra Protopapas; Romaine Street; Lois Jean Tarr; Kathleen Wood; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall

## PENSION POLICY

The Pension Policy Committee: 1. studies and makes recommendations on problems and solutions relating to teacher retirement and other pension or benefit programs designed to help members and their dependents attain financial security upon retirement, disability, and/or death; 2. reviews legislative proposals related to changes in the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund and Public Employees' Retirement System pension systems; 3. reviews actions of the respective pension boards of trustees.

**Chair:** Howard Lipoff, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Sarah Favinger

Atlantic: Sandra Peart; Camden: Brian Simpson; Cumberland: Cynthia Weil-Panas; Essex: Lois Infanger; Gloucester: Richard Wolf; Hudson: Mark Azzarello; Hunterdon: Fiona Descala; Mercer: Daniel Siegel; Morris: Kathleen Paterek; NJREA: Irene Savicky; Ocean: Erich Brunner; Passaic: Pamela Fadden; Somerset: Mary Murdock; Union: Linda Cortinas

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Professional Development Committee: 1. researches, initiates, and promotes appropriate activities in continuing professional education, in-service professional development, and professional standards; 2. stimulates research and proven innovations in its areas of interest; 3. considers long-range problems, policies, and solutions required in areas affecting the profession and the association; 4. makes recommendations concerning programs to be presented at NJEA conferences and the

annual convention; 5. works in conjunction with the Instruction and the Certification, Evaluation, and Tenure committees to develop recommendations related to furthering professional best practices; 6. reviews and recommends legislative and regulatory proposals; 7. disseminates such information among the profession; 8. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Jennifer Clemen, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Michael Ritzius

Atlantic: Kelly Petrucci; Burlington: Alexandra Paccione; Camden: Denise Jones; Cape May: June Camizzi; Cumberland: Lawrence Hickman; Essex: Avis Price; Gloucester: Sonya Cramer; Hudson: Anita Kober; Hunterdon: Donna Pontoriero; Middlesex: Donna Jacobson; Monmouth: Steven Koumoulis; Morris: Angela Cordova; NJREA: Diane Stelacio; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Passaic: Thuraya Zeidan; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: David Yastremski; Union: Tonya Scott-Cole; Warren: Laurie O'Brien

## PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee: 1. promotes and protects the legal and professional rights of members; 2. investigates the legal status of members who are in contest regarding their rights and responsibility as school employees and as citizens; 3. reviews cases involving affirmative litigation in such areas as rights for non-tenured employees, academic freedom, negotiations, and hardship cases resulting from member rights efforts; 4. supervises staff investigations and assistance for members and associations when warranted; 5. recommends appropriate action to the Executive Committee, including the granting of financial assistance.

**Chair:** Peter Blodnik, Essex

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Bergen: William Pavlu; Camden: Stacy Diggs; Cape May: Kimberle Bruckno Moore; Cumberland: Rachel Reinhart; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity; Hudson: Jose Garcia; Mercer: Naomi Johnson-Lafleur; Middlesex: Susan Doosey; Monmouth: Craig Miller; Morris: Amal Hussein; NJREA: Arlene Volkin; Passaic: Lakresha Harris-Hodge; Somerset: Marguerite Cahill; Union: Brenda Pryor

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Public Relations Committee: Advises on NJEA's statewide advertising and public relations programs; on affiliate organizations' public relations projects and programs; on programs to improve the external public's perception of public schools, school staff, NJEA, and professional organizations as transmitted by the media—newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and films; on media materials and organizational efforts to involve members and affiliate leaders in public relations, community action, and association campaigns for reaching parents and other citizens; and on training

opportunities for school personnel in public relations and community organizing.

**Chair:** Edwinta Rhue, Hudson

**Staff contact:** Eric Jones

Atlantic: Amy Gold; Bergen: Allyson Pontier; Burlington: Kimberly Niehaus; Camden: Elisabeth Yucis; Cumberland: Stephen Garavento; Essex: Annette Kuehn; Gloucester: Lynn Cianci; Hunterdon: Edward Dubroski; Mercer: Debra Baer; Middlesex: Nicole DelPopolo; Morris: Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Susan Vigilante; Ocean: Patti Watson; Passaic: Javier Fresse; Somerset: Kristina Fallon Tomaino; Union: Edith Farrell; Union: Angelo Marocco

## SCHOOL FINANCE

The School Finance Committee: 1. studies school funding proposals; 2. reviews the source of revenues used to provide state, county, and local funding to public education—nursery through graduate level; 3. develops strategies to create community and citizen awareness as to how educational funds are utilized; 4. suggests legislative changes or modifications required to ensure adequate funding for our public education system, nursery through graduate level; 5. makes recommendations regarding legislative initiatives designed to improve the financing of all forms of public education in the state.

**Chair:** Mariann Kronyak, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Dan Goldman

Camden: Adam Sheridan; Cumberland: Heather Musto; Gloucester: Michelle Fox; Mercer: Jerry Simonelli; Middlesex: Tracey McGowan; Monmouth: Cheryl Haynes; Morris: Samantha Westberg; NJREA: Roger Baker; Salem: Abner Mendoza; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Vernon Spencer

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

The committee deals with sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues pertaining to all persons in the school community.

**Chair:** Thomas Tamburello, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Michael Rollins

Atlantic: Philip Pallitto; Bergen: Amy Moran; Burlington: Tamara Beatty; Camden: Marc Lopez; Cape May County: Kenneth Bassett; Cumberland: April Stevenson-Kinder; Essex: Micah Gary-Fryer; Gloucester: Sophia Capinha; Higher Ed: Caesar Niglio; Hudson: Joseph Roman Torres; Hunterdon: Elizabeth McCann; Mercer: Angel Fuentes-Pesquera; Middlesex: Susan Ray; Monmouth: Karina McIntyre; Morris: Sara Kozlowski; NJREA: Karen Hughes; Ocean: Paulette Fox; Somerset: Marisol Espinoza; Sussex: Carla Mancuso; Union: Terron Singletary; Warren: Warren: Russa Nollstadt

## STAFF PENSION FUND TRUSTEE

The Board of Directors of the NJEA Employees Retirement System is responsible for administering and carrying out the provisions of the pension program for NJEA staff members.

**Chair:** Marie Blistan

**Staff contact:** Kristen Butler

The committee consists of the association's president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, and executive director; three staff members; and two NJEA members elected by the Executive Committee.

## TECHNOLOGY

The Technology Committee: 1. studies the impact of technology on educational programs; 2. reviews technology curricula proposals and initiatives for educational appropriateness; 3. reviews state-supported funding proposals and makes recommendations for funding improvements to provide the equipment, personnel, programs, and training necessary to institute all aspects of technology education; 4. educates NJEA members, legislators, and policymakers about the varied components of technology education; 5. recommends the types of programs needed in every school district to ensure students become technologically literate; 6. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Peter Moran, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Gabriel Tanglao

Atlantic: Christina Gras; Bergen: Michael Ryan; Burlington: Christopher Bowman; Camden: Arden Niessner; Cape May: Julie Stratton; Cumberland: Aaron Righter; Essex: Sabina Ellis; Gloucester: Stephen Whitehead; Hudson: E. Alix Polynice; Mercer: Olive Giles; Middlesex: John McLean; Monmouth: Ann Moyle; Morris: Jessica Hoertel; NJREA: Virginia Hoden; Ocean: Melissa Krupp; Passaic: Lori Lalama; Salem: Bethany Hannah; Somerset: Camille Ragin; Union: Edith Farrell

## UNISERV

The UniServ Committee: 1. hears suggestions and appeals and makes recommendations about the UniServ program to NJEA's Executive Committee; 2. collects the data needed to effectively evaluate current program and service offerings to local and county affiliates and members; 3. evaluates the UniServ staff's training program; 4. evaluates the entire UniServ program in terms of service to unified local and county associations.

**Chair:** Ellen Ogintz, Mercer

**Staff contact:** Patrick Manahan

Atlantic: Gerardo Rios; Bergen: Marie Papaleo; Burlington: Kathleen Vogel; Camden: Sturac Meyers; Cape May: Patrick Holden; Cumberland: Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Essex: Michael Mignone; Gloucester: Anthony Cappello; Hunterdon: Carol Rocha; Monmouth: Ann Moyle; Morris: Brian Adams; NJREA: Frank Harsanyi; Ocean: Jodi Dotts; Passaic: Donna Reaver; Salem: Jill Sutton-Parris; Somerset: Frances Blabolil; Union: Alissa Valiente; Warren: Ann Kaspereen



## URBAN EDUCATION

Identify solutions to improve educational equity issues in urban school districts. Study pertinent data and members' needs in order to elevate the voices of all of the stakeholders in urban education to build long-term sustainability that impacts systemic issues. Study strategies and programs needed to address the barriers that prevent students in urban settings from receiving opportunities suitable for all students to achieve their potential. Develop relationships with other entities that support NJEA's goals in urban education. Collaborate with other appropriate NJEA committees.

**Chair:** Todd Pipkin, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Amanda Adams

Atlantic: Latanya Elias; Bergen: Jessica Luciano; Burlington: David Parker; Camden: Larry Blake; Cumberland: Sherman Denby; Essex: Janet Mitchell; Gloucester: Melba Moore-Suggs; Higher Ed: Christopher Mueller; Hudson: Andrew Bove; Mercer: Elizabeth McGlinchy; Middlesex: Paul Bryant; Monmouth: Lanelle Emenike; Morris: Karen London; NJREA: Geraldine Lane; Passaic: Lizandaa Alburg; Somerset: Gayle Nelson; Union: Tanya Tenturier

## VOCATIONAL, CAREER, AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Identify problems such as, but not limited to, The Vocational, Career, and Technical Education Committee 1. makes the association aware of changes occurring in vocational education; 2. reviews federal and state legislative proposals and regulations that impact vocational education and educators; 3. reviews certification requirements and makes recommendations for improvements; 4. considers problems in vocational education in New Jersey; 5. makes recommendations for solutions to the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly.

**Chair:** Erin Wheeler, Monmouth

**Staff contact:** Francine Pfeffer

Bergen: Kevin Rager; Burlington: Larry Tisdale; Camden: Andrew McAlpin; Cape May: Michael Crane; Cumberland: Aaron Righter; Hudson: Stephen Finn; Mercer: Asra Mazhar-Uddin; Middlesex: Frank Paprota; Monmouth: Linda Grunthaler; Morris: Colleen Pascale; NJREA: Mae Robinson; Ocean: Howard Polenber; Passaic: Charles Gurnari; Salem: Garry Dolbow; Union: Emanuel Fadahunsi

## WOMEN IN EDUCATION

The Women in Education Committee: 1. reviews organizational and social policies for their impact on gender equity; 2. reviews curricula and instructional programs and their impact on health and social issues; 3. recommends strategies, programs, and policies promoting gender equity; 4. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Fatimah Hayes, Camden County

**Staff contact:** Meredith Barnes Bergen: Lisa Veit; Burlington: Debra Maida; Camden: Tracy

Stephens-Austin; Cape May: Kimberle Bruckno Moore; Cumberland: Damita White-Morris; Essex: Angel Boose; Gloucester: Joyce Farr; Hudson: Katherine Chao; Monmouth: Sarah Reichenbecher; Morris: Michele Miller; NJREA: Joan Jensen; Passaic: Kerriann Palmieri; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: Aida-Janet Wahba; Union: Lillian Alston

## WORKING CONDITIONS

The Working Conditions Committee: 1. studies and recommends procedures for collective negotiations, salaries and fringe benefits, and seniority rights; 2. studies working conditions problems and issues identified by the Delegate Assembly or other NJEA committees; 3. reviews and makes recommendations for improvements in all matters relating to the working conditions of school employees in order to improve their employment status and working environment; 4. recommends training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Barbara Rheault, Atlantic

**Staff contact:** Jennifer Raike

Atlantic: Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Grace McCloskey; Camden: Lisa Campisi; Cumberland: Cynthia Weil-Panas; Gloucester: David Walls; Hudson: Christopher Kuchar; Middlesex: Jennifer Johnson; Monmouth: Susan Morin; NJREA: Frank Foulkes; Ocean: Joshua Eckersley; Passaic: Louis Hill; Somerset: Kristina Fallon Tomaino; Union: Sue Tamburro

## WORKSITE SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Worksite Safety and Health Committee: 1. serves as a watchdog on environmental issues; 2. monitors and recommends policy regarding environmental health issues in school facilities; 3. monitors curricular developments in New Jersey and the nation; 4. recommends training programs and the dissemination of pertinent instructional information in the interest of all members.

**Chair:** Keith Hinton, Essex.

**Staff contact:** Michael Rollins

Bergen: Deborah Rick; Burlington: Paulette Chiolan; Cumberland: Adrian Garrett; Gloucester: Robert Scardino; Hudson: Mark Azzarello; Mercer: Olive Giles; Middlesex: Cheryl Willis; Monmouth: Bibi Bennett; Morris: Eugene Behme; Ocean: Brenda Douglas; Passaic: Robin Holcombe; Retired: Carolyn Tonic-Robinson; Sussex: Michael Bussow; Union: Rhondaleigh Austin

## YOUTH SERVICES

The Youth Services Committee: 1. recommends and implements initiatives, strategies, and programs related to vandalism, alcoholism, drugs, physical abuse, and other areas affecting children's school life and ability to learn; 2. develops and reviews legislation impacting children in correctional institutions; 3. recommends improvements and appropriate funding of social support programs; 4. disseminates information to educational and community groups with similar interests; 5. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Mary Karriem, Essex

**Staff contact:** Osomo Thomas

Bergen: Martha Martinez; Camden: Cecil Leonard; Cape May: Mary-Theresa Smith; Cumberland: Damita White-Morris; Essex: Philip McCormick; Gloucester: Shannon Pizzuta; Hudson: Elsie Diaz; Mercer: Sandra Herrington; Middlesex: Noelle Ebler; Monmouth: Mary Scott; Morris: Lee Bensinger; NJREA: Abby Zahn; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Passaic: Hansley Cazeau; Somerset: Nicolle Anthony; Union: Linda Weinberg.

# NJEA STAFF

## EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Executive Office is the primary link between governance and staff, oversees implementation of policies adopted by the Delegate Assembly, and acts as a resource on all governance matters. Under the executive director's supervision, the Executive Office is responsible for overall staff direction and management.

It supports the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Committee and maintains the official records of these two bodies. It conducts NJEA elections and county association elections where appropriate. It provides staff support on issues related to the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws, organizational structure, the conduct of meetings, and the NEA Convention and offers assistance and training to affiliates. It also maintains liaison with the National Education Association and Education International and works with the NEA directors.

**Executive Office:** Steve Swetsky, executive director; Kevin Kelleher, deputy executive director; Gary Melton, associate director; Patricia A. Haberstick, executive assistant/office manager; vacancy, confidential assistant; Colleen Stevens, administrative assistant; Catherine M. Raffaele, administrative assistant; Antoinette Boyle, chief administrative assistant—Organizational Development/UniServ

**Advocacy-Family Involvement:** Eric Jones, field rep; Linda Calehuff, program assistant

**ESP:** Robert A. Antonelli, field rep; Kimberly Lipcsey, program assistant

**Governance:** Marie E. Blistan, president; Sean M. Spiller, vice president; Steve Beatty, secretary-treasurer; Shannon Pellegrino, executive assistant; Nancy Bachrach, confidential assistant; Kathleen A. Mathews, confidential assistant

**Human Resources:** Matthew DiRado, manager; Annette Ilagan, senior human resource specialist; Dawn Goatley, employee benefits administrator

**Leadership Organizing:** Marguerite Schroeder, field rep; Jennifer Donaghue, program assistant

**Leadership Training:** Michael R. Saffran, field rep; Jennifer Donaghue, program assistant

**Member Rights:** Aileen O'Driscoll, managing attorney; Kaitlyn Dunphy, associate director; Carrie Herbert, administrative assistant; Dawn Pisauro, program assistant; vacancy, senior clerk

**Membership and Organizational Development:** Jaime Valente, field rep; Tamika Elder, program assistant

**Organizing:** Michael Rollins, field rep; Victoria Lepore, program assistant; Organizational Development Consultants: Desiree Brennan; Christina Dare; Jennifer

Johnson; Andrew Lewis; Charisse Parker, Kathleen Paterek, Hannah Pawlak.

## BUSINESS

Under the NJEA executive director's supervision are business operations, which include business management, accounting, purchasing/production, information systems, buildings and grounds, membership processing and mail services. These functions cover all aspects of the Association's fiscal, facilities, equipment/technology, and membership records.

The Accounting Department encompasses the organization's financial and bookkeeping, activities. The staff trains local affiliates on organizational management and supports affiliates on dealing with affiliation standards, bonding and auditing, incorporation matters, and filing of tax reports. Working with the association's secretary-treasurer, this office handles NJEA's financial records, payroll, taxes, paying bills and auditing. Budgeting, investments, and inventory of assets are also coordinated.

The Purchasing/Production Department handles contract review of all vendor contracts, processing encumbrances to the budget, bidding for printing and promotional jobs, catering, coordinating all supplies and equipment acquisition including shipping/receiving of NJEA materials.

The Information Systems Department manages the development of many custom applications for NJEA and maintains approximately 30 existing applications including MARS, Pride, CPIS, ORG, PAC, etc. It also coordinates and supports the technologies; including telephone services used by staff, members, and governance throughout the state.

The Buildings and Grounds Department oversees the operations and management of NJEA's properties, and insurance policies, along with the services including parking, security, building maintenance, landscaping, mechanical, storage, and custodial services.

The NJEA Membership Processing Department manages and maintains up-to-date membership records, coordinates membership records activities, and handles membership dues accounting.

The Mailroom/Print Shop coordinates all of NJEA's mailing and duplication services.

**Business:** Karen Kryven, comptroller; Conswalo 'Sway' Gilbert, administrative assistant

**Accounting:** Kristen Butler, CPA, manager; Michael Caracci, associate director; Jose Cancio, associate director; Brenda Pabon-Guadarrama, chief—Business Services; Bonnie Weiss, Chief—Business Services; Deschela Davis, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Shirley

Jones, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Monica Winch, principal clerk—bookkeeper

**Purchasing/Production:** Kristen Butler, manager; Melody Washington, chief—Business Services; Andrea Meshofski, chief—Business Services

**Building and Grounds/Parking Attendant:** John Cottone, manager; James Buckley, chief—Buildings and Grounds; vacancy assistant—buildings and grounds; Artie Eischeid, parking assistant; vacancy, parking assistant

**Information Systems:** John Cottone, manager; Anthony Leuzzi, associate director; Donald Miller, associate director; Richard Nachbaur, associate director; Richard Roche, associate director; Denise Hamilton, associate director; Jorge Salgado, associate director; R. Mills, computer technician; Rich Driscoll, computer technician

**Mailroom/Printshop:** Damien McKeever, Manager; Eric O'Donnell, chief—Duplicating and Mailing; Stephen Feuerstein, principal offset operator; Ryan Eischeid, principal clerk; Gloria Lugo, senior clerk—receptionist; Andrew Mathis, senior clerk; Zann Williams, senior clerk; Latonya Reid, clerk

**Membership:** Damien McKeever, manager; Evelyn Dones, membership specialist; Marisol Ruiz, Chief—business services; Tammi Antonelli, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Charisse Huff, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Lesley Newman, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Susan Walker, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Karyn Snyder, principal clerk—bookkeeper; Murjani Andrews, principal clerk—bookkeeper

## COMMUNICATIONS

NJEA Communications is responsible for all aspects of the association's communications efforts, both internal and external.

It uses all media platforms to inform NJEA members, education policymakers, New Jersey residents and public opinion leaders about the association's objectives and involve residents in New Jersey public education. The division deals with all media outlets and handles NJEA's advertising campaigns.

NJEA's monthly all-member magazine the NJEA Review, is produced within the division. All other print and audiovisual materials—including brochures, pamphlets, and leadership publications, videos and online content—are also produced by the division.

In addition, NJEA Communications helps local and county affiliate leaders create and use internal communications structures, public relations plans and various media strategies to fulfill their organizational objectives.



The division also:

- Produces technology-based communications, including the NJEA website [njea.org](http://njea.org) and NJEA's social media properties.
- Produces targeted membership publications.
- Develops and coordinates coalitions and alliances with business, civic, and other organizations to promote NJEA, its members and New Jersey's public schools.
- Handles administration, fundraising and promotion of the Hipp Foundation.

**Communications:** Steven Baker, director; Beth Georgetown, Administrative Assistant

**Graphic Design:** Jennifer Cohn Marsh, associate director; Gregg Poserina, lead design assistant; Jennifer Larson, technical design assistant; Nora Lenahan, typesetter

**NJEA Review:** Patrick Rumaker, associate director; Kathryn Coulibaly, associate director; Liz Murphy, secretary

**Organizing and Coalition Building:** Dawn Hiltner, associate director; Elizabeth DeBarr, administrative assistant

**Public Relations:** Meredith Barnes, associate director; Dawn Hiltner, associate director; Christy Kanaby, associate director; Matthew Stagliano, associate director

**Digital Communications:** Diane Barry, associate director; Kathryn Coulibaly, associate director

**Video Production:** Nello Ciccone, associate director; Christopher Curto, technical video assistant

**Communication Consultants:** Kimberly Bevilacqua-Crane; Jennifer Clemen; Joseph Coleman; Mariann Kronyak; Ani McHugh; Sharon Milano; Kevin Parker; Lou Randazzo; David Yastremski.

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

NJEA Government Relations coordinates NJEA's legislative activities and political campaigns and is responsible for the monitoring functions of government departments, bureaus and agencies.

It also is responsible for working with association committees that study educational legislation and regulations, which recommend educational policy.

The legislative and political action activities include, but are not limited to: legislative analysis and reporting, testimony before legislative committees, coordination of all legislative and congressional lobbying, state and federal political action efforts, and legislative/political action training for NJEA members.

The division also monitors the State Board of Education, lobbies and reports on proposed regulations, and responds to member inquiries and problems related to agency activities.

**Government Relations:** Kevin Kelleher, interim director; Marybeth Beichert, associate director; Jerrell Blakeley, associate director; Michael Flynn, associate director; Michael Giglio III, associate director; Sean Hadley, associate director; Francine Pfeffer, associate director; Osomo Thomas, associate director; Anna Hanzes, associate director; Mary Kemery, administrative assistant; Janet Bush, secretary; Carol McWilliams, secretary; Sabrina Moore, secretary; Christie Procell, secretary; Carolyn Thompson, secretary

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES

NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues oversees the professional and instructional interests of the organization and its members.

The division is responsible for the NJEA Professional Development Institute, which endorses and promotes high quality professional development programs. Of particular importance is the NJEA Priority Schools Initiative, which provides support and resources to program schools, using research on effective school practice to improve the culture of learning to reduce learning gaps to the benefit of all students.

In addition, the division acts as a resource on a wide variety of instructional subjects and professional issues, extending from such topics as certification, evaluation, standards, assessment, special education, gender equity and technology integration. In each of these areas, the division works in collaboration with a wide range of interest and advocacy groups across the state that share NJEA's vision for effective practice.

The division also focuses on a wide range of professional development and continuing education issues. It works extensively with the N.J. Department of Education (NJDOE) to promote effective professional development practice consistent with NJEA policy. The division provides support to the State Professional Learning Committee, which advises the NJDOE on continuing education in the state.

The division coordinates major statewide instructional issues conferences and scores of specialized meetings. It plans and administers the NJEA Convention—the association's premier professional development event—developing and coordinating professional programs and activities, as well as overseeing facilities arrangements, logistical services, and exposition services.

Division staff assists members and local and county affiliates in the field on these issues as needed through the NJEA-NEA UniServ network.

**Professional Development:** Michael Cohan, director; Amanda Adams, associate director; Chrissi Miles, associate director; Camy Kobylinski, associate

director; Michael Ritzius, associate director; Janet Royal, associate director; Gabriel Tanglao, associate director; Richard Wilson, associate director; Felicia Davis, administrative assistant; Cindy Vannauker, administrative assistant; vacancy, secretary; Theresa Mura, secretary; Davella Ward, secretary

**Consultants:** Professional Development Consultants: Renee Ahern; Eric Brenner; Shan Byrd; Genevieve Ditrain; Jennifer Dubroski; Edward Dubroski; Esther Innis; Greg Jablonski; Donna Jacobson; Biran Janik; Joan Jensen; Pamela Koharchik; Danielle Kovach; Margaret Leventhal; Brenda Martin-Lee; Deanne Martini; Linda Marton; Michael Mason; Margaret Novicki; Jason Pukel; Mary Steinhauer; Lois Jean Tarr; Tiffanie Thrbak.

**Priority Schools Consultants:** Deborah Adams; Lizandaa Alburg; Johanna Amaro; Christine Candarella; Katherine Clark; Angela Coxen; Edward Dubroski; Jennifer Dubroski; Michael Fletcher; Barbara Gary; Dawn Howlen; Dorothy Kohrher; Brenda Martin-Lee; Deanne Martini; Janet Mccoid; Brian Mclaughlin; Anna Muessig; Candida Palmieri; Patricia Pillsbury; Sally Ann Ruggiero; Carolyn Schultz; Teresa Stallone; Diane Stelacio; Danele Still; Dorjima Tchourumoff; Linda Thomas; Maryann Woods-Murphy; Tracie Yostpille.

**Teacher Leader Consultants:** Lizandaa Alburg; Johanna Amaro; Christine Candarella; Ed Dubroski; Jennifer Dubroski; Dawn Howlen; Michael Fletcher; Deanne Martini; Brenda Martin-Lee; Anna Muessig; Tracie Yostpille.

## RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC SERVICES

NJEA Research and Economic Services Division gathers, organizes and presents factual information to support state and local association programs and activities.

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Operating on a coordinated, statewide basis, the UniServ field representatives and office staff members work out of 19 regional offices to supply doorstep service to members. Four regional directors coordinate the UniServ network of regional offices and are assisted by four administrative assistants and a chief administrative assistant.

The 63 professional and 44 associate UniServ staff members are assisted by 44 professional and 76 associate staff members in other divisions who work out of NJEA Headquarters in Trenton and 98 part-time UniServ consultants.

The NJEA-NEA UniServ field representatives train local leaders and assist in coordination of state-national resources, including professional development, instructional improvement, and human relations; negotiations service; contract administration and grievance adjudication; local member consultation and individual service; public relations and communications; legislative and political activity; leadership development skills; organizational management and membership promotion; inclusive local training, organizing assistance, and goal development.

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# WHAT'S IN YOUR



## PART 2: GETTING THINGS FIXED, REDUCING TOXINS

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

The stories about New Jersey's widespread problems with toxins in drinking water can be scary. Some contaminants—such as well-known lead and the newer poly- and perfluoroalkyl (PFAS) “forever” chemicals—harm children more than adults, making school water a concern. (See Part 1, December *NJEA Review*.)

The Environmental Working Group (EWG)'s latest drinking water reports fuel the concerns. Aside from lead issues, the group found toxic chemicals known as PFAS are more common in New Jersey than most other states. EWG also found more than 100 other contaminants in the state's drinking water. Ten of those contaminants are over the health-based limits, are known carcinogens, and can affect pregnancies.

Water companies do not have to test for more than 500 contaminants known to be in New Jersey's water.

### WHERE CAN WE GET INFORMATION ABOUT DRINKING WATER QUALITY?

Drinking water quality information is based on what's measured on the state list of regulated chemicals, a combination of federal and state standards. (See Resources on Page 51.)

State water supply utilities must test water leaving their treatment plants for lead and other

substances. They also must test their own lines containing lead. Their annual required Consumer Confidence Reports—mailed to customers—are supposed to provide information about test results.

School districts must deal with their own lead-containing lines. In 2016, New Jersey finally adopted regulations requiring districts test for lead in school drinking water. They had to test their own water within the year and every six years afterwards. They also must:

- Make results available at each school and on district websites, where they must stay until the next set is available.
- Only tell parents and the NJDOE when levels exceed the federal EPA's “action level”—15 parts per billion (ppb).
- Report what was done to immediately stop use of water outlets above the action level and how staff and students will have access to water.
- Provide an annual “statement of assurance” to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE).

Recent changes include testing every three years, and a central test result database at a new NJDOE site: [nj.gov/education/lead/lead-report.html](http://nj.gov/education/lead/lead-report.html).

Groups such as the EWG and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) analyze test results. (See Resources in sidebar.)

### WHICH NUMBERS ARE BEST?

Many scientists have criticized the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for inadequate drinking water standards. Its numbers are out of date for some substances, don't cover many others, and/or have

“

*Schools should avoid bottled water and set up temporary drinking water stations when necessary.*

recommended but unenforceable “maximum contaminant levels” (MCLs).

Some states have leapt into the breach. For example, the New Jersey Drinking Water Quality Institute (DWQI) recommends health-based levels for some water contaminants.

There is no safe level for lead, which is well-known for its many harmful effects. In 2016, the American Academy of Pediatrics called for a national commitment to eliminate all lead sources that may affect children. It urged state and local governments to ensure that school water fountains not exceed 1 ppb of lead.

PFAS compound standards are improving as their hazards are studied. An early regulator for three PFAS compounds, New Jersey set a MCL of 13 parts per trillion (ppt) for PFNA in drinking water and interim specific groundwater quality standards for PFOA and PFOS at 10 ppt.

However, “New Jersey can do better,” says the NRDC. “Its proposed MCLs fail to fully protect our health and the environment from PFAS contamination. The agency must step up to fix

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

these problems by adopting a combined MCL of 2 ppt for PFOA and PFOS that protects the most vulnerable among us.”

Standards depend on laboratory test methods. This year, the latest EPA procedure led Michigan, California, New Hampshire and New York to standards for older PFAS chemicals, some much better than New Jersey’s.

To complicate matters, newer “short-chain” PFAS chemicals likely cause the same health problems as older ones. New Jersey officials accused the EPA of ignoring studies when it approved replacements such as GenX.

### WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

Systemic solutions—getting rid of contaminants—are the only effective answer. Meanwhile, in general, schools should avoid bottled water (see sidebar) and set up temporary drinking water stations, when necessary.

The new rules do not require districts to fix lead problems. However, the state plans to replace all lead service lines within 10 years at an estimated total cost of \$2.3 billion.

Meanwhile, districts should:

- Test water at least annually, remembering it’s just a “snapshot in time.”
- Send the results to the NJDOE and post them, with explanations about which are drinking water and which other sources, in an easily found website.
- Look at pipes, parts, faucets, fountains and service lines for possible sources, replacing any contributing lead to drinking water with nontoxic options.
- Filter and/or flush where necessary, especially when stagnation is likely.
- Keep tabs on the EPA’s proposed changes to the Lead and Copper Rule, issued in October, some of which applies to schools.

Flushing systems helps but does not remove the lead source. For example, a Chicago Public Schools engineer invented an automatic flushing device (“Noah”) to avoid water stagnating in pipes and absorbing lead.

“Parents and school staff should use the new New Jersey online database, to find out if lead is in their school’s drinking water,” says Heather Sorge, campaign organizer for Healthy Schools Now. “Then they can push for its removal to protect staff and students.”

PFAS chemicals are harder to deal with. Water utilities can remove the older ones using granular activated carbon (GAC) or reverse osmosis. But they will need other methods for newer PFASs.

To avoid contributing to PFAS contamination, districts can change procurement policies to require full chemical transparency for all products they order (e.g., carpets). They can require non-PFAS food containers (Denmark plans to ban them in July 2020), and avoid chemicals altogether by returning to reusable food containers.

## What’s an NJEA local to do?

### 1. Work with the district to:

- Inventory contaminants in school drinking water, lead sources, and PFAS chemicals in materials present/used in the school.
- Review water utility Consumer Confidence Reports and procurement policies.
- Develop right-to-know transparency about chemicals in any products or materials coming into the school.
- Deal with hazards in holistic ways that prevent harm (e.g., reusable dishes instead of take-out containers with PFAS linings).

### 2. Set an example by banning bottled water at meetings and other events.

### 3. Keep tabs on PFAS chemicals, checking on what other states are doing (see Resources below).

### 4. Support community efforts to clean up and eliminate drinking water contaminants.

### 5. Work with the Healthy Schools Now Coalition and other allies. (Visit [njwec.org](http://njwec.org))

## Bottled water is not the answer



- It’s expensive and creates plastic pollution.
- In 2018, nearly 64% of “bottled” water in the U.S. was actually tap water.
- Documented bottled water industry campaigns have demonized tap water.
- New Jersey regulators found bottled water with antimony at five times the federal limit, arsenic at twice the limit, and radium; the results have not been widely publicized, and the limits used are out of date.
- Some companies don’t test bottled water for PFAS or other chemicals, nor must they report the results.
- It doesn’t pressure utilities, governments, or districts to fix water infrastructure (cost estimated at \$24 billion, compared to \$31 billion spent on bottled water in 2018).

## Resources

“Should we break our bottled water habit?” Consumer Reports: [bit.ly/bottlehabit](http://bit.ly/bottlehabit)

“Get the Lead Out: Back to School Toolkit,” Environment America and U.S. PIRG: [bit.ly/getleadoutkit](http://bit.ly/getleadoutkit)

Environmental Working Group (EWG): [ewg.org/pfasfound](http://ewg.org/pfasfound)

National Resource Defense Council (NRDC): [bit.ly/protectpfas](http://bit.ly/protectpfas) (has state information)

New Jersey’s water systems’ regulated substances: [bit.ly/njdepwater](http://bit.ly/njdepwater)



# A CLOSER LOOK ...at the contributions of retired educators



As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of NJREA, the retiree organization representing New Jersey's public school employees, learn more about just some of the contributions retired educators have made and continue to make in New Jersey's schools. To watch more stories like theirs, go to [classroomcloseup.org](http://classroomcloseup.org), click on the drop-down menu under "Categories" and type "Retired."

Here, we highlight three stories about teachers of the year.

## THE HEDGEPETH WILLIAMS STORY

Ten years before *Brown v. Board of Education* that put an end to school segregation in the United States, there was *Hedgepeth-Williams v. Board of Education*. On Jan. 31, 1944 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that local school districts and boards of education could not establish separate public schools based on race, color or creed. Trenton's Paul Robeson Elementary teacher Kristine Burns and retired teacher Sue Shields helped their students produce a book about the landmark decision that occurred in their school 70 years ago.

## AUTHORS & EDUCATORS

Many educators are also authors. Former Haddonfield teacher and author of *The Silver Linings Playbook*, Matthew Quick joins current and retired educators to discuss balancing writing with teaching and how each informs the other. Winner of the 2014-15 New York Emmy.

## FRIENDS OF FORSYTHE

Fourth graders at Marsh Elementary in Absecon get hands-on experience cleaning up an oil spill. The Friends of Forsythe visit schools in Atlantic County to provide programs on environmental education and conservation. The volunteers include a retired teacher, a retired school maintenance man and a retired doctor.



Thousands of "Classroom Close-up NJ" segments are viewable and downloadable at [classroomcloseup.org](http://classroomcloseup.org). A searchable database makes finding an entire show or individual segments on any topic easy. These shows can help innovate your instruction, guide you to unknown resources, or simply make your day.

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[classroomcloseup.org](http://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](http://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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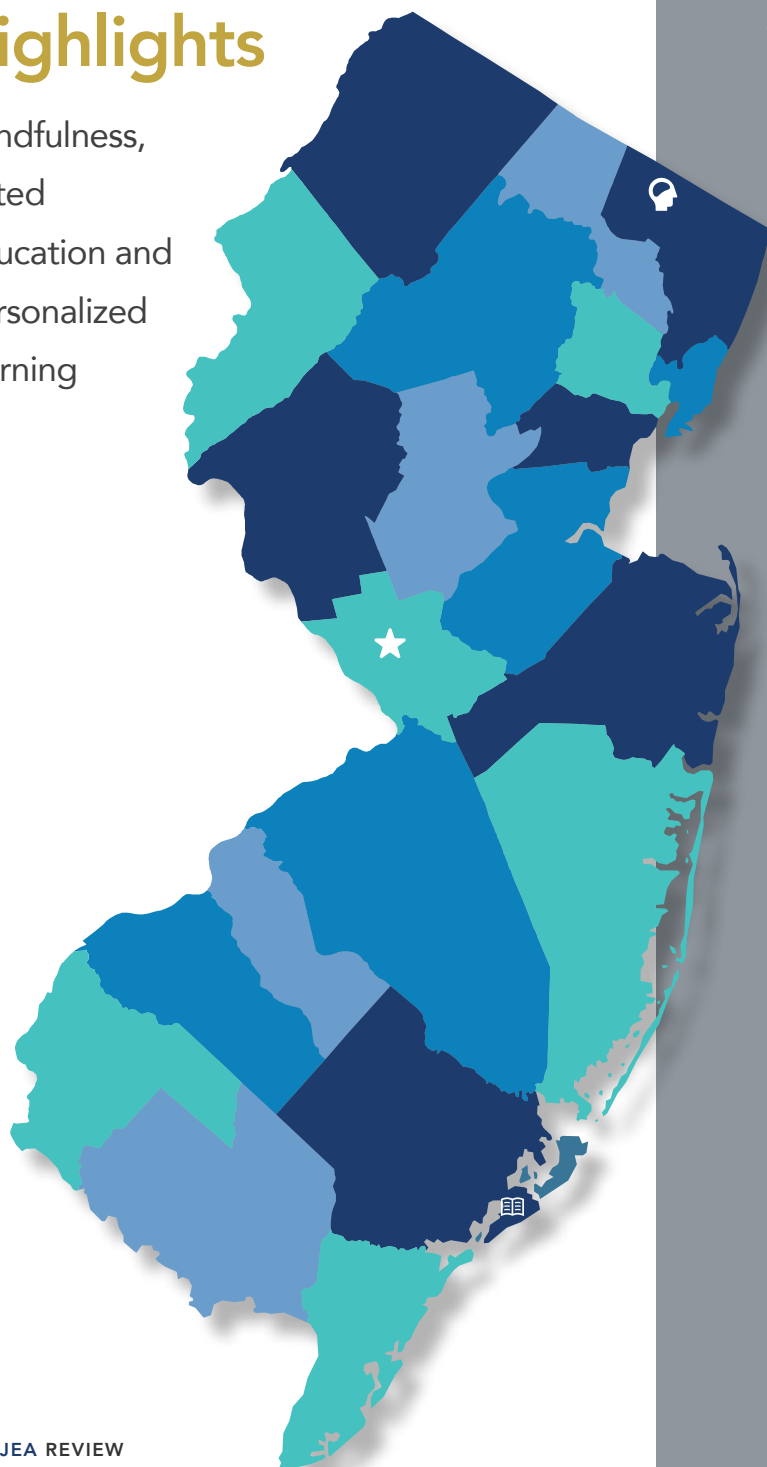


# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and  
conferences

## highlights

Mindfulness,  
gifted  
education and  
personalized  
learning



This workshop has been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and is also posted on [njea.org](http://njea.org). Those seeking endorsement of a professional development experience that they will provide should call NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.

### EVERYDAY MINDFULNESS IN THE CLASSROOM

Zensational Kids is offering two workshops for educators of all grades. Allison Morgan MA, OTR, E-RYT is the founder and CEO of Zensational Kids, an educational company bringing evidence-based yoga and mindfulness practices to school communities worldwide. Teaching the inner resources of focused attention, self-awareness and resilience, Morgan is passionate about training educators, mental health professionals and allied health professionals effective techniques to share these practices with youth.

Educate 2B: Tools for Engaged Learning and Living will be held on Jan. 15 in Park Ridge. In this one-day training, participants will learn how to effectively implement 30 developmentally appropriate tools with fun, focused, two-minute activities. This curriculum helps educators quickly identify the appropriate tools to help students become calm, energized, focused, positively connected and ready to learn. The cost is \$219.

Everyday Mindfulness: Techniques for Teens to Develop Compassion, Calm, Focus and Resilience is being held on Jan. 30 in Park Ridge. Everyday Mindfulness provides students and educators with tools to pause, acknowledge, shift and refocus. Mindfulness practice helps students find relief from some of the burdens of stress and anxiety while developing personal mastery and resilience. This creates space to discover their own goodness as well as the goodness available around them. The cost is \$219.

To register for either event, go to [zensationalkids.com/events](http://zensationalkids.com/events). For more information call 201-446-0353 or email [allison@zensationalkids.com](mailto:allison@zensationalkids.com).

## ★ NJAGC 2020 CONFERENCE: A CLEAR VISION OF EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE IN GIFTED EDUCATION

The annual conference of the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC), “A Clear Vision of Equity and Excellence in Gifted Education,” will be held Friday, March 20 at the Conference Center at Mercer. The program is open to educators, curriculum supervisors and administrators.

Participants will hear the keynote from Dr. Joy Lawson Davis and attend one breakout session in the morning and attend two breakout sessions in the afternoon. Davis’ keynote is titled “Identifying, Engaging, and Supporting Gifted Learners from Underrepresented Populations.” Her workshop is titled “Using Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in the Gifted Education Classroom.” Other workshops will address the educational and social/emotional needs of minority students, strategies for increasing equity in gifted programs, and other topics relating to broadening diverse representation in gifted education. Presenters will deliver sessions incorporating their vision of excellence in gifted education, such as showcasing successful programming for the gifted learner, sharing best practices to develop attendees’ individual educational skills, and idea exchange seminars as a way of increasing participants’ knowledge in the gifted field. Speakers will also provide an overview of teaching strategies, skills, and characteristics specific to the gifted learner.

This year’s conference will seek to guide educators on best practices that will help ensure that students from all backgrounds are fairly represented in gifted programs.

The costs run from \$159-\$219, depending on membership in NJAGC. Contact Sue McGreevy at 856-273-7530 or [mcgreevys@njagc.org](mailto:mcgreevys@njagc.org) for more information. Visit [njagc.org](http://njagc.org) to register.

## 📖 PERSONALIZED LEARNING CONFERENCE MID-ATLANTIC

Join innovative educators March 11-13 at Harrah’s in Atlantic City and explore next generation learning at the Personalized Learning Conference Mid-Atlantic (PLearnMA). Learn how to assist your students in identifying their motivations and goals and use the social-emotional skill of self-management to persist in achieving them. Deepen connections within the classroom to build foundations of self-regulation to better access academic content presented in a personalized learning environment.

The theme this year, “Integrating Social Emotional Learning with Personalized Learning,” will feature over 120 dynamic and interactive sessions focused on personalized learning for K-12 students. Attend featured breakout sessions, meet the experts, connect with exhibitors and vendors and network with leaders and innovators.

The cost is \$475, which includes attendance to the full conference from Wednesday, March 11 through Friday, March 13. Meals and refreshments—opening reception, breakfasts and lunches—are included. Available for purchase separately (not included in registration): book study, and book only. Capital Area Online Learning Association (CAOLA) members receive \$100 off registration; contact CAOLA for code.

To register go to [bit.ly/plernma](http://bit.ly/plernma) or contact Mark Hennes at 717-732-8427 or [mhennes@caiu.org](mailto:mhennes@caiu.org).

# MORE TO LEARN

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATORS ROUNDTABLE

Ocean County Soil Conservation District announces its 23rd Annual Environmental Educators Roundtable, which will be held on Earth Day, April 22 from 3 to 8 p.m. The event takes place at the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education in Waretown.

Our Roundtable theme this year is “Happy Earth Day for the Next Generation – Full STEAM Ahead!” The event will feature an array of STEAM-based activities and field experiences to motivate and inspire educators to incorporate environmental topics into their curricula. Informative and adventurous programs are aligned with Next Generation Science Standards. Explore the local Barnegat Bay watershed and network with environmental educators while gathering resources, ideas and lesson plans to take back to your classroom.

Doors open at 3 p.m. for an Open House that includes exhibitors and a light dinner. Workshops are offered from 4:30 to 6:45 p.m., followed by dessert and light refreshments. The keynote presentation by Xerxes Society Senior Biologist, Kelly Gill, will run from 7 to 7:45 p.m.

Wrap-up, evaluations and professional development certificate distribution conclude the event.

The fee is \$25.

The deadline to register is April 10. Contact Becky Laboy, Education Outreach Specialist, Ocean County Soil Conservation District at 609-971-7002, ext. 114 or [education@soildistrict.org](mailto:education@soildistrict.org). For more information visit [soildistrict.org/educational-programs/roundtable](http://soildistrict.org/educational-programs/roundtable).

## ONLINE COURSE: TEACHING FOOD AND NUTRITION FOR ALL

The Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy (Tisch Food Center), part of the Program in Nutrition at Teachers College, Columbia University, is offering an online course, Teaching Food and Nutrition for All. The course is open to anyone with a passion for helping the next generation eat well themselves and for the planet, including, K-12 educators, preservice teachers in undergraduate or graduate programs, and educators (paid or volunteer) who conduct gardening, cooking and other food and nutrition educational activities.

Educators will walk away with the tools and confidence to bring food and nutrition topics to life in the classroom, garden, or cafeteria.

Registration is available now for the spring and summer sessions and groups of 5 or more will receive a discounted registration fee. You can register at [bit.ly/teachingfoodforall](http://bit.ly/teachingfoodforall) or email Deb [dao2113@tc.columbia.edu](mailto:dao2113@tc.columbia.edu) for more information.

## AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST NATIONAL TEACHERS INSTITUTE’S ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON US HISTORY

Their annual National Teacher Institute brings together educators from all over the world. This four-day event includes breakout sessions, workshops, lectures and tours from some of the leading experts in the history and education fields.

Educators will be immersed in a friendly, fun, and engaging learning environment, where they will be able to network with other educators, learn more about the historical topics that they teach in their classroom while acquiring new and innovative teaching methods. This event is free but does require a \$100, refundable, deposit be placed to reserve your spot. At the event’s conclusion, educators can apply for continuing education credits, provided by Virginia Tech University.

The event is held this year on July 9-11, 2020, in Mobile, Ala. For more



information or to register, visit [battlefields.org/events/national-teacher-institute-2020](http://battlefields.org/events/national-teacher-institute-2020).

The American Battlefield Trust is also home to a library of resources and activities that educators can incorporate into their lessons on the American War for Independence, the War of 1812, and the U.S. Civil War. Visit [battlefields.org/learn/educators](http://battlefields.org/learn/educators).

### MATH WORKSHOPS OFFERED AT RUTGERS

The Association of Mathematics Teachers of New Jersey (AMTNJ), with the cooperation of the Rutgers Department of Mathematics and the Center for Discrete Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science (DIMACS), is offering math workshops for elementary, middle and high school teachers. The workshops are held on Rutgers' Busch Campus and run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Following are workshops offered in January. Workshops in February through May can be reviewed at the indicated websites.

#### High School workshops

- Feb 3: Intervention Strategies for Struggling Learners in Mathematics, Grades 6-9
- Feb. 5: Tips for Math Coaches, Math Supervisors, and Math Leaders, Grades K-12
- Feb. 7: Flipping the Classroom in Math for Teachers, Grades 6-12
- Feb.14: Teaching and Learning Mathematics in the 21st Century through the Use of Technology, Grades 6-12
- Feb.18: Differentiating Mathematics Instruction in the Secondary Classroom, Grades 7-12
- Feb.19: Making Learning Visual in the Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry Classroom, Grades 7-12
- Feb.24: Formative Assessment with Web-Enabled Devices, Grades 9-12

Registration/information: [tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-HS-2019-2020A](http://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-HS-2019-2020A)

#### Middle School workshops

- Feb.3: Intervention Strategies for Struggling Learners in Mathematics, Grades 6-9
- Feb.5: Tips for Math Coaches, Math Supervisors, and Math Leaders, Grades K-12
- Feb.7: Flipping the Classroom in Math for Teachers, Grades 6-12
- Feb.14: Teaching and Learning Mathematics in the 21st Century through the Use of Technology, Grades 6-12
- Feb.18: Differentiating Mathematics Instruction in the Secondary Classroom, Grades 7-12
- Feb.19: Making Learning Visual in the Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry Classroom, Grades 7-12
- Feb.21: Develop Student Understanding of Area and Volume Formulas of Various Geometric Figures, Grades 6-8

Registration/information: [tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-MS-2019-2020A](http://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-MS-2019-2020A)

#### Elementary School Workshops

- Feb.5: Tips for Math Coaches, Math Supervisors, and Math Leaders, Grades K-12
- Feb.10: Number Sense, Fluency, and Operations in the 2-5 Classroom, Grades 2-5
- Feb.20: Visualizing Problem Solving through Proportional and Spatial Reasoning, Grades 3-5
- Feb.27: Differentiating Instruction in Math: "It's not as hard as you think!" Grades 3-5

Registration/information: [tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-Elem-2019-2020A](http://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-Elem-2019-2020A)

For more information or questions, contact AMTNJ at [amtnj@juno.com](mailto:amtnj@juno.com).



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, School Administrator, or Teacher Leader.\*

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North - Parsippany-Troy Hills, NJ

Central - FEA Conference Center in Monroe Twp., NJ

South - Timber Creek High School in Erial, NJ

\*Teacher Leader Certification is available through NJEXCEL or a 10-month TLC program. For details, go to [www.njtlc.org](http://www.njtlc.org).



**(609) 860-1200**  
**[www.njexcel.org](http://www.njexcel.org)**

# REACHING ALL OF OUR STUDENTS

BY ANGELLO VILLARREAL, NJEA PRESERVICE POLITICAL ACTION CO-CHAIR, MONMOUTH UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDENT, AND TEACHER RESIDENT AT LONG BRANCH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

What would you do if you are substituting in a classroom, and not a single student speaks English? What if you obtain your dream teaching job, but there is that one student who makes every lesson a struggle? Imagine having a Back to School night session, but no parents attend. Those are a few of the questions and problems that preservice and new teachers might have when they step into the classroom. The first step is to recognize that our student population is growing more diverse every day, and we need to adapt to change.

As new teachers, we need to embrace every student's identity and cultural and economic background to give them a voice in the classroom. Every student will bring their own unique experiences into school. Let's remember: our students don't care how much we know about the subject matter, lesson or what degree we have; they want to see that we care about them. Every student wants to feel valued, not that they are "slowing down" the class. We need to encourage

and challenge our students while holding them accountable for their actions and decisions.

You know that student in the back corner of the classroom who does not want to listen, and interrupts every time you are trying to teach a lesson? Yes, that same student that sometimes sleeps in the classroom, yells jokes in the middle of the activities and makes your teaching day tricky. That student is the one that needs you the most.

How do I know? I was that student!

We need to go beyond our lessons and grades, and have a sociocultural and political consciousness, and realize how our students are affected by that. As educators, we must affirm diversity and understand that every student is different. We must learn more about our students, their families and communities.

Every child in our classrooms has their own set of problems. Whether it is learning a new language, adapting to a new culture, being different because of race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or

other identity, or struggling economically every student needs their teachers to be their mentors: the people they can look up to. Be there for them, push them as much as you can, care for them, and listen to them.

As preservice and new teachers, we need to awaken our critical openness and reflection to understand that a child is not a stereotype. Set aside time to interact with and get to know each of your students—whether it is at lunch, before, or after class—to show them that you care about them beyond the lesson. Sometimes they had a great weekend, or they barely slept because they worked overnight after school. Even though some students do not speak your language, they often go through the same problems as you and your other students. Be there for them and listen to them; we might be the only ones who do. 🙋

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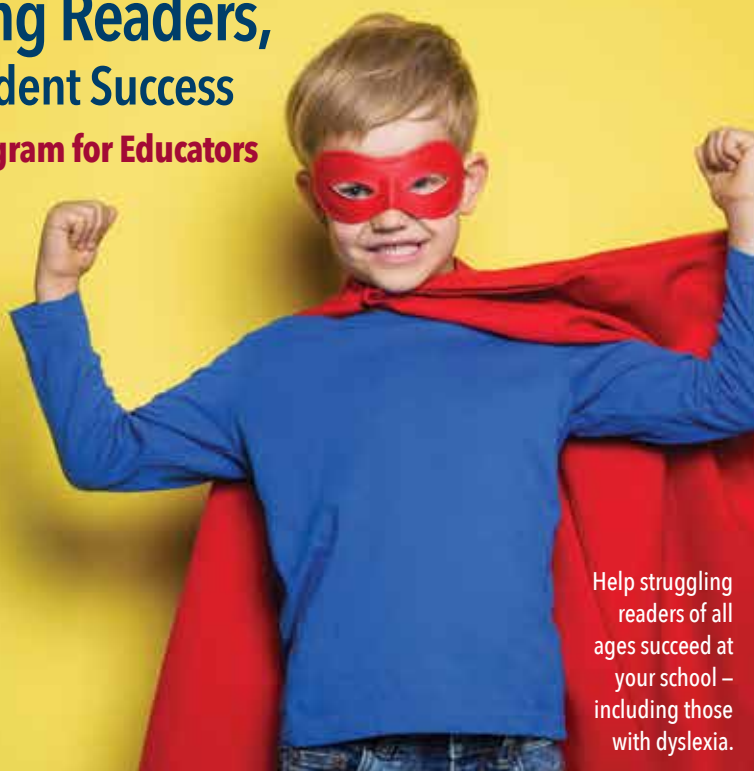
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PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

## SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT INCREASE

The Social Security Administration announced a 1.6% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in retirees' Social Security benefit payments beginning Jan. 1. The COLA is an increase—if any—as measured by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. CPI-W went up 1.6% in the third quarter of 2019 compared to the third quarter of 2018.

For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2020 are factored in.

The increase in the COLA also influences the earnings limit for those collecting early Social Security. The earnings limit is the amount an early Social Security recipient can earn before a reduction in benefits takes place. The current earnings level \$17,640. This will rise to \$18,240 in 2020.

Visit [ssa.gov](https://ssa.gov) for questions regarding Social Security payments.

YEAR	INCREASE
2006	4.1%
2007	3.3%
2008	2.3%
2009	5.8%
2010	---
2011	---
2012	3.6%
2013	1.7%
2014	1.5%
2015	1.7%
2016	---
2017	0.3%
2018	2.0%
2019	2.8%
2020	1.6%

## 2020 MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS ANNOUNCED

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced in November the 2020 premiums for Medicare Part B.

For most Medicare beneficiaries, premiums, deductibles and surcharges will increase. Premiums will rise to \$144.60 per month, an increase of \$9.10. Medicare Part B deductibles will increase by \$13 to \$198. Retirees will also pay a different premium amount in 2020 if they fall into a different income-related category. This change happens once individual filers reach \$87,001, or a joint-filer reaches \$174,001, for income earned in 2018.

The Social Security Administration uses the income reported two years ago to determine a Part B beneficiary's premium. Thus, the income reported on a beneficiary's 2018 tax return is used to determine whether the beneficiary must pay a higher monthly Part B premium in 2020. If a beneficiary's income decreased significantly in the past two years, they may request that information from more recent years be used to calculate the premium.

### IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION RELATED TO SOCIAL SECURITY

For Medicare beneficiaries who have Medicare Part B premiums automatically deducted from Social Security benefits, the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) must be large enough to cover the change in premium. Since many ben-

eficiaries were already paying lower-than-standard premiums because of this rule, the 1.6% of the 2020 cost-of-living adjustment won't be enough to cover the increase to \$144.60 per month. So, beneficiaries to whom this applies will pay a lower premium.

### REIMBURSEMENTS FOR PRMB RECIPIENTS

For those members receiving post-retirement medical benefits (PRMB) paid for by the state of New Jersey, the standard Medicare Part B premium is reimbursed in the member's pension check. Any income-related adjustment that members or their dependents pay—or that new enrollees pay—is reimbursed at the end of the year in which the adjustment is paid, only after the proper paperwork is filed with the Division of Pensions and Benefits. Notice on how to file for any income-related adjustment reimbursement will be sent to retirees, as well as be posted on the Division of Pensions and Benefits website, by early February.

Visit [njea.org/njrea](https://njea.org/njrea) for additional information. If you have questions about your Medicare Part B premium, call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227). Any questions regarding the reimbursement process should be directed to the state Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524. Members also can visit "Letters to Retirees" at [state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pension-retirees.shtml](https://state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pension-retirees.shtml) for updates.

## Around the counties

*For questions, call your county REA. For trip details, check the county newsletter.*

### ATLANTIC COUNTY REA'S

next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, March 3 at the Smithville Inn in Galloway. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Linda Young at 609-226-6202.

### The SALEM COUNTY REA

will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Monday, Feb. 24 at the Alloway Municipal Building in Alloway. A representative from the Inspira Network will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-534-0782.

Join **UNION COUNTY REA** for its winter meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, Feb. 25 at The Westwood in Garwood. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Donna Mertz-Burkhardt at 908-686-2390.

## 2020 MEDICARE PART D PREMIUMS

Since Jan. 1, 2012, all Medicare-eligible retirees enrolled in the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP) are automatically enrolled in the state-selected Medicare prescription plan, which is currently OptumRx. This program includes the Medicare-eligible retiree to be enrolled automatically in Medicare Part D.

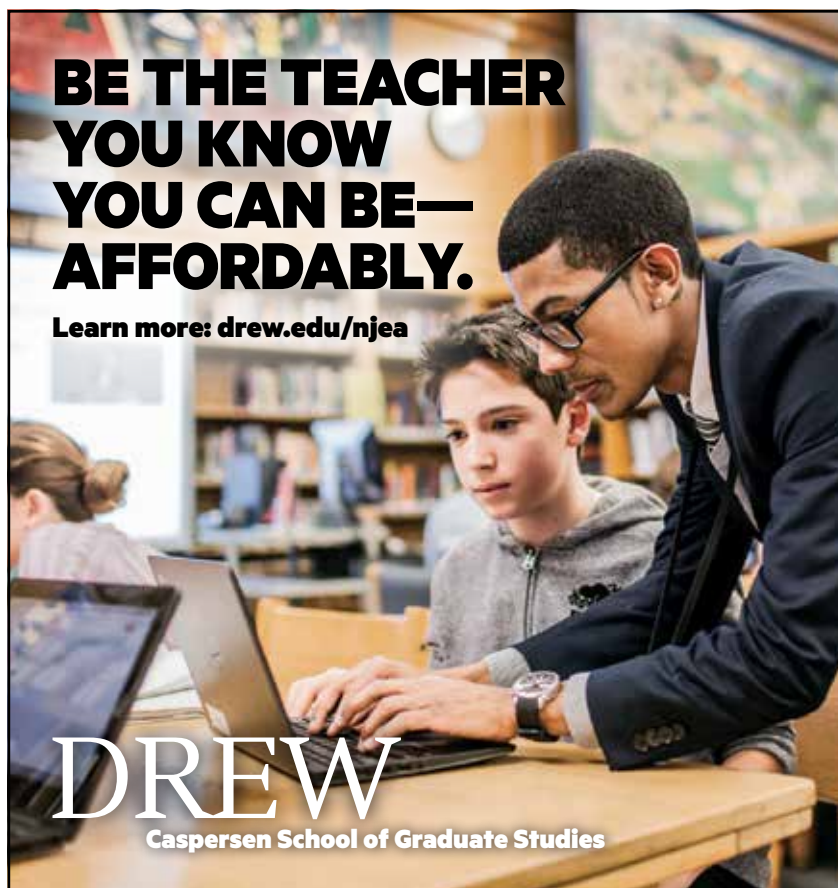
For 2020, most retirees will see a decrease in their Medicare Part D premiums to \$30.00 per month. While there is no standard Medicare Part D cost associated with the program, enrollees whose incomes exceeded the legislated threshold amounts—\$87,000 in 2018 for a beneficiary filing an individual income tax return or married and filing a separate return, and \$174,000 for a beneficiary filing a joint tax return—will pay a monthly, income-related payment. Those surcharges will be generally lower, except for the highest-income participants. View the chart below for the full list of the premiums:

INDIVIDUAL TAX FILERS	JOINT RETURN FILERS	2019 PREMIUMS
\$87,000 or below	\$174,000 or below	\$0.00
\$87,001 to \$109,000	\$174,001 to \$218,000	\$12.20
\$109,001 to \$136,000	\$218,001 to \$272,000	\$31.50
\$136,001 to \$163,000	\$272,001 to \$326,000	\$50.70
\$163,001 to \$499,999	\$326,001 to \$749,999	\$70.00
Above \$500,000	Above \$750,000	\$76.40

The Social Security Administration uses the income reported two years ago to determine the Part D beneficiary's payment. Thus, the income reported on a beneficiary's 2018 tax return is used to determine whether the beneficiary must pay a monthly, income-related payment in 2020. If a beneficiary's income decreased significantly in the past two years, they may request that information from more recent years be used to calculate the payment.

For those members receiving post-retirement medical benefits paid for by the state of New Jersey, the monthly, income-related payment for them and their dependents is reimbursed at the end of the year in which the payment is paid—after the proper paperwork is filed with the Division of Pensions and Benefits. Notice on how to file for any income-related adjustment reimbursement is sent to retirees, as well as will be posted on the Division of Pensions and Benefits website, by early February.

If you have questions about your Medicare Part D monthly income-related payment, call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227). Any questions regarding the reimbursement process should be directed to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524



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# NJEA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

## MINUTES OF MARCH 30, 2019

The NJEA Delegate Assembly met on March 30, 2019, at the DoubleTree, Somerset, N.J., at 9:30 a.m. President Marie Blistan presided.

Gillian Raye (Sussex) delivered the inspirational message and led the body in the flag salute.

Roll call was taken. There were 106 out of 126 delegates present. Alternates were seated as follows: Hurley for Chau (Atlantic); Fletcher for Kronyak (Bergen); Giacoppo for Bowman (Burlington); Grasso for Carbonara (Cumberland); Greenfield for Blodnik and Kelly-Gamble for Robertson (Essex); Mazzone for Fedele (Hudson); Hicks for Sampson-Clark (Mercer); Marino for Rodrick (Monmouth); Finnen for Adams and Hussein for Bohme (Morris); Cortinas for Jones (Union), and Williams for Hodge (Higher Education)

Absent were representatives Stinson (Camden); Hibell (Middlesex); Mould (Ocean); Miles-Austin and Zurka (Union); Capodice (Non-Classroom), and Faulkner (NEA Director)

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

### DA RULES COMMITTEE REPORT

Kahty Paternek (Morris) moved the amendments to the Standing Rules of the Delegate Assembly proposed by the committee. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

### NEA DIRECTOR NOMINATIONS

The chair presented the nominations from the NJEA Executive Committee for the three NEA Director seats that will become vacant in 2019-20 and opened the floor for further nominations. Patricia Bland (Burlington) removed her name from nomination. The chair then called two additional time for nominations, and none were made. The chair closed nominations.

### TEACHER OF THE YEAR PRESENTATION

Vice President Sean Spiller introduced 2019-20 State Teacher of the Year Jennifer Skomial, who then presented remarks to the body.

### NEA DIRECTOR ELECTION

The five NEA Director nominees were each given an opportunity to speak, after which the DA Rules Committee conducted balloting.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Blistan addressed the following topics in her report:

- The state budget proposed by Gov. Phil Murphy, highlighting many pro-education components.
- The recent contract settlement between the Murphy Administration and CWA which include Chapter 78 relief.
- Recent meetings with the commissioner of education.
- Updates on the Teacher Leader regulations and development of a new statewide assessment system.
- NJEA's work with a coalition of superintendents and others to address school funding reductions affecting several school districts.
- A restorative justice pilot program proposed in legislation.
- Status of NJEA's two ESP bills on due-process and subcontracting.
- A major charter investigation conducted by a team of journalists.
- The circulation of NEA's screening questionnaire for presidential candidates.
- The work of a new Amistad Task Force to broaden the use of curriculum and materials from the NJ Amistad Commission.

Blistan called on UniServ-South Director Patrick Manahan to give a report on NJEA's Chapter 78/ESP Job Justice campaign.

The chair recognized Ms. Paternek, who presented the results of the NEA Director election as follows:

- James Frazer – 68 votes, elected
- Susan McBride – 77 votes, elected
- Pete Moran – 26 votes
- Barbara Rheault – 45 votes
- Kimberly Scott – 77 votes, elected

The chair concluded her report with an update on NJEA's PAC fundraising campaign.

### NOMINATIONS FOR NEA DIRECTOR ALTERNATES

The chair opened nominations for the three NEA Director alternate positions that will be vacant beginning Sept. 1, 2019. Lisa Palin (Union) nominated Chrystal Parr-Allen (Union); Jenifer Clemen (Bergen) nominated Peter Moran (Hunterdon); Raye (Sussex) nominated Ashanti Rankin (Cumberland); Ray Romito (Atlantic)

nominated Rheault (Atlantic); Anthony Rosamilia (Essex) nominated Chris Cannella (Essex). After calling three times for any additional nominations, the chair closed nominations. Each of the nominees was given an opportunity to speak, after which the DA Rules Committee conducted balloting.

### VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Spiller reported on NJEA's response to the Pathway to Progress report issued by the Senate President, including the presence of many members at each of the public forums conducted on the many proposals in the report, most of which NJEA opposes. Spiller also noted there was no legislation introduced in response to the report.

### NONDELEGATE SPEAKERS

The following nondelegate members were provided an opportunity to address the body:

John Coniglio (Morris) spoke of the need to teacher local leaders how to use technology to better communicate with their members, asked if NJEA could provide for group ordering of items such as shirts from vendors, and commented on the number of local affiliates not actively involved in the Chapter 78/Job Justice campaign. Maria Sequoia Enriquez (Hudson) spoke about the work of NJ 21 United to support

### SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORTS

Steve Beatty presented his report. (It was noted that the written report had not been provided to delegates prior to the meeting, and the chair indicated the report would be uploaded for them in two days).

He also noted that the first of two LAFAP payments had gone out to local affiliates that qualified for funding and spoke about his visits to affiliates participating in Worth-it Wednesday activities around the state.

The chair recognized Ms. Paternek, who presented the results of the NEA Director alternate election as follows:

- Chris Cannella -- 57 votes
- Peter Moran – 50 votes
- Chrystal Parr-Allen – 21 votes
- Ashante Rankin – 62 votes, elected
- Barbara Rheault – 73 votes, elected

A runoff election was conducted between Cannella and Moran, and the DA Rules Committee conducted the balloting.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ed Richardson reported on the N.J. Principals and Supervisors Legislative Conference, where the Senate President was the keynote, and summarized him remarks on issues related to school funding and Chapter 78 relief.

He also reported on the terms of the recent CWA state workers' contract settlement, noting that they achieved Chapter 78 relief by indexing employee premium shares as a percentage of salary.

Finally, he reported 14 local Pride projects were approved for funding, totaling \$26,000, in response to New Business Item 1 approve at the January 2019 meeting.



The chair recognized Ms. Paternek, who presented the results of the NEA Director alternate runoff election as follows:

- Chris Cannella -- 51 votes
- Peter Moran -- 67 votes, elected

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ann Kaspereen (Warren) presented the Leadership Committee report and moved the recommendation. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

Amal Hussein (Morris) presented the NEA Activities Committee report and moved recommendations 1-4. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

## NEW BUSINESS

Jen Clemen (Bergen) moved New Business Item 1: That the Professional Development Grant Program be amended as indicated below (addition underlined and in boldface):

Professional Development Grant funding shall only be used for the following expenses:

- Materials/supplies required for the activity (including audiovisual equipment **rented or purchased by the county affiliate**).
- Light refreshments (drinks, sandwiches, etc.)
- Stipends for non-staff presenters (external provider) if a presenter is not available through NJEA.

The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

Dan Epstein (Somerset) moved New Business Item 2: That NJEA aggressively pursue legislation in accordance with our existing charter school policy with the goal of having the measure(s) signed into law by the end of 2021. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

## FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

The chair noted that the superintendent of the Jersey City School District was terminated by the Board of Education.

Rheault (Atlantic) and Rankin (Cumberland) separately thanked delegates for electing them to be NEA director alternates. McBride (Bergen), on behalf of Scott (Essex) and Frazier (Union) thanked the delegates for electing them as NEA directors. Cannella (Essex) thank those who voted for him and invited delegate to purchase tickets for the NEA LGBTQ Caucus dinner on July 6 in Houston.

Dannielle Clark (Camden) presented a contribution of \$5,000 to the Paul Dimitriadis Member Rights Fund.

Pat Frain (Somerset) thanked delegates, on behalf of Pete Moran, for electing Moran as an NEA director alternate. Sue Clark (Gloucester) invited delegates to join the county's ESP member door-knock the following Saturday. Mary MacRae (Somerset) gave an update on Gayle Faulkner, who is recovering from a fall, and thanked delegates for signing her card.

Anthony Rizzo (Burlington) reported that his county sent out 10,644 faxes to legislators through

their Fax it Fridays effort as part of the Chapter 78/Job Justice campaign. Anne Marie Finnen (Morris) invited delegates to the county association's mall display, April 28 through May 5.

Lois Yukna (Middlesex) invited delegates to the Middlesex Member Activation meeting on April 8.

Michael Ryan (Ocean) asked for support for the Lacey Township EA's fight against privatization of paraprofessionals by attending a unity gathering on April 12 and the local board of education meeting on April 15. Melissa Tomlinson (Atlantic) urged members to attend the public hearing on the Pathway to Progress report in her county on April 17 and to participate in the Red for Ed March during the Ocean City block party. Jen Herrick (Middlesex) asked for support to fight the privatization of paraprofessionals in the Old Bridge EA by attending the local board of education meeting on April 16.

Blistan informed the delegates that a special guest had arrived, and introduced Gov. Phil Murphy, who addressed the body regarding his budget priorities and other issues, and thanked them for NJEA's continuing support.

At 12:25 p.m., Iris Tonti (Mercer), moved to adjourn. The motion was duly seconded. The motion carried.

Submitted by:

Edward Richardson

Executive Director



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Hard copies of the Member Benefits Directory can also be ordered for your local association by calling 609-599-4561, ext. 2222.

## HELP GROW THE NJEA MEMBER DISCOUNT PROGRAM

NJEA has over 300 business partners who offer all NJEA members a discount or enhanced service that is superior to what is offered to the general public. We always welcome more! You can help us grow the NJEA Member Discount Program and put more savings in your pocket by inviting local businesses that you frequent to join our program. Members and their family members who own their own businesses are also welcome to join the program. We would love to help educators support other educator-owned businesses.

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If you are planning a trip and/or car rental over the upcoming holidays or spring break, be sure to go to [memberbenefits.njea.org/travel](http://memberbenefits.njea.org/travel). Local Hospitality\* will be refunding one member's travel expenses between now and March 31, 2020.

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## STAFF NEWS

## HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA congratulates **ELIZABETH DEBARR** on her promotion to administrative assistant for media relations in the Communications Division and the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, effective Dec. 1. DeBarr was initially employed by NJEA in October 2004 as a secretary in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She transferred

to the Communications Division in February 2008, where she had primary responsibilities working with public relations staff and with "Classroom Close-up NJ." Prior to joining NJEA staff, DeBarr was a registrar at the New Jersey School Boards Association. DeBarr was an NJEA member from 1995 to 2000 when she served as a paraprofessional in the North Hanover Township School District. She holds a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University. DeBarr lives in Burlington Township.



NJEA welcomed **MAURICE KOFFMAN** to NJEA staff on Dec. 2 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 29 office, which serves the association's higher education members. For 13 years, Koffman was a full-time release president of the Michigan State University Administrative Professionals Association (MSU APA), representing 2,900 degreed professionals. He

was an information technology professional at MSU. During his time at there, Koffman was the chief negotiator and contract administrator for a multiyear higher education collective bargaining agreement and co-chair of a joint wage and health care agreement representing 5,400 members in eight separate unions. Koffman served as a member of the Michigan Education Association Board of Directors and Executive Committee, strongly advocating for higher ed members across Michigan. Koffman also served as a member of the NEA Executive Committee. He holds a bachelor's degree in international relations and economics and a Juris Doctor in public law and regulations from Michigan State University. Koffman lives in New York City with his partner, Millie.



NJEA welcomed **JORGE SALGADO** to NJEA staff as the senior systems administrator in NJEA's Information Systems department on Nov. 18. His decades of information technology (IT) experience includes system administration, engineering and architecture. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Salgado designed and maintained cloud and on-premise systems infrastructure at

Continuum Health Alliance. For 15 years, he was a Microsoft trainer at Executrain, a global network of training centers for IT professionals. In December 2009, Salgado published an article titled "Multisession Workstations" in the internationally respected *Linux Journal* magazine. Salgado earned a bachelor's degree in Mechanical/Electrical Engineering from Monterrey Institute of Technology in Mexico City, Mexico. He was later an associate professor at the school for three years. Salgado lives in Marlton with his three daughters, Natalia, Gabriela, and Karime.



NJEA congratulates **DAWN PISAURO** on her promotion to program assistant in NJEA Legal Services and Member Rights, where she previously served as a secretary, effective October 2019. Pisauro initially joined NJEA staff in September 2006 as an office assistant in the Region 29 UniServ regional office, which serves NJEA's higher education

members. In February 2009, Pisauro was promoted to senior clerk for Member Rights/Legal Services in the NJEA Executive Office. In August 2017, Pisauro was promoted to secretary for Member Rights/Legal Services in the NJEA Executive Office.



NJEA welcomed **JERELL BLAKELEY** to NJEA staff as an associate director in the Government Relations Division on Dec. 2. Blakeley most recently worked as the chief of outreach and constituent relations for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Prior to that, he worked as a part-time career counselor at the Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations, as a senior campaign organizer for the New Jersey Work Environment Council's Healthy Schools Now program,

and as an educator in the Trenton and Camden public school districts. He was also a part-time NJEA organizational development consultant. Blakeley is a councilman-at-large in the city of Trenton, the vice chairman of the Mercer County Board of Social Services and an adjunct professor at the Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations. He received his bachelor's degree in history with a minor in political science from Howard University. He earned a master's degree in the social and philosophical foundations of education from the Graduate School of Education at Rutgers University-New Brunswick, as a Martin-Eagleton Fellow. Blakeley lives in Trenton.

# JANUARY & beyond

for more information go to [NJEA.org](http://NJEA.org)

**1/3**

Friday

Executive Committee and County Presidents' Council meetings

**1/4**

Saturday

Delegate Assembly

**1/10-11**

Fri. & Sat.

Equity Alliance Conference

**1/24-25**

Fri. & Sat.

Winter Leadership-South

**1/31-2/2**

Fri. to Sun.

ESP Conference

**2/12**

Wednesday

Executive Committee meeting

**2/21-22**

Fri. & Sat.

Winter Leadership-North

**3/6-7**

Fri. & Sat.

Winter Leadership-North

**3/27**

Friday

Executive Committee and County Presidents' Council meetings

**3/28**

Saturday

Delegate Assembly

## deadlines

**1/3** Educational Support Professionals Conference  
Event date: Jan. 31-Feb. 2

**1/10** Winter Leadership Conference-North  
Event date: Feb. 21-22

**1/24** Winter Leadership Conference-Central  
Event date: March 6-7



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# HOW TO WRITE FOR THE NJEA REVIEW

## WHAT CAN I SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION?

**FEATURE ARTICLE**—The *Review* feature articles address areas of interest to NJEA members. This is an opportunity to help your colleagues improve their skills by describing a successful approach or strategy. A feature article should range between 1,400 and 2,000 words. Remember to use subheads to break up sections; consider listing resources or tips as a separate sidebar.

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**—Respond to content that has appeared in the *Review* by submitting a letter to the editor, maximum 250 words. A letter/email must be received by the 10th of the month in order for it to appear in the subsequent issue (that is, Sept. 10 for the October *Review*).

**SELFIE OF THE MONTH**—Attending a local, county or state association event? Snap a quick selfie with your colleagues at a meeting, training, rally, conference, etc. and submit it to [njeareview@njea.org](mailto:njeareview@njea.org). One selfie will be featured in “The Advocate” column each month. Be sure to include the names of the members who appear in the photo and a brief description of the event where it was taken.

**QUICK TIP**—Do you have a great idea regarding classroom management? A better way to complete a mundane task? A favorite website? An app you and your students can’t live without? The *Review*’s “Bulletin Board” column includes quick tips from experts like you. Submissions should be 250 words or less.

**SPEAK OUT**—This occasional column lets members opine about a hot topic in education. If you have strong feelings about a current issue that would be of interest to other members, speak out in an essay of 500 words or less.

**PROUD MOMENTS**—Has your local association used PRIDE funds to promote our great public schools? Send a brief description and your best photo to [ProudMoments@njea.org](mailto:ProudMoments@njea.org).

**TOOLBOX**—If you have a great way to incorporate technology to boost student learning, consider writing about it in the “Toolbox” column. Share your expertise in 1,000 words or less.

**SUBMITTING CONTENT**—Email submissions to [njeareview@njea.org](mailto:njeareview@njea.org). Be sure to include your name and contact information, the name of your district and what you do there, the name of your local association, as well as the name and contact information of your local association president. Submissions for the Proud Moments page can be sent to [proudmoments@njea.org](mailto:proudmoments@njea.org).



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# Whatever happened to 30 under 30?

BY PATRICK RUMAKER, NJEA REVIEW EDITOR

It seemed like a simple enough idea: find 30 NJEA members under 30 years old who are movers and shakers among their colleagues or in their communities, then honor their work in the *NJEA Review*.

The under-30-year-old members might have already been holding office in their local or county associations or were elected school board members in their home communities. They might have already been named a school's teacher or educational support professional (ESP) of the year in their districts. Maybe they led an initiative related to immigration, racial and economic justice, LGBTQ+ inclusion, gender equity or anti-bullying.

A call for nominations of accomplished younger members first appeared in the December 2017 *Review*. The call for nominations also appeared on the NJEA website and was shared on NJEA's social media properties. It was shared by word-of-mouth and email through NJEA member groups such as the NJEA Early Career Network.

With 200,000 members, we believed it wouldn't be too hard to gather a sizable—and diverse—class of nominees for the NJEA Membership Committee to consider. The committee reviewed the nominations with the information it had before it. In addition to nominees' names and accomplishments, the committee knew the local and county associations to which they belonged to ensure geographic diversity—northern, central, and southern New Jersey. But the committee did not know the race or ethnicity of the nominees.

Each of the 30 selected were notified of their achievement and were asked to submit a photograph. As the editor of the *Review*, I received the photographs for publication.

With 30 accomplished members' faces staring back at me from my computer screen, it appeared that the group was nearly all white. Using our membership database, which has an

optional field in which members can identify their ethnicity—something the Membership Committee did not have access to in the selection process—I discovered that 27 of the 30 winners self-identified as Caucasian. One of the winners self-identified as a Hispanic male and two self-identified as Hispanic females.

The member who had initiated the 30-under-30 project and I attempted to expand the list to 40-under-30. We took a second look at the list of nominees who weren't selected and discovered a lack of diversity existed there as well. We explained the reason for the publication delay to the original 30 winners and re-opened nominations with intentional invitations through NJEA committees and conferences that focus on racial, educational and social justice. We received few new nominations.

## INTENTIONS AND IMPACT

No one involved in the 30-under-30 project intended for the process to identify so few members of color. But good intentions do not absolve us from the impact of the systems in which we are working. Rather, the process is a call to action to direct our intentions toward challenging those systems and both the intentional and unintentional biases they perpetuate.

It was a difficult and unpopular decision for me not to publish the 30-under-30 column. All of the persons nominated, and the 30 ultimately selected, have worked hard for their profession, their schools and their communities. But the message to members of color, who would not have seen themselves reflected among those featured, would have been "There is no a place for you here." The good intentions of the project did not, in my mind, outweigh impact of the outcome.

In last month's *Review*, NJEA Executive Director Steve Swetsky reflected on his conversations with members.

“

***No one involved in the 30-under-30 project intended for the process to identify so few members of color. But good intentions do not absolve us from the impact of the systems in which we are working.***

"Members of color will speak highly of NJEA in the abstract, but when you ask about their personal experiences either in their locals or in looking at the *NJEA Review* or in so much else that NJEA does, they're looking and not seeing themselves," he said. "We are getting better, but we have a long way to go."

Member and staff groups have formed and been supported by NJEA leadership to engage in conversations on the realities of being a member of color. It is an ongoing and sometimes uncomfortable conversation, but a vital one if NJEA is to be a genuine force for social justice, education justice and student success. It's not about political correctness, it's about representing the values and voices of all NJEA members.

What do you think? What is your experience as a member around the issues raised here? Write and let me know at [NJEAREview@njea.org](mailto:NJEAREview@njea.org). 📧

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Conference registrar:

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## Conference Schedule:

**7:30 - 9:00 a.m.**

Registration and  
Continental Breakfast

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Welcome and Keynote  
Presentation

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**12:15 - 1:00 p.m.**

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Breakout Session II



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