

REVIEW

APRIL 2020
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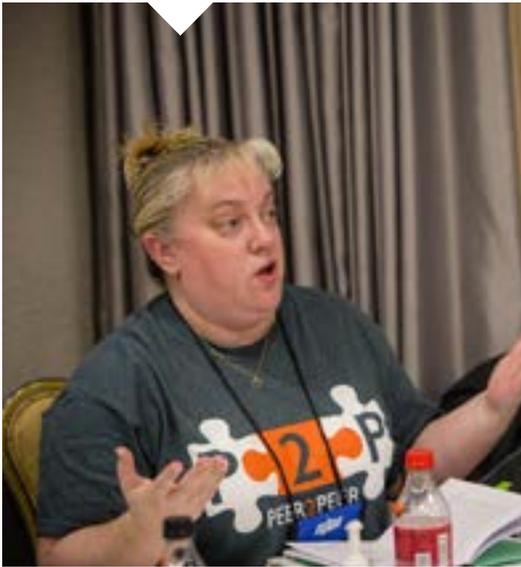
Speech-Language Pathology

I AM NJEA

Lucille McSeed, a building rep and paraprofessional at Lincoln Avenue School in Orange, discusses her experience as an NJEA member during a members of color conversation at Montclair High School in Essex County.



Kerri Ireland, first vice president for the Somerville Education Association, shares a story during the workshop X's and O's for Local Leaders at the NJEA Winter Leadership Conference-Central on March 6.



Members of the Toms River School Transportation Association at NJEA Winter Leadership Conference-Central on March 6. From left: Nicholas Reed, Vice President Lauren DiRienzo-Archer, Catherine Burgess, Secretary Jennifer Paulino, and President Debra Bella.

Members of the Toms River School Transportation Association at NJEA Winter Leadership Conference Central on March 6. From left: John Maher, Negotiations Chair Bonita McBride, President Ricardo Diaz, and Building Rep Marie Moretti.



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



20 | BLACK LIVES MATTER

Hackensack Education Association's Pride in Public Education program held an intergenerational forum with students, educators and community members. It was a powerful evening of courageous conversations that focused on the impact that racial bias has on education.

BY RAQUEL JAMES-GOODMAN



24 | MINDFULNESS IS A WAY OF LIFE

Mindfulness has become the latest buzzword, a status that puts this valuable life skill at risk of being dismissed. Mindfulness is not a class period, but a way of living that can increase focus and concentration and promote a sense of calm that decreases stress and anxiety, improves impulse control, enhances self-awareness, helps children and teenagers respond to difficult emotions, increases empathy and understanding of others, and develops natural conflict resolution skills.

BY JENNIFER CAPUTO

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30 | FOODCORPS

Working with the nonprofit organization, FoodCorps, the students and staff at Bankbridge School in Gloucester County transformed a rarely used courtyard into a vegetable garden that enables children to appreciate what it takes to produce food and helps them to forget about any other worries and be one with nature.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



34 | READ ACROSS NEW JERSEY

Read Across New Jersey is an annual celebration of reading that culminates on March 2, the birthday of prolific children's book author Theodor Seuss Geisel, also known as Dr. Seuss. Dozens of schools sent in photos from their celebrations. A selection of the photos is found here. Many more can be found online at njea.org/ranj.

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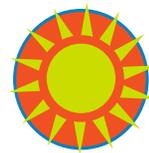
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The number of local associations that have successfully negotiated a starting salary of \$60,000 as their bachelor's degree minimum in their current ratified contracts.

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On the cover



Hackensack Education Association member Raquel James-Goodman used an NJEA Pride in Public Education Grant to fund an event for Black Lives Matter at Schools Week in Hackensack. With her in the cover photo are students who participated in an evening panel discussion. See Page 20.

PHOTO BY
KATHRYN COULIBALY



GOOD NEWS

Reading scores among New Jersey fourth and eighth graders are the best in the nation.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. 2017 NAEP Reading: Nation's Report Card. April 2018

REVIEW



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



WORKING TOGETHER TO BENEFIT EVERYONE

I have had the privilege of speaking to thousands of educators over the course of my career in public education and the one overriding characteristic I have observed in each of them is a desire to help others. That's the only way to explain the countless hours school employees volunteer to benefit their students, their schools, and their communities. When there has been a challenge, NJEA members have been eager to step in and help.

I observed that firsthand with the response to Superstorm Sandy and the way our members jumped in to help displaced students, rebuild communities and support their colleagues who had lost almost everything.

We are currently confronting a new challenge, but I know that same spirit of community will see us through. It seems counter-intuitive that the best way we can help each other is primarily by isolating ourselves, but the seriousness of COVID-19 (coronavirus) and the potential impact on the most vulnerable, in particular, necessitate this.

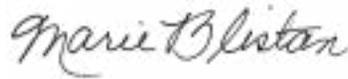
I also know that our members are deeply concerned about the health and well-being of their students. From the governor's office and

Legislature to local boards of education and administration, our leaders have a partner in NJEA. Without a doubt, our organization will do what we can to find ways to support our communities, our students, and each other.

As educators, we have always valued collaboration and have worked together to solve problems, no matter the size. I am confident that we will weather this challenge the same way we always have: by caring for each other, considering the best interests of everyone involved, and always prioritizing the best interests of our students.

I hope that this issue of the magazine, as always, provides you with information, resources, and a continued sense of community with your colleagues in public education.

Thank you for all that you do to keep students healthy and safe.




NJEA President Marie Blistan with the association's Teacher Leader Consultants last September. From left: Anna Muessig, Lizandaa Alburg, Christine Candarella, Blistan, Dawn Howlen, and Johanna Amaro. The Teacher Leader Academy held its first session in January. See Page 17 for more information.

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: Montclair President Petal Robinson & Montclair EA were thrilled to have NEA Vice President Becky Pringle visit their district to see firsthand the exemplary work that our members are doing with restorative justice! Thank you, Petal and members, for another opportunity to share your work and spotlight the difference it makes with our students and community!

NJEA President Marie Blistan commented on a post by Merwyn Scott, the NEA Director for Community Advocacy and Partnership Engagement (CAPE), when NEA Vice President Becky Pringle visited the Montclair Education Association on March 5. The Montclair Education Association (MEA) won a Center for Social Justice CAPE Grant to focus on restorative justice work. Pringle met with MEA and NJEA leadership, members, students, parents, community leaders, elected officials, the local newspaper editorial board, and the superintendent of Montclair schools.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerForNJEA: HUGE! We have the Senate President on board with Chapter 78 relief!

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller shared an article from nj.com (the website of the *Star-Ledger*) titled "NJEA and Sweeney announce plan to cut \$1B in health care costs for teachers, districts." The article notes that officials praised the deal for addressing reduced costs for taxpayers and lower premiums for public school employees. For more information see Page 14 and visit njea.org.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: We now face unprecedented times in uncharted waters, but I will take solace in the fact that we face them together—Union Strong. The personal and professional responsibilities that we must all deal with for the foreseeable future will tax many of us in difficult ways, but we have an unbreakable community of dedicated and compassionate leaders, staff, and members that will be there to support one another in any way possible...

This is an abbreviated version of a longer Facebook post that NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty posted on March 15 as schools statewide closed in response to COVID-19. The full post included resources such as AID-NJEA and his own phone number for members who need someone to talk to. For more information, visit njea.org/covid-19.

KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

GIVE THE GIFT OF BELONGING!

Purchase NJREA membership for a retiree-to-be

Do you know an NJEA member who is retired or about to retire? The move to retirement can be an exciting time, but it's even better when the New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) has your back.

NJREA is a diverse, vibrant organization that helps retirees transition to an exciting time in their lives. From social events and activities to information and resources and money-saving opportunities and travel discounts, NJREA membership is an essential tool to make the most from retirement.

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 maintain your membership with NJEA, NEA-Retired, and your County Retired EA (this 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 award-winning *NJREA Newsletter*, a quarterly publication 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, and all NEA retiree publications. In addition, njea.org/njrea has a vast array of resources, but you must be a member to log in.

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% 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.
- 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 out of your membership.

Mark a special occasion

NJREA dues varies by county, as each county association sets its rate; however, the average annual dues for a professional is \$100 or less.

For more information, or to purchase a membership as a retirement gift, Mother's or Father's Day present, or just because, contact the NJEA Membership Division at 609-599-4561 ext. 4123

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE: NOMINATE AN OUTSTANDING N.J. PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE

Since 1984, NJEA has presented Awards for Excellence at the NJEA Convention to New Jersey public school graduates who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in their fields of expertise. Awardees have come from all fields including—but not limited to—education, entertainment, government, media, and the fine arts.

To be eligible, the nominees must have graduated from a New Jersey public high school, be well-known, considered highly successful in their fields, and have a pro-union point of view.

If you would like to make an Awards for Excellence nomination, send the information described below to Janet L. Royal at jroyal@njea.org by April 24, 2020. You can also mail the nomination to Janet Royal, NJEA Awards for Excellence, PO Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211.

Include the nominee's name, mailing address, phone number, public high school from which he or she graduated, and a brief description of his or her achievement

Also include your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

Nominations received after the Apr 24. deadline will be considered for subsequent conventions.

READ THE NEA DIRECTORS NEWSLETTER

NJEA members are represented at the National Education Association (NEA) by two groups of members: those who are elected as delegates to the annual NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) and those who are elected to a seat on the NEA Board of Directors. The NEA Board of Directors is responsible for setting general policies between the annual NEA RA meetings.

The board also produces a newsletter following many of its meetings that can be downloaded at njea.org/neadirectorsnews.

The board meets four times per year and at other times it deems necessary to conduct association business. The board consists of one director from each state affiliate, at-large directors to meet representational guarantees and representatives for students and retired members. Each state is entitled to an additional director per 20,000 active and life members.

NJEA has nine state directors on the board who are elected by the NJEA Delegate Assembly for three-year terms. Two additional NJEA members currently sit on the board who were elected at the NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA): one representing ESP, one representing preservice members. Finally, one of the NEA Executive Committee members, also elected at the NEA RA, is an NJEA member.

The names of NJEA's NEA Directors can be found on Page 6 of every *NJEA Review* in the left-hand sidebar.

IS YOUR DISTRICT PROVIDING REQUIRED IN-SERVICE TRAINING?

Federal special education regulations

New Jersey districts receive some of their special education funding through Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B grants. The amount of this revenue may be found in district user-friendly budgets. To receive these funds, districts must provide assurance that they have a special education plan in place that addresses about two dozen requirements.

Questions to consider:

If your answers to these questions give you pause, consider what steps your local association could take to influence professional development in your district.

- How much money is your district receiving in I.D.E.A. Part B funds?
- Have you seen your district's special education plan?
- Are the in-service needs of paraprofessionals, general and special educators and related service providers addressed in the plan?
 - If so, how are those needs being met?
 - Are all staff receiving professional development?
- Do your district professional learning activities include:
 - Content knowledge?
 - Collaborative skills?
 - Behavioral intervention strategies?
 - Discussion about how new practices and programs will be implemented?
- Are your district professional learning activities of high quality?
- Is professional development embedded in the work day?
- Does your local association collaborate with the district about the professional learning needs of your members?
- Is professional development addressed in your local collective bargaining agreement?

NJEA promotes quality, collaborative professional learning experiences for our members, not simply a series of videos to be viewed independently. Think about using the regulatory language to add or enhance language in your contract. Or use it more broadly to create a persuasive argument for authentic, relevant professional learning for your members.

Remember, your district is obligated to meet these requirements when they accept the IDEA funds.

A useful NJEA publication that answers many questions about NJ special education regulations may be found here: njea.org/specialedregs. The entire NJ special education code may be accessed at state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf.

For additional questions, email Camy Kobylinski, associate director for NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues, at ckobylinski@njea.org.

SELFIE OF THE MONTH



Members of the Irvington Education Association (IEA) in Essex County held a rally in advance of a negotiations mediation session on Feb. 18 carrying signs reading, among other sentiments, "A contract is respect." IEA members have been working without a contract since June 30, 2019. While the mediation session did not yield at settlement, some progress was made. The association and board have entered fact-finding—the next stage of negotiations.

Participating in a local, county or state meeting or other association activity? Staffing a PRIDE event? Send your selfies to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to identify where the picture was taken and the members who appear in the photo.

CLEARING THE RECORD

Two photos appearing in the March *NJEA Review* had caption errors. A photo on Page 3 misidentified a member. A photo in the NJREA column had a caption that read “Need caption.” Both photos appear below, with their corrected captions. The *Review* editor apologizes for the errors.



The NJEA Convention Committee promotes the convention all year long, including staffing a table at the NJEA ESP Conference, Jan. 31-Feb. 2. From left are Convention Committee members Patrick Frain, Tonya Scott-Cole and Sue Davis, who serves as the chair of the committee.



At the NJREA Spring Luncheon in April 2019, members Barbara Toczko (l) and Doriann Dodulik-Swern show off a polo shirt that sports the NJREA 100th anniversary logo.

BOOK YOUR HOTEL ROOM TODAY FOR THE 2020 NJEA CONVENTION

Convention scheduled for Nov. 5 and 6

Want to reserve a room in Atlantic City for the NJEA Convention at a great rate? These eight hotels are offering member-only rates to help you save money while you enjoy the convenience of being close to everything the NJEA Convention has to offer and your evening free to enjoy what Atlantic City has to offer.

- Bally's
- Borgata
- Caesars
- Golden Nugget
- Hard Rock
- Harrah's
- Resorts
- Tropicana

Shuttle service will be available to and from the convention center from each of these hotels and throughout the city in the evening.

Go to njeaconvention.org/hotels to check out the discount rates and to make your reservations.

You'll need to log in as a member to continue. Use your member PIN (found on your membership card) or the email address you've previously given NJEA and your password (the last four digits of your Social Security number, unless you've changed your password). Guaranteed shuttle service will be available to these hotels only.

“NJEA SUPPORT WAS INVALUABLE”

HOW THE NJEA FOUGHT (AND FOUGHT, AND FOUGHT) FOR PAULA MELNYK’S TENURE RIGHTS

BY HOP T. WECHSLER, ESQ.

Under the New Jersey Tenure Act, teaching staff members are entitled to tenure if they work in a position for which a teaching certificate is required, they hold the appropriate certificate for the position, they have served the requisite time period, and—for teaching staff members hired on or after the TEACHNJ Act took effect on Aug. 6, 2012 only—they met mentoring and evaluation requirements.

Delsea Education Association member Paula Melnyk fulfilled all of these requirements with respect to her part-time special education English teacher position in the Delsea Regional High School Board of Education’s “Bookbinders” alternative school program. The Bookbinders program was offered to special education students after school hours and during evenings to fulfill needs that could not be met during the regular day’s instruction. The Delsea Board removed Melnyk from the program in June 2015 and replaced her with a nontenured teacher—plainly violating the Tenure Act, which states that tenured teachers “shall not be dismissed or reduced in compensation” unless tenure charges are successfully brought.

NJEA supported Melnyk’s tenure right claim to the Bookbinders position, assigning her a network attorney who filed a petition of appeal with then-Commissioner of Education Kimberley Harrington in August 2015. The Delsea Board’s defense? Melnyk was already a tenured full-time special education English teacher in the general education program; therefore, the board claimed, Melnyk’s Bookbinders position was “extracurricular.”

An administrative law judge (ALJ) agreed with the board, ruling in a July 2017 initial decision that, even though Melnyk fulfilled all Tenure Act criteria with respect to the Bookbinders position, the position was “extracurricular” because it was outside Melnyk’s regular duties, did not require

an additional certificate, and because Melnyk was paid a separate stipend for her position. Commissioner Harrington then adopted the ALJ’s initial decision as the agency’s final decision in October 2017, dismissing Melnyk’s petition of appeal while conceding that, had Melnyk exclusively taught in the Bookbinders position, she would have accrued tenure in the position under the Tenure Act.

Convinced that both the ALJ and commissioner were wrong, NJEA supported Melnyk’s appeal to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey. Melnyk’s NJEA network attorney, Hop T. Wechsler of Selikoff & Cohen, P.A., argued that tenure is a statutory, not a contractual, matter, and that if Melnyk fulfilled the Tenure Act criteria with respect to the Bookbinders position, she was tenured in the position.

Nonetheless, the Appellate Division ruled against Melnyk, determining that the commissioner’s interpretation of the Tenure Act was entitled to deference and affirming ALJ’s the decision in December 2018.

“When I was told the Appellate Division ruled against me, I just assumed it was over,” Melnyk recalled.

But it wasn’t. NJEA persisted, supporting the filing of a petition for certification with the Supreme Court of New Jersey on behalf of Melnyk.

“I was quite surprised and very pleased that NJEA appealed my case to the highest court in the state,” Melnyk noted. “It validated my contribution to my students.”

The odds were long, though, as during the court’s previous term, only 99 petitions for certification were granted out of more than 1,200 petitions filed.

For Paula Melnyk, the fourth time was the charm. The Supreme Court granted certification. Wechsler argued Melnyk’s case before the court, and on Jan. 30, 2020, the court issued a unanimous decision in Melnyk’s favor.

The court found that Melnyk’s Bookbinders

“

Knowing I had the whole NJEA force behind me gave me the ability to persevere and go in and do my job every day.

position was “eligible for tenure separate and distinct from any considerations of tenure eligibility” as to her full-time general education position, and it rejected the characterization of her Bookbinders position as “extracurricular.” In other words, Melnyk could have, and did have, tenure rights to two different teaching positions at the same time. The court remanded the case to the commissioner to calculate Melnyk’s damages.

NJEA fought (and fought, and fought) on Melnyk’s behalf, supporting her tenure rights claim for four-and-a-half years with repeated appeals filed by her NJEA network attorney, all the way to the Supreme Court.

“We’re extremely pleased with the result in this case,” noted NJEA Managing Attorney Aileen O’Driscoll. “We believe Ms. Melnyk’s tenure rights were vindicated, and the decision provides strong precedent for all our members.”

Thanks to NJEA’s persistence, *Melnyk v. Board of Education of Delsea Regional High School District* is now a published, precedential decision that will benefit current and future NJEA members as well as Melnyk herself. In fact, the commissioner has already cited Melnyk in a February 2020 decision recognizing a Somerville Education Association member’s tenure rights claim.

“NJEA support was invaluable,” noted Melnyk. “I never would have been able to afford an attorney to take my case up to the Supreme Court on my own. I never would have been brave enough, quite honestly, for fear of retribution. Knowing I had the whole NJEA force behind me gave me the ability to persevere and go in and do my job every day.” 🏠

Hop T. Wechsler is an attorney with Selikoff & Cohen, P.A. in Mount Laurel. Wechsler is one of NJEA’s network attorneys

COOL STUFF



ESSAY CONTEST OFFERS STUDENTS CHANCE WIN A RIDE IN A HOT AIR BALLOON AT SCHOOL AND FESTIVAL

Free festival tickets available for educators

The New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning and PNC Bank invite New Jersey students in grades 2 through 12 to take part in the 17th annual PNC Bank American Patriot Essay Contest by writing a short essay on the topic “What the American Flag Means to Me.”

The Grand Prize winner will receive the opportunity to take two rides in a hot air balloon. The first is a tethered ride in a gigantic, 75-foot-tall hot air balloon in front of their classmates at their school in June. The second will be a ride in one of the 100 hot air balloons at this year’s 38th annual New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning in Association with PNC Bank July 24–26, 2020 at Solberg Airport in Readington.

The Festival VIP Grand Prize package includes a hot air balloon ride for two, four Blue Sky Club VIP tickets, and the opportunity to meet one of this year’s concert headliners, which in the past have included Disney teen sensations such as the Jonas Brothers and Demi Lovato.

This year’s winning student’s immediate classmates will each receive one complimentary general admission ticket to the festival. Second-place and third-place prizes consisting of festival admission and merchandise will be also awarded. The winning student’s teacher and school principal will each receive two Blue Sky Club VIP tickets.

All teachers in the state who submit a group of 15 essays or more on behalf of their students will receive two free general admission tickets to the festival regardless of whether one of their students submits the winning essay.

Submitted essays must be 100 words or less. They will be judged by a panel of representatives from PNC Bank and the balloon festival. Winning essays will be selected based on creativity, poignancy and clarity with consideration given to the grade level of the contestant. Contestants are not required to be U.S. citizens.

How to enter

Entries should be mailed to Essay Judges, New Jersey Lottery Festival of Ballooning, 363 Route 46 West, Suite 200, Fairfield, NJ, 07004, or emailed to pncessay@balloonfestival.com. Entries should include the student’s name, home or school address, home or school telephone number, grade, age, school name and the name of their teacher. The deadline to enter is May 1, 2020.

Additional information may be found at balloonfestival.com/pncessay.



STUTTERING AWARENESS WEEK IS MAY 11-17

Stuttering is a communication disorder in which the flow of speech is broken by repetitions (li-li-like this), prolongations (lllllike this), or abnormal stoppages (no sound) of sounds and syllables. There may also be unusual facial and body movements associated with the effort to speak. Stuttering is also referred to as stammering.

More than 70 million people worldwide stutter. In the U.S., that’s over 3 million Americans who stutter. Approximately 5 percent of all children go through a period of stuttering that lasts six months or more. Three-quarters of those will recover by late childhood, leaving about 1 percent with a long-term problem. The best prevention tool is early intervention.

Stuttering affects four times as many males as females.

The Stuttering Foundation provides free online resources, services and support to those who stutter and their families, as well as support for research into the causes of stuttering. Visit stutteringhelp.org for more, including these eight tips for school employees:

1. Don’t tell the student “slow down” or “just relax.”
2. Don’t complete words for the student or talk for him or her.
3. Help all members of the class learn to take turns talking and listening. All students—and especially those who stutter—find it much easier to talk when there are few interruptions and they have the listener’s attention.
4. Expect the same quality and quantity of work from the student who stutters as the one who doesn’t.
5. Speak with the student in an unhurried way, pausing frequently.
6. Convey that you are listening to the content of the message, not how it is said.
7. Have a one-on-one conversation with the student who stutters about needed accommodations in the classroom. Respect the student’s needs, but do not be enabling.
8. Don’t make stuttering something to be ashamed of. Talk about stuttering just like any other matter.

Compiled by Lisa Scott, Ph.D., The Florida State University

QUICK TIP



GET YOUR STUDENTS EXCITED ABOUT ECONOMICS, INVESTING AND PERSONAL FINANCE THROUGH THE STOCK MARKET GAME.

The Stock Market Game program is an online simulation of the global capital markets that engages students grades 4-12 in the world of economics, investing, and personal finance, and prepares them for financially independent futures. More than 600,000 students take part every school year across the U.S. The Stock Market Game has reached 18 million students since its inception in 1977.

In 2019, for the second time, Orange Preparatory Academy (OPA) teacher Glenn Gamble's students pulled top honors in competition, which is sponsored by the SIFMA Foundation. The fall competitive round started Sept. 23 and ended Dec. 13. All teams were allocated \$100,000 to invest in stock, bonds or mutual funds. OPA Teams were instructed to invest in the stock of at least ten companies that match their interest and/or hobbies. The winners will be recognized at a luncheon for all Northern New Jersey winners in May 2020. During the recognition ceremony, OPA will be presented another banner to be displayed in the school.

The fall high competition had 703 teams. Seventeen of Gamble's teams were in the Top 100. This year, for the first time, the high school division placed first and second. First Place winner Radre Cousin grew his portfolio by 29%, or 23% above the S&P 500 Growth Index. Second Place winner Darwin Sinchi grew his portfolio by 27%, or 21% above the S&P 500 Growth Index.



High school competition first place winner Radre Cousins, OPA teacher Glenn Gamble and second place winner Darwin Sinchi.

For the second time, an OPA eighth-grader earned a top honor. Of the 248 teams in the middle school division Northern New Jersey Fall Competition, John Seide's portfolio placed third with earnings of 19.8% or 14% above the S&P 500 Growth Index. In the spring 2019 competition OPA eighth-graders won first and second place.

To learn more about the Stock Market Game and how your students may participate, visit stockmarketgame.org.



HAVE A QUICK TIP OF YOUR OWN?

Send it to NJEAReview@njea.org. Tips need not be limited to classroom teachers. If you have tips for the office, the cafeteria, building and grounds work, or any way to make life better for you and your colleagues, share the wealth.

NJEA Report

NJEA, Sweeney announce landmark agreement on Ch. 78 relief, ESP Job Justice



NJEA President Marie Blistan and Senate President Steve Sweeney at a Statehouse press conference announcing an agreement on Ch. 78 relief and ESP Job Justice

AGREEMENT PROVIDES SIGNIFICANT RELIEF TO EDUCATORS, SAVINGS TO EMPLOYERS

NJEA President Marie Blistan and New Jersey Senate President Steve Sweeney announced a landmark agreement providing NJEA members with long-sought relief from Ch. 78 while also lowering costs for local education employers and the state at a March 9 press conference. Ch. 78, a pension and health insurance law passed in 2011, imposed unsustainable and ever-growing health care costs on educators.

The agreement includes the creation of a new health insurance plan, called the New Jersey Educators Plan, that will be offered at a much lower premium cost than most current plans available under Ch. 78. Final details of that plan were not available as of press time. Check njea.org for updates.

Additionally, that premium will be based on a percentage of salary, unlike Ch. 78 which required payment based on a percentage of the health insurance premium. That change will relieve members from the worry, too often borne out in recent years, that premium increases will grow more quickly than salary increases, leading to lower take-home pay year after year.

The agreement is the result of sustained and

effective member organizing. NJEA members have been working on a sustained campaign to win Ch. 78 relief for nearly two years, pushing the issue to the forefront of the agenda in Trenton. As part of that campaign, NJEA members also advocated for two job justice bills that provide expanded due process and contract protection rights to New Jersey's educational support professionals (ESPs). Blistan and Sweeney also pledged today to work together to move those bills along with Ch. 78 relief.

"This is the culmination of a very long process," said NJEA President Marie Blistan. "It was not easy, but the work we have done together is a major victory for both our members and all the other taxpayers of New Jersey.

As of the day the NJEA Review went to press, March 13, a bill enacting the agreement was still being drafted, but with a goal to implement the agreement by July 1, the legislation is expected to move swiftly.

Once a draft of the legislation is available, NJEA leaders and staff will examine it carefully to ensure it matches the agreement struck by NJEA and Sweeney. After the resulting legislation is adopted and signed by the governor, the SEHBP Plan Design Committee will develop, consider and approve the health care plans enabled by the new

law. An open enrollment period will follow for public school employees to choose among the insurance options.

As the *Review* went to press, the Senate introduced its Ch. 78 relief bill, S-2271. Visit njea.org for details.

JOB JUSTICE FOR ESPs

Along with coming to an agreement on Ch. 78 relief, Sweeney has committed to passing two job justice bills that protect the jobs of ESPs. Those bills provide long-overdue fairness to the many hard-working professionals who help make our schools the best in the nation.

The multiple pieces of legislation will provide just-cause arbitration rights to educational support professionals (ESP) and prevent subcontracting of ESP positions during an active collective bargaining agreement.

Legislation to address privatization of ESP jobs will prohibit employers from entering into a subcontracting agreement that affects the employment of those covered by an unexpired collective bargaining agreement. Once a collective bargaining agreement expires, an employer would be permitted to enter into a subcontracting agreement only if the employer provides written notice to the local associations in each collective bargaining unit and to the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission at least 90 days prior to any effort to seek a subcontracting agreement.

Under the legislation, school boards will be required to give local associations the opportunity to meet and discuss the decision to subcontract and negotiate over its impact. Each employee replaced or displaced because of a subcontracting agreement would retain all previously acquired seniority and would have recall rights if the subcontracting terminates.

Legislation to provide or expand due-process for ESPs will extend to nonteaching school employees the right to submit to binding arbitration any dispute regarding whether there is just cause for a disciplinary action up to and including the lack of continuation of employment.

NJEA cancels events, meetings, announces other COVID-19 prevention measures

The Review went to press on March 16. For updates, visit njea.org/covid-19.

The health and safety of NJEA's members, our students and our staff are paramount to our union. The increasingly rapid spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) requires a proactive approach to prevention so that we can continue the important work of representing and advocating for NJEA members while protecting the welfare of those we encounter. NJEA is taking strong measures to keep everyone safer during this pandemic.

The most effective way to do so is through the practice of "social distancing." Essentially, this means minimizing contact with others, particularly in large groups and/or confined spaces. NJEA's COVID-19 response is built on that strategy.

LIMITED ACCESS TO NJEA FACILITIES

During this time, no non-staff groups or individuals will be invited to NJEA facilities, either in the Trenton headquarters or regional offices. The number of staff reporting to NJEA facilities for work will be limited in order to further limit the potential for any staff member to come into contact with an infected individual. Most NJEA staff will work remotely.

Some staff will continue to report to NJEA facilities to carry out essential functions that cannot be handled remotely, but other staff have been asked to stay away from the buildings, and guests will not be admitted. That is for the safety

of our staff as well as those who might visit and is necessary to reduce the chance of COVID-19 transmission. If you planned to visit an NJEA office or NJEA headquarters for any reason, please call the office you intended to visit to learn how to get in touch with NJEA staff to help you remotely.

Most meetings, conferences, events will be moved online, cancelled or postponed.

Effective immediately, and through at least April 19, NJEA is canceling, postponing or re-formatting most NJEA-sponsored meetings, conferences and other events. That date may be reviewed or extended based on the progress of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meetings that can be held remotely via web tools or telephone, such as NJEA committee meetings, may be restructured as virtual meetings. Other events, such as NJEA conferences or overnight trainings, will be postponed or canceled.

Should you have a question about a meeting or event you are currently scheduled to lead or attend, please contact the event organizer.

If you have registered online for an event, you should be notified of changes. At the current time, some small meetings with local associations may still take place. However, please do not show up to previously scheduled events without confirming whether the event is still scheduled to be held.

GUIDANCE TO STAY HEALTHY

NJEA has previously shared Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidance regarding the importance

of individuals staying away from work and school if they feel ill or have any reason to believe they could have been exposed to COVID-19. Additionally, all individuals should practice good hygiene and take other precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. You can find that guidance and other resources at njea.org/coronavirus-guidance-for-njea-members.

Your district should be giving you clear guidance about this issue as well. Should you have any questions regarding information or directives from your district, or any concerns about the consequences of your decision to stay home as a result of following the CDC's guidance, contact your UniServ rep. Contact information can be found at njea.org/about/regional-offices.

NJEA WILL MONITOR SITUATION, ADJUST AS WARRANTED

Other decisions will be made in the coming weeks regarding additional measures and the timing of resumption of regular business practices. In every case, NJEA prioritizes everyone's health and safety while NJEA staff and governance continue to work and advocate on behalf of our members. While no one wants to deal with a situation like this, we are confident that NJEA's staff, governance and all members will come together, as we always do, and respond in a way that makes us all proud to be part of this union.

NJEA donates \$75,000 to fund Amistad Journey



NJEA President Marie Blistan announcing the Amistad Journey at the 2019 NJEA Convention.

On March 4, New Jersey State Board of Education unanimously accepted a \$75,000 donation from NJEA to fund the Amistad Journey, a program that will enable educators to travel to historic sites of the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade in the United States and Africa. The Amistad Journey will be administered through the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education. The commission, created through legislation passed in 2002, is a 23-member body charged with ensuring that African American history, contributions and experiences are taught in New Jersey's classrooms.

"Though the law establishing the Amistad Commission has been in place for 17 years, and much work has been done by educators to bring the Amistad Curriculum into our schools, there is more that must be done," NJEA President Marie Blistan said. *(continued on next page)*

(continued from Page 15)

The Amistad Journey resulted from the work of the NJEA Amistad Stakeholder group, which was initially convened by NJEA President Marie Blistan in September 2018. The purpose of the NJEA Amistad Stakeholder group is to ensure that students receive an intentional, authentic and inclusive learning experience that will develop students' academic strengths and cultural sensibilities about the inclusive nature of history and acknowledge the contributions of Africans and African Americans to U.S. history through the New Jersey Amistad Curriculum.

The stakeholders group has studied what has been done and will soon report recommendations for what can and must be done to fully implement the law.

The intention of the Amistad Journey is to further enhance educators' ability to deeply integrate Black history into every element of the curriculum. In addition to NJEA and the New Jersey Department of Education, groups participating on the Amistad Stakeholder Group include:

- New Jersey Association of School Administrators
- New Jersey Association of School Business Officials
- New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association
- New Jersey PTA
- New Jersey School Boards Association
- New Jersey Amistad Commission

NJEA Associate Director Gary Melton Jr. represented Blistan at the State Board of Education meeting as the board voted to accept the association's donation.

"The Amistad Journey is going to be a strong component for our educators in this work, which will ultimately benefit students," Melton said. "This is a change agent in the world of education that will make our world a better place."

On behalf of Blistan, Melton thanked former NJEA Executive Director Ed Richardson for his support and early work with the Amistad Journey and Jacqui Greadington, a long-time NJEA leader, who advocated for the importance of the journey experience.

With this infusion of funds, the NJDOE will now move forward with developing the application process for the Amistad Journey.

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Teacher Leader Academy holds first session



NJEA Professional Development Consultant Brenda Martin-Lee addresses the first session of the Teacher Leader Academy.

After several years of diligent research, careful planning, and the legal creation, structuring, and funding of an entity known as the NJEA Teacher Leadership Academy, those seeking a teacher-leader endorsement met for their first session on Jan. 23 at NJEA headquarters in Trenton. These candidates for the endorsement were joined by those who will assist them in attaining the endorsement: the NJEA Teacher Leader Consultants, Teacher Leader Academy Coordinator Richard Wilson, and external consultant Stefani Hite.

NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, NJEA Executive Director Steve Swetsky and NJEA Director of Professional Development and Instructional Issues Michael Cohan attended the first session to congratulate the first participants. Blistan, who took a lead role in advocating for the legislation that created the endorsement in 2015, traced the history of the endorsement and the role NJEA plays as a leader in the profession.

"I'm proud of this union for standing up and leading the way, and I am proud of you as the very first class of the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy," Blistan said.

NJEA did more than advocate for the creation of the teacher leader endorsement, it committed itself to be an approved provider of a program of study leading to it. In that light, Spiller reflected on the impact the first academy class will have on the endorsement and on the future of the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy.

"You are going to be an example of what this endorsement means and what it and the Teacher Leader Academy will become," Spiller said.

Swetsky noted the dual roles that NJEA fills: as an advocacy organization that seeks to advance and protect the rights, benefits, and interests of members and as a professional organization that seeks to promote a quality system of public education for all students.

"We don't talk enough about what we do as a union for the profession," Swetsky said. "I urge you to talk to your colleagues about NJEA's status as a leader in public education.

While the evening began with a brief celebration of the launch of the first class of the Teacher Leader Academy, the candidates for the endorsement quickly moved on to the work of their first day as a class. The candidates and consultants will meet as a whole on nine Saturdays throughout the year. They will meet weekly as smaller regional study groups with their Teacher Leader Consultants. The course of study leading to the endorsement is divided into four modules and takes a full calendar year to complete.

A PARADIGM SHIFT IN LEADERSHIP

Teacher leadership offers a paradigm shift that not only allows teachers to support their peers from a nonevaluative position, but also to influence the entire system. Teacher leadership gives educators a voice at the decision-making table on instructional issues at the school and district level.

At its core, the work of teacher leaders is to build the capacity of their peers. Using that concept as a starting point, the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy prepares teacher leader candidates to effectively be their own faculty, with the support of their regional teacher leader consultant.

Candidates for the endorsement will identify their own strengths and areas where they want to challenge themselves. Each candidate will then lead the learning of small groups of other teachers working with them on the endorsement. The study groups are designed to use feedback from other participants to create an incubator for leadership.

There will be an emphasis on candidates developing the ability to walk the challenging line of acting as both peer and expert with their colleagues. Other components of the program will include occasional meetings of the full cohort of participants in Trenton, as well as a clinical experience designed to meet the individual goals of each candidate.

The academy will run on an annual schedule with new classes beginning each January. The program is currently being evaluated by Thomas Edison State University for credit eligibility. If you are interested in applying to be a candidate in the cycle beginning in January 2021, watch for application information this fall.

ICYMI@njea.org

Encouraging kids to explore the world through books
March 2, 2020

Murphy budget: record funding for education,
Nov. 25, 2019

NJEA supports millionaires tax, additional pension funding
Feb. 24, 2020

42 NJ schools and districts get grants to bring sustainability ideas to life
Feb. 12, 2020



Sussex County College hosts Women in STEM Career Day



Young women in the ninth grade participated in Women in STEM Career Day at Sussex County College.

More than 200 Sussex County freshman girls were encouraged to dream big as they participated in a Women in STEM Career Day, hosted by the Newton FIRST Varsity Robotics Team and the Technology Student Association (TSA) female leaders, and funded with a \$5,000 grant from Johnson & Johnson. STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Held on Jan. 9, the daylong event provided area students with the opportunity to meet, hear from, and be inspired by the guest presenters, all of whom are working in STEM fields.

The event was coordinated by Abigail Nicholas, a Newton High School

(NHS) sophomore and STEM Ambassador. Also coordinating the event were NHS technology teacher Jim Hofmann, NHS guidance counselor Theresa Hough, and NHS Principal Jeffrey Waldron. The day featured guest speakers, interactive stations on careers in STEM, a FarmBot device, lessons on how to build a rainbow machine, and more.

The rainbow machine illustrates basic optical principles. It consists of a white LED coupled into an optical fiber. The light exits the fiber, hits a mirror and then passes through a dispersing prism. The light splits into a spectrum and projects onto a screen. For this event, Audrey Wall of Thorlabs purposely misaligned the mirror and the prism, so that young women girls had to work to realign the system to get the rainbow spectrum to show up on the screen.

Nicholas introduced a video submitted by Danielle DeFeo, a 2010 NHS graduate who earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Stevens Institute of Technology and is now working as a mechanical engineer at Disney in the Sustaining Engineering Department.

Students also watched a video from Cassie Yauch, a graduate of Kittatinny High School and a former FIRST Varsity Robotics Team member. Yauch is now a senior at Virginia Tech University studying engineering.

The Newton Robotics Team works closely with Thorlabs, which supported the event, sending Audrey Wall, Maureen Smith, and Amruthaa Sunderaraj. They helped the young women build the rainbow machine. Stacey Yauch, a chemical engineer from Picatinny Arsenal, provided an overview of the role the arsenal plays in the nation's defense and STEM careers in the military.

Other supporters included the Girl Scouts of Northern New Jersey and scientist Matthew Richtmyer and engineer Catherine Mack, who both work with Johnson & Johnson.



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**STUDENT VOICES LEAD
BLACK LIVES MATTER
AT SCHOOLS WEEK IN
HACKENSACK**

BY RAQUEL JAMES-GOODMAN



From left: Teacher Raquel James-Goodman, Rafeet Bishi, James Vargas, Hackensack Middle School Principal Damen Cooper, Amiya Hutchinson, Tedra Andrews, teacher Heather Mecka, Alyssa Cavallo, Julia Thompson and Denyce Balcaser.

During the third National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action, Hackensack Education Association's Pride in Public Education program held an intergenerational forum with students, educators and community members. It was a powerful evening of courageous conversations that focused on the impact that racial bias has on education.

Black Lives Matter at School is a national coalition of educators, parents and students organizing for racial justice in education. The goal of Black Lives Matter at School is to spark an ongoing movement of critical reflection and honest conversation in school communities for people of all ages to engage with issues of racial justice. The week supports a movement to address access and opportunity for all students, by

Raquel James-Goodman is a language arts teacher at Hackensack Middle School. She can be reached at mdajamesgoodman@gmail.com.

highlighting inequities and increasing awareness, and organizing for change. Resources for the week, and throughout the year, can be found at blacklivesmatteratschool.com.

In January 2018, the NJEA Delegate Assembly, the association's highest policy-making body, joined the call for a National Black Lives Matter at Schools Week, which began in Seattle in 2016. The National Education Association is one of many organizations and leaders that endorse the week. NEA also provides resources to initiate discussions of racial justice at neaedjustice.org/black-lives-matter-at-school. Additional resources for the week, and throughout the year, can be found at blacklivesmatteratschool.com.

STUDENT, EDUCATOR AND COMMUNITY LEADER PANEL

Our students have lived experiences and intuition. They have stories and wisdom. They are leaders, uniquely equipped to expose and disrupt educational inequities. We need to listen and learn from our students, and reward them for demonstrating courage and taking risks for sharing their narratives. We also want our

children to learn from those of us that have been where they are. It was with these insights in mind and with the support of staff, students, district administration and HEA leaders that we gathered at Hackensack Middle School on Feb. 6.

Jeff Carter, president of the Bergen County branch of the NAACP, Hackensack alumni Ryan Cobb, and Hackensack educators Caseen Gaines, Heather Mecka, and Griselda Almonte-Delgado joined a panel of seven students from seventh through 12th grades to launch the conversation between generations.

Eighth-grader Tedra Andrews shared recent headlines from New Jersey news that highlighted some of the challenges Black and Latinx students face. The headlines included:

- N.J. Schools among most segregated in the nation, suit says (bit.ly/njsegregation)
- Black kids in N.J. schools are suspended at a higher rate than white kids, data shows (bit.ly/njsuspend)
- N.J. wrestler forced to cut dreadlocks still targeted over hair, lawyer says (nbcnews.to/2HSP0AL)



The program received funding from the NJEA Pride in Public Education program. From left: Amiya Hutchinson, Alyssa Cavallo, Julia Thompson, James Vargas, Rafeeat Bishi, Denyce Balcacer, Tedra Andrews and Ryan Cobb.

Andrews expressed personal connections to the headlines and said that in her four years at Hackensack Middle School, she has only had four Black teachers, none of whom have been male.

Eighth-grader James Vargas read his poem, "I'm Hispanic," which listed the many stereotypes he has combated in school. The first stanza of Vargas' poem reads:

*I'm Hispanic so I'm not legal,
Disrespected by Americans,
looked down on by the bald eagle
Discrimination is prohibited,
but we're still not treated equal*

Denyce Balcacer, a senior at Hackensack High School currently taking an elective called Race and Representation, spoke about the intersection of race and culture as a Dominican American woman. She recalls straightening her hair because she thought her curly hair did not meet the standard of beauty she had internalized. Today, she rocks her curls with pride, countering the "ideal" of Western beauty standards. Gaines, who also served on the panel, teaches the elective.

Balcacer also expressed the need for educators to see the whole child. She is a talented artist who,

"never took an art class in school." She advised that educators need to help students explore their talents and areas of interest instead of focusing on testing.

Rafeeat Bishi, another senior in Gaines' Race and Representation class, described the impact of implicit bias of her teachers' expectations for her.

"Stereotypes have affected me in a way that people assume I'm not meant to achieve," Bishi said. "When they see me, they don't see the typical high GPA honors student."

Bishi further explained the importance of the Black Lives Matter at School events.

"In order to create equity in our schools, we must encourage those who feel neglected," Bishi continued. "Students who have been historically underserved or who are not taught in a way that connects to their identity may not feel included at school. Conversations are necessary because if we don't talk about these situations, they won't change. I guess my goal is to see more people who look like me represented in spaces that aren't typically made for us."

Julia Thompson, a seventh-grade student at Hackensack Middle School, believes more conversations are necessary. Julia expressed

“

It is our responsibility to create a learning community in which all students feel comfortable, challenged, and valued.

pride in the diversity of Hackensack, saying she has friends from many backgrounds, and open conversations bridge greater understanding between cultures.

Another seventh-grade student, Amiya Hutchinson, spoke about her personal journey to maintain high academic standards while staying engaged and at times feeling disconnected from the curriculum. She suggested appealing to students by giving them choices in class and teaching them about Black history and ethnic studies.

Alyssa Cavallo further emphasized the importance of youth voice.



"I come from a family rooted in immigration and the hope for a better future," Cavallo said. "The subject of race and education holds a special place in my heart, and I strongly believe that student voice is the key in solving this long-time issue of inequality in our schools."

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Throughout the panel discussion, attendees participated by posting comments through an app providing real-time feedback. Audience members shared common concerns over curricula. One wrote, "I was educated in the '50s and '60s in New Jersey and did not learn about the breadths of black and brown history," while another attendee noted, "The curriculum did not represent me or hold my culture in high esteem."

Some attendees recalled how bias affected their schooling.

"Bias impacted my schooling tremendously," and attendee wrote "I was never pushed, because my teachers thought average was, 'good enough' for me. Looking back, I believe I could have done more if my teachers believed I could do more."

The evening ended with attendees gathering for a post-discussion reception sponsored by the PRIDE program of the Hackensack Education Association that included refreshments, book giveaways, and a book signing by author Nathaniel Sojourner Truth.

As the event coordinator, I was encouraged by the turnout. More than 120 people from across Bergen County were in attendance. I proposed a panel discussion with students because not only are they leaders, adults can't simply silence their experiences.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT TEACHING

According to the 2017-18 New Jersey School Performance Report, the percentage of students of color (Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, Indigenous and multiracial) is growing each year and make up nearly than 60% of public school

students in the state, yet 84% of teachers and 78% of administrators are white.

The students are sitting in our classrooms that are disproportionately taught by educators with little to no cultural literacy. Even scarier, many educators are unaware of their implicit bias and are ill equipped to service diverse student bodies and, consequently, maintain and promote systems of oppression and inequity. For educators to respond to their students' needs, they must understand the community in which they serve, and further understand the historical context of student circumstances and their privilege as the teacher.

The audience seemed to agree. When asked, "What must we do first to create equity for all students?" over 50% of the audience chose, "Train staff in culturally responsive teaching."

As a profession, we need to wake up. The students are our clients, and we are losing them because we fail to honor them and their identities. It is our responsibility to create a learning community in which all students feel comfortable, challenged and valued. My role is to meet students where they are and move them closer to self-actualization so that they understand their creative, intellectual and social power.

To facilitate this enrichment process, culturally responsive teaching is necessary. As education researcher Gloria Ladson-Billings notes in *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, culturally responsive teaching recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning.

In *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, educator Geneva Gay writes that "Culturally responsive teaching can be defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them."

The evening ended with attendees gathering for a post-discussion reception sponsored by the PRIDE program of the Hackensack Education Association that included refreshments, book giveaways, and a book signing by author Nathaniel Sojourner Truth.

THE STUDENTS HAVE SPOKEN.

WHAT NEXT?

"As educators, it's important to create spaces for students to share their truths, and even more important that we listen," said Hackensack High School teacher Caseen Gaines. "Teaching Race and Representation reminds me daily that students are aware of racial bias, and we can't improve our institutions until we encourage them to speak up and support when they do."

The consensus is in—students want to be seen, heard and celebrated. They want culturally responsive teaching. Educators need to build on this momentum and create authentic partnerships with students and community members, key stakeholders in school reform. In line with the Black Lives Movement at School, we must demand that policy makers and school leaders invest in:

- Ongoing professional development on culturally responsive teaching.
- The development of a culturally responsive curriculum across disciplines.
- Restorative justice training and discipline policies centered around opportunities to reflect and grow.
- Ongoing recruitment and support of diverse teachers and administrators that reflect the student body

This work is urgent. Deficit-oriented teaching must be replaced with culturally responsive teaching if public schools are going to survive. Priorities are determined by time and resources. It is my hope that children, above all, will be the priority. 🙏

Mindfulness

IS NOT A CLASS PERIOD, IT'S A LIFESTYLE

BY JENNIFER CAPUTO



"I think we can all acknowledge that we live, breathe and work in a pedagogical field burdened with buzzwords. The latest word buzzing around is 'mindfulness.' So, let us begin this conversation with the intention of keeping the practice of mindfulness alive in the hearts and minds of educators.

As an educational consultant working with teachers all over New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland for the last 15 years, it's become clear to me that many districts grasp desperately on to the latest buzzword in order to check the proverbial box so they can tout, "Yes! We do that in our district!" Disgruntled teachers share with me that they are provided with very little, or even no, time and resources to properly implement the "latest and greatest" instructional strategies and teaching techniques being introduced.

I've seen my share of educators rolling their eyes and throwing their hands in the air at this sad state of affairs. My conversations with them have shown me that they are open to support the latest and greatest methods and are in desperate need of the time and the resources to be able to implement these "cutting edge" methods properly. Unfortunately, if you've been in education for as little as a full school year, you've no doubt have had some experience with what I am sharing.

Jennifer Caputo is the 2019-20 Sussex County Teacher of the Year and a New Jersey State Teacher of the year finalist. She is a fifth-grade teacher at Helen Morgan Elementary School in Sparta. Caputo can be reached at jennifer.caputo@sparta.org. You can learn more about Caputo and mindfulness practice at her website shiftforwellness.com and on Twitter and Instagram at [@jennncaputo](https://www.instagram.com/jennncaputo).

Let's take a look at some education buzz words from the past 20 years. If you can't bear to read through this list, meet me at the paragraph below: 21st-century skills, collaboration, cooperative learning, collaborative learning, critical thinking, creativity, brain breaks, felt need, problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, equanimity, Bloom's Taxonomy, Common Core, scaffolding, whole child, differentiated instruction, learning styles, multiple intelligences, infusing technology, brain-based learning, brain research, assessments, formatives, summatives, peer assessment, community building, team building, whole-group instruction, small-group instruction, test complexity, growth mindset, personalized instruction, life-long learning, researched-based, stakeholders, paradigm, Web 2.0, college and career ready, right-brain thinking, digital natives, neuroscience, real-world, BYOD, BYOT, sage on the stage, guide on the side, student-centered, digital literacy, digital citizen, data driven, flipping, innovation, tech-savvy, STEM, STEAM, global education, inclusivity, inventive spelling, and most recently—mindfulness.

I mean absolutely no disrespect to any of the terms and practices listed above. I whole-heartedly practice and believe in many of them. I've even designed graduate courses around them. Many of those buzzwords are responsible for keeping me excited about teaching and learning. Several have allowed me to help students successfully gain access to curricula. While mindfulness may be the latest buzzword, I don't want it to die a slow death by hearing it overused and practiced in an isolated manner as if it were a separate subject area, such as science, physical education, or art.

LET'S TALK ABOUT MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is paying attention and being aware of the world around you. It is intentional. It is being in the present moment with curiosity and kindness and without judgement. Mindfulness is not merely about the head and cognition, but about our entire being. The practice of mindfulness is beneficial to the brain, body and breath connection. The benefits of this practice are too great to lose.

The practice of mindfulness is popping up everywhere in the world around us. It's become an integral part of the medical field with practitioners advised to breathe mindfully while in the operating room. Janice Marturano, a senior executive with decades of experience in Fortune 200 corporations, encourages mindful leadership in corporate America in her book *Finding the Space to Lead: A Practical Guide to Mindful Leadership*. Professional athletes are paying thousands of dollars for personal mindfulness coaches to help improve their game.

Mindfulness is not the only word that can be used to describe the practice. To avoid its overuse, some alternative words can be used that will help

to keep this healthy habit alive and well in the classroom. These include compassion, awareness, attention, focus, heartfulness, self-awareness, self-cultivation, self-care, consciousness, alert, recognition, kindness, curiosity, non-judgment, non-judgmental, caring, sensible, and paying attention. Once we change our language around this nourishing practice and realize we can substitute one word for the other, mindfulness will naturally become embedded in our everyday instructional practices.

Mindfulness is not a class period, but a way of living day to day, a way to notice what is happening in the here and now without judgement and with kindness and curiosity. It is meant to be a life skill. It is meant to be a shift in instructional practices for teachers and leadership practices for administrators.

MINDFULNESS IS A PURPOSEFUL PAUSE IN THE DAY.

Some of the names associated with mindfulness are Jon Kabat Zin, Janice Marturano, Dr. Ronald D. Seigel, Ellen J. Langer, and the Ramapo College of New Jersey Krame Center. I am currently designing a graduate level mindfulness course for The College of New Jersey and LaSalle University with the Regional Training Center. Be sure to look for it!

WHAT MINDFULNESS IS

The practice of mindfulness is about sensory experience. An awareness of what is. It is about being present and being self-aware. Mindfulness creates a space after a stimulus to allow for a response rather than a reaction. Not only is this skill helpful for our students to develop, but it can also help teachers in the way they respond to students with more clarity for greater productivity.

WHAT MINDFULNESS IS NOT

Mindfulness is not a religion. It is not about using mantras or visualization. It is not about being calm or being absent of thought. It is not meant to be used as a disciplinary measure or a silver-bullet cure-all.

WHY MINDFULNESS?

Information is careening toward our students at super speeds, and they don't know what to do with it all. This excessive speed results in mindless tweets, inappropriate postings, bullying, feeling overwhelmed, and needing to keep up among



Students use the chimes and the singing bowl to signal the beginning and end of a mindfulness pause.

many other inappropriate behaviors. We are connected now more than ever and many of our students may not realize the emotional impact this has on them. Practicing mindfulness will help students to pump the breaks.

Increasing academic demands on educators and students creates climate of stress and anxiety. As a result, students and staff can have trouble with self-regulation. When used regularly, mindfulness can increase focus and concentration and promote a sense of calm that decreases stress and anxiety, improves impulse control, enhances self-awareness, helps children and teenagers respond to difficult emotions, increases empathy and understanding of others, and develops natural conflict resolution skills.

Not only is this skill helpful for our students to develop, but it can also help all school staff members in the way they react to students. It can improve classroom management and other concerns. Before reacting, taking a moment to check in and breathe can provide more clarity for greater productivity.

MINDFULNESS AND THE BRAIN

The prefrontal cortex

The prefrontal cortex is in the front of the brain and is responsible for executive functioning. This part of the brain allows us to pay attention, regulate emotional balance and regulate our bodies. Research indicates that nine factors appear to be dependent on the regulating function

of the prefrontal cortex. These nine factors, which were identified by Dr. Ronald Siegel, are listed in the sidebar on Page 29, translate into nine aspects of well-being that can be developed through the practice of mindfulness.

The amygdala

The amygdala is the emotional center of the brain. It is responsible for the fight, flight, or freeze response. When we are focused and balanced, everything becomes easier. Mindfulness is a big help in:

- Concentrating
- Learning
- Sleeping
- Making better decisions
- Being less reactive

We become more self-aware as we grow the ability to self-regulate. As we grow these abilities, we naturally become more compassionate toward ourselves, others and the environment.

The hippocampus

Simply put, mindfulness improves memory by working to eliminate stress in the body. The hippocampus is the part of our brain that is responsible for memory. We know stress inhibits the storing of information and the recalling of information. Storing and recalling information is what the students are asked to do all throughout their day in our classrooms. Teachers are also required to do the same.

With demands being so high right now for both students and teachers, the practice of mindfulness can help to enhance the ability to store and recall information.

MAKING MINDFULNESS WORK

Like every other skill and strategy educators teach students, modeling is the best approach. Practice along with the class and share your experience with the kids.

1. **Emphasize the breath:** In the practice of yoga, the inhale is an expansion of the breath; the life force of the body. Accompanying the inhale is the symbolic gesture of bringing in elements that best serve you: life, light, love, confidence, courage, trust, ease, calm, etc. In contrast, the exhale is a contraction of the respiratory system. The squeezing out of stale breath from the lungs and elements that no longer serve the body and brain: nervousness, worry, fear, anxiety, etc.
2. **Start slowly:** Release any pressure you feel to be perfect. It's not about being perfect. It's about being easy with the practice. (See shiftforwellnes.com.)
3. **Practice:** There is no right or wrong here. The practice of mindfulness is about tuning into the body, brain and breath and noticing what you notice.
4. **Set a goal:** Aim for two, three, five, or ten minutes throughout the day. Transitions are a wonderful opportunity as is relinquishing

the time to practice mindfulness over to the students. I have Tibetan chimes and a singing bowl in the classroom. Each day two students are responsible for leading us into the practice with the chimes and bringing us out with the singing bowl.

5. **Have fun:** Keep it simple so it's sustainable and long term. Allow it to become your classroom norm.

Here are some times throughout the day to consider practicing:

- Morning meeting
- Start of the day
- Transitions/between subjects
- In the middle of a lesson
- Midtest
- Writing prep
- After recess
- After lunch
- When students are tired/drained
- To alleviate negativity
- While waiting in line
- When focus and attention begin to diminish
- Community builder
- Close of the day

THE ROLE OF THE MINDFUL TEACHER

Students can spot a fake a mile away. To teach mindfulness, it's essential that you make it a part of your lifestyle for there to be student buy-in. If you're screaming and yelling at your students all day long, there's no way they are going to close their eyes for you in class. They won't trust you because you're not walking the walk. Don't expect





“ *Mindfulness is not a class period, but a way of living day to day; a way to notice what is happening in the here and now without judgement and with kindness and curiosity.* ”

miracles. The practice of mindfulness is not a cure-all or meant to be used as a disciplinary tool.

Let's look at some ways perception plays into how we present ourselves in the classroom. There is significantly more occurring in the room than the presentation and exchange of cognitive information. Along with the conceptual information we teach, a large body of nonverbal information is being transmitted. Transmission can be talked about in several different ways:

- Unconsciously mimicking facial expressions
- Vocal expressions
- Postures
- Behaviors of those around us
- Arms folded, hands behind the back, and other stances

Nonverbal information travels in two directions in the classroom: from you to them and from them to you.

FROM YOU TO THEM

- You are transmitting your inner state before

you say anything. Their “read” on you is registered nonverbally first.

- If you are not present (because of stress, resistance, etc.), that registers, particularly in youth with trauma who are vigilantly assessing their environment.
- Mindless adults are often the norm for high-risk children and adolescent populations. In this instance “trauma” means highly sensitive, anxious children.

FROM THEM TO YOU

- Your ability to sense what is going on in other people is directly proportionate to your ability to sense or access your own feelings.
- Through the development of mindfulness, you can quickly and intuitively assess the mood and energy of the room.
- Through practice, there emerges a spontaneous sense of what is appropriate

based on what is presenting itself in the moment.

WHAT MINDFULNESS LOOK LIKE IN ROOM 37

Like every other teacher I know, I am constantly racing against time. Time, however stringent, should not be the reason mindfulness is not practiced. Initially, I was the person in the room who lead the practice and decided when it would happen. To my dismay, I went home too many nights one week realizing I never gave the children time to practice because I was more worried about getting through my lesson.

Without a doubt, of all the skills I teach, this incredibly healthful skill will be the one that will stay with my students throughout their lives. They have already proven that to me as they continue to reach out to tell me stories about how it has been affecting their lives for the better.

I turned the control of the practice over to the class. Each day when students enter the room, one student takes the chimes, and another takes the singing bowl. The children know that I can be in the middle of a word and if those chimes ring, everything stops. Lights go out. Blinds close. Projector goes to mute. There is darkness.

While the class is “shutting down” as we reduce the amount of visual stimulus in the room, children are positioning themselves into their mindful bodies: both feet are planted on the floor, spines are nice and tall to create lots of space for the breath to flow in and out, shoulders are rolled back and down and positioned over their hips, ears are in line with their shoulders, the chin is parallel to the floor, and they continue to grow their spine tall as they imagine a string attached to the crown of their head being pulled up to lengthen their spine to create more space for the breath.

The student with the singing bowl is responsible for ringing us out. The time can be anywhere from 30 seconds to three minutes. To allow the student with the singing bowl the opportunity to enjoy the practice, I will gently lay my hand on their shoulder to act as a reminder to ring us out.

DO'S AND DON'TS

The only rules are the ones set by the class. For example, the students

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Mondays are the best when the students come in to share stories with me from the weekend about how their practice helped them during an emergency room visit, a trip to the dentist, or a 3-2 count on the pitcher's mound. This is what it's all about.

WHAT STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY

“Mindfulness is noticing what's happening right now.”
– a student's definition

“I am always on the go... I'm tired, but on days like this, I am WIDE AWAKE.” – Megan

“I think this makes me happy and nice and calm. I love this and hope for more. This makes me feel good and awesome.” – Shawn

“I really do take the lessons into consideration. If I am ever having a stressful day, I come into class and mediate and everything about my day would go just fine.” – Briana

“This really helps me get the stress off and it is really smooth and flowing.” – Gabby

“...it sets the mood for the day.” – Gabi

“I really enjoy mindfulness because I didn't get much sleep, now I'm energized.” – Connor

“Whenever I'm stressed about something, mindfulness always helps me feel better and feel safe at school.” – Sierra

“...makes me feel relaxed and de-stresses me.” – Grace

“It is fun, and it is just like a mini nap and it makes me feel good.”
– Milena

“It is wonderful, and it makes me relaxed and nice and ready for the day!” – Mariella

“I don't want to move ahhhhhhhhhhhh. More minutes!” – Thomas

“I like mindfulness because if you have a headache or stressed it will really calm you down.” – Haley

“I was going to ask to go to the nurse when I got to class, but I feel fine now.” – anonymous

M I N D F U L N E S S

do not appreciate the chimes being rung during sustained silent reading time. They feel this is already a mindful practice, and they do not want it to be interrupted. Additionally, they avoid the use of chimes during a test that is timed. Otherwise, the middle of testing is a very popular time for chimes to be rung. On Page 26 is a picture of my students in the middle of a test with their heads down on yoga blocks. In this instance, they had a choice. As the year goes on, students have practice with many different approaches to mindfulness, and they begin to choose what will be best for them in a particular situation on a particular day.

As a mindful instructional practice, I stop class two minutes before the end of the period to encourage children to stop, put their things where they belong, think about where they are heading and gather the materials for their next class. During this time, they prefer the chimes not to be rung.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

I talk about this practice and its importance during Back to School Night. I am always thrilled with the enthusiasm with which the practice is met. Parents are grateful that time is taken throughout the day to encourage students to tune in. They are supporting it at home. Many moms and dads tell me their child practices on their own at home and during extracurricular activities. This is music to my ears!

For me, Mondays are the best when the students come in to share stories with me from the weekend about how their practice helped them during an emergency room visit, a trip to the dentist, or a 3-2 count on the pitcher's mound. This is what it's all about.

We teach because we want to effect change. We want to raise adults and help to create contributing members of society. This practice sets the children in that direction. Imagine a world where everyone walking around in it is paying attention, self-aware, and compassionate. Wow! I want to live in that space. How about you? 🙏



NINE ASPECTS OF WELL-BEING

The nine aspects of well-being, identified by Dr. Daniel J. Siegel, can be developed through the practice of mindfulness. Siegel is a clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and the founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA (marc.ucla.edu).

The nine aspects of well-being are bodily regulation, insight, attuned communication with others, empathy, emotional balance or regulation, fear modulation, response flexibility, intuition, and morality.

To read more about each of these aspects, go to bit.ly/9-aspects-wellbeing.

After current and further research is completed, it's likely that a 10th item will be added to this list: gratitude.



SAMPLE MINDFULNESS PRACTICE SCRIPT FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

"Please get into your mindful bodies."

Mindful bodies: Both feet are planted on the floor, spines are nice and tall to create lots of space for the breath to flow in and out, shoulders are rolled back and down and are over their hips, ears are in line with the shoulders, the chin is parallel to the floor, and continue to grow your spine tall as you imagine an imaginary string attached to the crown of your head being pulled up to lengthen the spine creating more space for the breath.

"Allow your eyes to close or gaze gentle down at your desk."

"Place your hand on your anchor spot."

Anchor spot is where they notice their breath moving: belly? cheek? nose? throat?

"Please... (chose one)

"...take 3 mindful breaths expanding on the inhale and contracting your belly on the exhale."

"...breathe mindfully for one minute."

"...listen mindfully for one minute. What sounds do you hear? in the room? hallway? outside?"

Create your own script.

FOODCORPS

BRINGS AN ARMY OF AGRICULTURE
ENTHUSIASTS INTO NEW JERSEY'S
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



It's a typical day at Bankbridge Elementary School in Sewell. Bankbridge is part of the Gloucester County Special Services School District, and it serves students with special needs from preschool through Grade 6.

Today, FoodCorps Service Member Natalie Agee is preparing for a lesson where students will plant seeds in recycled paper milk cartons filled with soil so they can watch them grow. Their teacher will use the seed project to enhance the science curriculum. At the end of the project, the students will take the plants home to share with their families, and hopefully, to add to their own gardens.

Another class is gearing up to try smoothies made from the many delicious things Agee is helping students and staff grow in the school garden. Students are guided by staff and volunteers in selecting ripe produce out of the squash, zucchini, onions, tomatoes, broccoli, potatoes, kale, radishes, carrots, lettuce and strawberries that have been planted.

Other days, students are weeding, composting, going on a nature hike, or cooking and trying new foods.

One popular lesson, called "roots and shoots" introduces students to how the food they eat grows—which ones grow on trees, in bushes, or in the ground. Afterward, the students eat food from the garden. The lesson seemed to be a success when one student confidently ordered another, "Eat your roots," and indicated the carrots on the plate.

Composting is another interesting lesson for students. One teacher was concerned that her students would not be receptive to working with worms. But the students rose to the occasion. After learning why the worms are essential to composting, and how composting maintains valuable nutrients, they assisted Agee in naming the worms and helping to build a shelter to shield them from the classroom lights.

As part of their occupational therapy, some students work on knife skills using produce from the garden.

TEACHING SCIENCE AND BUILDING A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Paula Alber, a first-through-third grade special education teacher, was impressed with how well her students responded to the garden.

"My students felt a strong sense of responsibility for the garden," Alber said. "Agee made a watering schedule for the garden and my students would not let me forget!"

In addition, Alber's students made smoothies using spinach from the garden, and during the



A Bankbridge Elementary School student harvests produce he helped to grow in the school's courtyard.

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

Super Bowl, they made a fresh salsa. Each student was responsible for adding an ingredient.

“This is a great program,” Alber said. “FoodCorps gave us science lesson plans to go along with our curriculum. I would definitely recommend this program to anyone interested in building a school garden project, or who is interested in adding new elements to an existing project.”

FOODCORPS STATEWIDE, NATIONWIDE

As a FoodCorps service member, Agee works with two schools in Gloucester County. Statewide, there are 12 FoodCorps AmeriCorps service members for the 2019-20 school year. Nationwide, FoodCorps is in 18 states and the District of Columbia. The mission of the program is to connect children with healthy food in schools. Service members work in school garden projects, teach lessons on healthy eating, and work to incorporate healthy foods into the school menu.

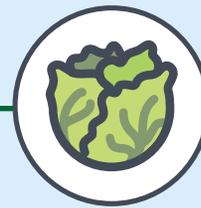
“At the beginning, it’s important to build relationships with the staff and to work with them to find the best ways to integrate the program into the school community,” Agee said. “Here at Bankbridge, they already had a robust courtyard garden and vegetable garden. They requested FoodCorps come in to help maintain them, and to collaborate with staff to get the students fully engaged with the gardens and discover ways

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One popular lesson, called “roots and shoots” introduces students to how the food they eat grows—which ones grow on trees, in bushes, or in the ground. Afterward, the students eat food from the garden.



A Bankbridge Elementary School student checks on the garden’s progress.



RESOURCES TO BRING THE GREEN TO YOUR SCHOOL

New Jersey is the Garden State, so it stands to reason that we make the most out of every opportunity to “bring the green” financially and environmentally to our schools and our students.

There are many grants and programs available to assist educators interested in creating, expanding, or even maintaining a school garden, but it takes a lot of searching to find the right program and apply. Below are a few resources to help you make the most of your garden project.

FoodCorps

FoodCorps seeks to connect children to healthy food in school so they can lead healthier lives and reach their full potential. For more information, go to foodcorps.org.

SNAP-Ed

New Jersey SNAP-Ed, a part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), is a nutrition and physical activity program aimed at teaching residents how to make healthy, budget-friendly food choices and lead more active lives.

School-based resources are coordinated by three groups that have divided the state into regions. Zufall Health runs the SNAP-Ed program in Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, Sussex and Warren counties. Contact Jennifer Salt, Program Director at jsalt@zufallhealth.org or 973-891-3421.

Community Food Bank of New Jersey offers programs in Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Passaic, Salem and Union counties. Contact snaped@cfbnj.org or 908-355-3663 ext. 526.

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension coordinates programs for Burlington, Gloucester, Camden and Mercer counties. Contact them at njaes.rutgers.edu/snap-ed or 856-224-8034.

NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Grant

The NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education makes it possible for public school employees to receive grants that will help them bring creative ideas to life.

The only foundation of its kind in New Jersey, the Hipp Foundation supports initiatives to promote excellence in education. More than \$2.1 million in grants for innovative educational projects that represent a bold, fresh approach by public school employees has already been awarded. Apply for a Hipp grant and bring your innovative ideas to life at njea.org/hipp.

to use them to support lessons, healthy eating, and behavior goals.”

Bankbridge may not always require FoodCorps service members. As with all development programs, the goal is to get to a point of sustainability on their own.

“The staff have so many other responsibilities and challenges,” Agee said. “There is definitely a commitment to having these gardens, but they need support. Since this is my primary responsibility, I can devote all my attention to developing projects and programs that bring the garden into the classroom and get the students into the garden.”

FoodCorps service members come from a variety of educational backgrounds, but the majority studied public health, social work, education, nutrition, or agriculture.

“We have people from all walks of life in the program, from recent college graduates to retirees,” Agee said. “But we are all passionate about teaching children to learn more about nature and getting them comfortable with it.”

As a service member, Agee must serve 1,700 hours between Aug. 1 and July 12. This is a full-time position, and Agee can often be found at Bankbridge during the school day as well as at night and on weekends. Service members receive a stipend and educational benefits as part of the AmeriCorps program.

BENEFITS OF SCHOOL GARDEN PROJECTS

Regardless of how educators choose to pursue garden projects in their districts, the benefits are substantial.

From the North American Association for Environmental Education:

In addition to benefits such as cognitive functioning, physical activity, and improved cooperation among youth, school gardens may also provide an opportunity for enhanced science learning, particularly among elementary-aged children from low-income communities.

Researchers found that these benefits accrue when supplementary materials accompany garden visits and youth development, online teacher professional development, and other school resources. These resources include as complementary lessons related to nutrition, plant science, horticulture, and youth development.

To achieve similar positive effects in a school garden program, educators can incorporate hands-on gardening with group work, complementary lessons, and teacher development into their school gardening curriculum.

The evidence is clear: school garden projects have many benefits for students, staff, and community members.

BUILDING BEAUTY AT BANKBRIDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BY CINDY FORNES, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER

I moved into this office overlooking an enclosed courtyard at Bankbridge Elementary School five years ago. It was so depressing to look out at such a wonderful space with nothing but dead grass, struggling rose bushes and a faded picnic table. At the time, it was only used as a cut-through from one side of the building to the other. Occasionally, a staff member might eat their lunch there. It was a safe, contained area that had so much potential for our students—especially in the nice weather—and I knew that we could do something special with the space.

The extended summer school year started, and I wanted to make the courtyard a fun and relaxing place for everyone. I talked with teachers Jennifer Hansbury and Alyssa Cop because I knew they would be eager to take this on as a summer project. We worked together to brainstorm ideas and developed our “dream plan.”

I contacted the teacher at our Career Center, which is a special needs program that helps with grounds maintenance, and the students came and pulled out some of the dead bushes and shaped up the ones we could salvage. Seeing activity in the space, people began to volunteer items such as pavers, a pond and professional gardening services.

One week after beginning work on the project, Samantha Coleman, a Master Gardener and the sister of an interpreter at Bankbridge, showed up with a truckload of salvage perennials to donate and helped plant them. That week, we also dug out around the entire perimeter of the courtyard: it was a muddy mess. Our principal at the time, Guy Davidson, was apprehensive by the looks of it, but we showed him our plans and promised it wouldn’t require much money at all, and that it would be usable by the end of summer.

Our goal was to make the courtyard as kid-friendly as possible and to have the students help out as much as they could. After all, it was their place. The plants we used were all sensory based: the students could smell, touch, taste and see them. The students helped plant everything. They even helped the Career Center students

lay pavers for the patio. A single vision became a schoolwide project overnight. It was amazing to see the therapeutic benefits of being outside, connecting with nature, and the serenity the courtyard brought to staff and students alike. The fish in the pond became members of our community that everyone wanted to help care for and visit. Overnight, it seemed, more than a dozen monarch butterflies made the courtyard their home. One student discovered a praying mantis that has taken up residence, and now they lay their eggs there.

After seeing how much the students loved the courtyard garden as a respite and a place to plan and learn, we moved on to the next project: the vegetable garden. The staff and students at Bankbridge Regional woodshop helped by building the garden beds that our students helped to design. The horticulture department at the high school provided guidance and supplies.

At this point, we became aware of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension grant and applied. Rutgers provided us with two more raised beds for the vegetable garden. In addition, we applied for a FoodCorps service member to help us integrate the garden more fully into the daily working of the school. We knew that both our projects were a huge undertaking and would require a lot of work and attention that we might not have during the regular school year. In addition, we wanted to expand garden education to our students.

The gardens have had an amazing impact on our students and our staff. Samantha Coleman, the Master Gardener volunteer, was so moved by the project and how it benefited our students that she asked how she could work in the district. She is now a full-time instructional aide.

Since that time, we have added so many elements to the courtyard garden and the vegetable garden. I love every second that I am able to look out the window and see a student playing the instruments, tasting herbs, looking in awe at the fish and butterflies. Here, they are truly able to forget about any other worries and just be one with nature.





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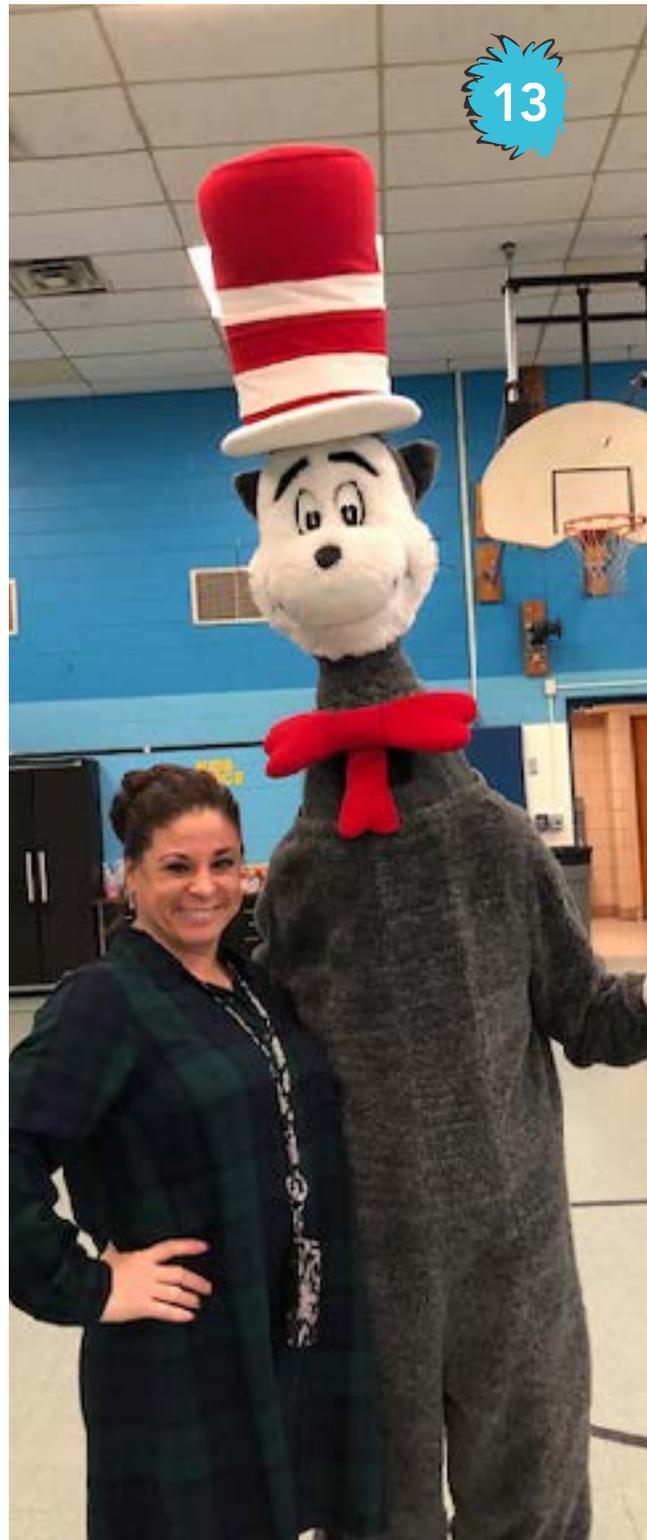
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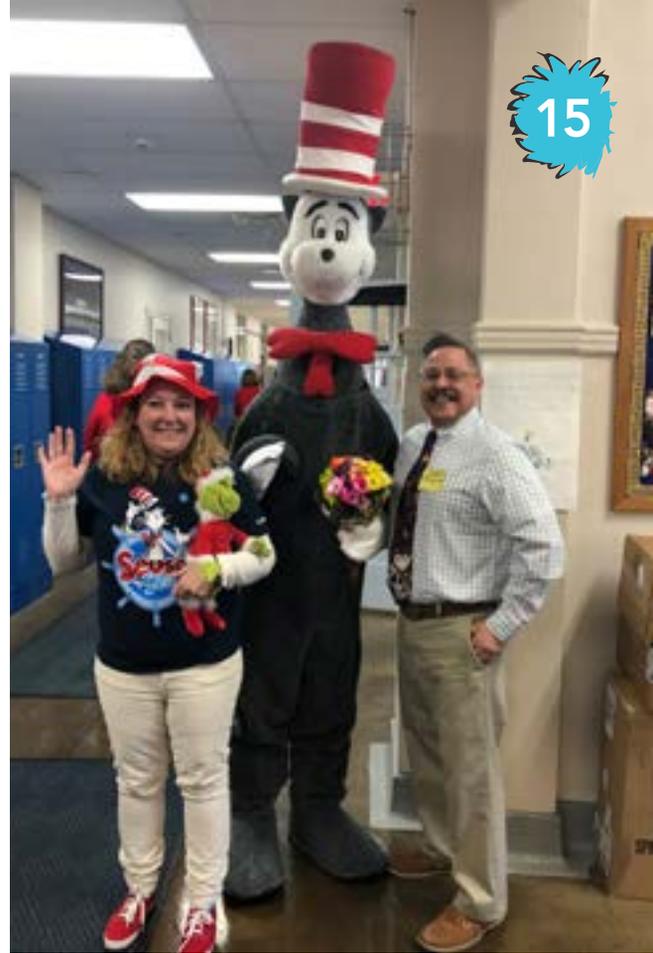


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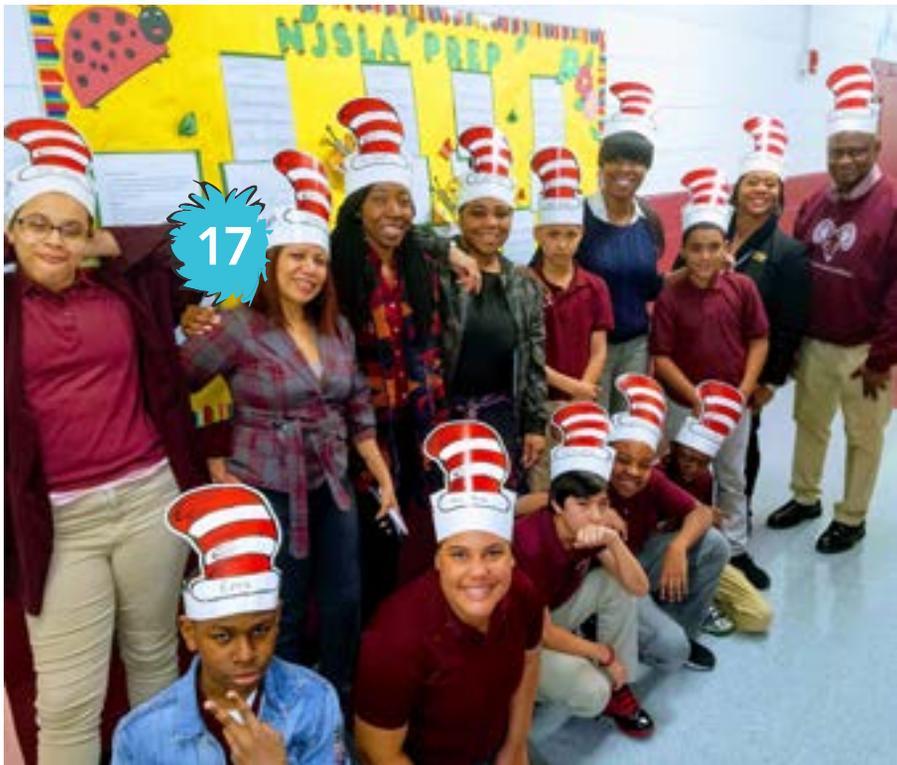


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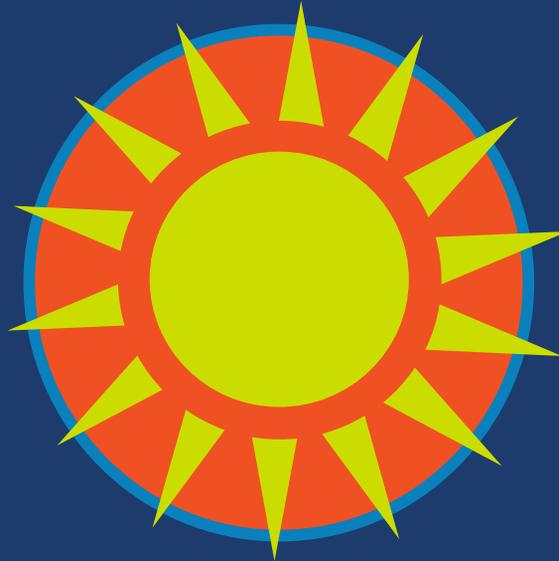


9. Manchester Regional Day School 10. Teaneck Community Charter 11. Belleville, School No. 4 12. Port Republic School 13. Washington Twp., Bells School 14. Rahway, Franklin School 15. Riverton School 16. Passaic, Mario Drago School 17. Newark, Alma Flagg School



SLC 2020

Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference



Hilton East Brunswick
Three Tower Center Boulevard
East Brunswick, NJ

Session I - August 1-3, 2020
Saturday – Monday

Session II - August 3-5, 2020
Monday – Wednesday





2020 JACK BERTOLINO SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The 2020 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference will offer a broad menu of workshops that equip members to become stronger association advocates. Most workshops offer 7.5 hours of training. A longer workshop providing additional hours of training is available for newer presidents and other local officers.

There are two sets of three-day programs:

- Workshop I – Aug. 1-3 (Saturday to Monday)
- Workshop II – Aug. 3-5 (Monday to Wednesday)

Not all of the 34 workshops are offered in each workshop period. The workshop descriptions provided on the following pages indicate when any given program is scheduled. To accommodate educational support professional members (ESP) who may wish to limit use of vacation or personal time, Workshop Number 21 runs from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

For all other workshops, registration begins on Day One at 1 p.m. The first program, a “mini-course,” begins at 4 p.m. Day Three ends with a brunch, which is served at 10:30 a.m. following the final workshop session.

This year’s summer leadership conference will take place at Hilton East Brunswick. The conference is dedicated to developing association advocate representatives. Accordingly, no professional development credit is given for attendance in any seminar.

How do I register?

If you are an NJEA member, you are eligible and encouraged to attend this summer leadership conference offering 34 advocacy workshops. You will find topics that will prepare you for your current or future roles, sharpen your leadership skills and show you how your local can develop to its full-functioning capacity.

The purpose of this article is to alert members to this training opportunity and describe the 34 workshop programs available this year, but to register you need to talk to your local and/or county association president.

Local and county association presidents will receive registration brochures with detailed information on the 2020 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference. You must contact your local president and consult that brochure to learn more about lodging, daily schedules, accommodations for members with special needs, and registration.

If you have a special physical or communication need or other disability that may require assistance or accommodations to permit or facilitate your attendance and participation, or if you have any questions or concerns about housing arrangements, please contact NJEA by June 1 at slc@njea.org or at 609-599-4594, ext. 2270.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available for first-time attendees. See your local and/or county president for more information.



Which workshop(s) should I take?

NJEA offers many advocacy conferences with a large array of workshops. Selecting which to take can be a daunting task. Whether you are currently serving in a leadership position or you have aspirations to become involved in some capacity within your local association, there are trainings that can help develop and hone your skills. To guide you, positions within the association are listed on Page 3, followed by workshops that would be beneficial to you. You will discover that being an officer is not the only position within your association and

there are opportunities to get involved in other ways. Additionally, we have included a track for those exploring future leadership. Please note that not all of these workshops are offered at the summer leadership conference and may be offered at other conferences throughout the year. These courses are not listed in any particular order and are not mandatory to serve in any position. Not all of the workshops offered at the summer leadership conference are listed on Page 3, so please review this entire booklet before making your selection(s).

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How to Be an Organizer	*
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*Workshops marked with an asterisk are not offered at the Summer Leadership Conference but may be offered at other conferences throughout the year.



Workshops

1. Now That I'm a Local Officer, What Do I Do? (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

PART 2 – 9/25-26 – 1-½ Day Workshop for New Presidents Only

For: Newly Elected Local Officers

The job of an effective local officer is the most challenging you'll ever face in your association. This workshop is designed to help newly elected presidents and local officers identify those challenges, develop strategies to deal with them, and build a strong, effective association. We will discuss advocacy topics so you leave empowered and with all the information you need to lead your association. This training incorporates components of X's and O's of Local Leaders workshop that was offered at the 2020 Winter Leadership Conferences.

Prior to the start of the conference at 1:15 p.m., presidents are invited to a pre-session discussion—presidents should plan to arrive by 12:45 p.m. All other participants will meet at 4 p.m.

Resident: \$297* Commuter: \$257*

**Registration forms for Part 2 will be distributed at SLC. Additional payment will be required.*



2. Advanced Training for Local Officers (offered 8/3-5)

For: Experienced presidents and local officers

There are many challenges that presidents and local leaders face daily. The goal of this workshop is to help you navigate your role as an officer so you can be the best advocate for the members of your local. Some of the topics that will be discussed are Corrective Action Plans, Donaldson Hearings, and public speaking.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$357

3. Vital Skills for Experienced Presidents (offered 8/3-5)

For: Experienced presidents

Prerequisite: At least one year of experience as a president

So you have served as a local president for at

least one year and you didn't quit in spite of organizational issues, pressures, paperwork and power plays? Good for you! Come learn how to create trust, inspire enthusiasm, and win over skeptics so someone else will want to step up to serve the membership when you decide to step down.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

4. Basic Treasurer's Training (offered 8/3-5)

For: Local treasurers

Learn the ABCs of being a local treasurer. Understand the fiduciary responsibilities of this important association role. Learn about building a budget and fiscal issues, implementing time management tools, taking the fear out of treasury audits and payroll, and laying the foundation for a computerized treasury. Lastly, understand the benefits of the Local Association Financial Assistance Program (LAFAP) form and learn how to complete a LAFAP through our online system.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

5. Advanced Treasurer's Training (offered 8/3-5)

For: Treasurers who have completed Basic Treasurer's Training

This course is designed for the experienced treasurer interested in using Quicken® to maintain the association's books and conform to Local Association Financial Assistance Program (LAFAP) reporting requirements. It also includes further training on budgets, PAC/Philanthropic funds, LAFAP, and check reconciliation.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

6. Basic Grievance Processing (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: Any member who is new to grievance processing as either an association representative (AR) or as a grievance committee representative

This workshop will provide an introduction to the basic vocabulary, essential tools, complete process, and changing laws of grievance work from the local association level through court appeals. Problem-solving options will be made available to local grievance representatives. These will be reviewed through case studies illustrating specific solutions to real problems.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

7. Advanced Grievance Processing (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

Prerequisite: Basic Grievance Processing or experience in processing grievances

Learn the skills needed, and why it is necessary, for the local association to present grievances effectively at the board of education level. Case studies and role playing will be utilized in group activities in order for participants to present a grievance to a board of education. Participants will be instructed in the following concepts prior to preparing their cases: past practice, clear vs. ambiguous contract language, just cause standards, management rights, maintenance of benefits, and duty of fair representation.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

8. Legal Issues Affecting School Employees (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: All members

This workshop is an in-depth review of pertinent provisions of school and labor laws, and administrative and legal decisions affecting members. We will examine the impact of school and labor laws on employment, analyze techniques for proper forum selection for dealing with disputes (i.e., role of PERC, the commissioner of education, courts and agencies), review decisional law and legislative enactments, recognize statute applications/interpretations through case-by-case determination, and examine, analyze and review association roles.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



9. PERC Law (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: Negotiators, grievance committee representatives, and other association leaders

To assist in negotiations and representation, this workshop will focus on unfair labor practices and court cases outlining negotiability/arbitrability disputes including discipline, transfers, extracurricular assignments, and duty of fair representation. What constitutes past practice, just cause, and relief from unilateral changes in working conditions will be explored in depth.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

10. AR – Key to a Strong Organization (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: Association representatives; open to all members

Learn the fundamentals and develop skills to become an association advocate. This program concentrates on contract enforcement, basic school law, member benefits, membership promotion, emerging instructional issues, legislative action, and your state and national association.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$357

11. Basic Collective Bargaining (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: New and inexperienced negotiators

Master the essential phases of bargaining with particular emphasis on the role of laws in the negotiations process; organization of and preparation for negotiations; negotiations tactics and techniques; the use of mathematics in negotiations; the 2010 bargaining law; impasse resolution including mediation, fact-finding, and superconciliation; job actions and communication; and ratification.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

12. Advanced Collective Bargaining (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: Experienced negotiators who have completed Basic Collective Bargaining or members who have actively participated in the bargaining process as a member of a team

Advanced Collective Bargaining workshop topics include hot topics at the table, getting to where we want to go and how to get there, salary guides (alternative methods of distribution), what do we do when the going gets tough, legislation affecting bargaining, and bargaining health benefits.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

13. Basic Salary Guides (offered 8/1-3)

For: New local negotiators preparing for successful salary negotiations

Methods of costing, analyzing, and understanding salary guides will be presented. Successful salary negotiations techniques such as developing comparisons, member input, district's ability to pay, planning salary guide workshops, and planning a successful ratification will be emphasized. Challenges facing ESP and inclusive local associations will be stressed. Current issues of importance will be discussed and successful strategies in these areas will be presented.

Participants must bring their current scattergram and collective bargaining agreement, including all salary guides.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

14. Advanced Salary Guides (offered 8/3-5)

Prerequisite: Basic Salary Guides

The workshop will give participants an understanding of how salary guides are constructed and calculated. Participants will construct a base-year cost-out and salary guides for three additional years on an Excel spreadsheet. Knowledge of how a spreadsheet functions is essential. This training will expand on issues raised in Basic Salary Guides, as well as explore additional concerns and techniques.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

15. Bargaining Health Benefits (offered 8/3-5)

For: Negotiators and leaders with interest in benefits

Learn how to deal with board demands on health insurance issues at the bargaining

table. This training will provide participants with a thorough understanding of the role of insurance benefits in achieving economic security. There will be extensive instruction on medical, dental, prescription and optical plans. This workshop will enable participants to review the legal framework, prepare for negotiations, and analyze board proposals.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

16. Minority Leadership Training for Emerging & Experienced Leaders (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Recognizing that NJEA's influence on public education is in direct proportion to an engaged membership, the Minority Leadership Training (MLT) Program prepares ethnic-minority members to be strong leaders, advocates, and full participants in their association. Participants will be introduced to the skills necessary to become an effective leader in their school, community and association.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



17. Minority Leadership Training for Emerging & Experienced Leaders (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Have you been a member for several years but are not yet active in your union? Do you lead in advocacy/organizing opportunities within your community but never transitioned to your local/county/state association? Are you passionate about social justice and representation of diversity at all levels of our advocacy work? If so, this critical-thinking workshop is for you! Topics to be addressed include decolonization of white supremacy culture, intentional organizing, power of political engagement, and strategies that support members-of-color and social justice allies.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



18. From Impasse to Impassioned: A Guide for Local Action Teams (offered 8/3-5)

For: Local Action Team Members

Is your local currently bargaining or preparing to bargain? Are you concerned that you may encounter difficulty when trying to reach an agreement with the board? If so then this workshop is for you! Local Action Team members will learn how to develop a communication system, design and carry out structure tests, and move the general membership toward collective action and engagement. Participants will leave with the skills they need to develop a comprehensive action plan and organize their membership.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

19. Engaging All Members (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Learn why membership matters and discover ways to support members while building their commitment and involvement. This is a great program for membership chairs, ARs, and those who would like to get other members involved in their local associations but don't know where to begin. Learn about how to use NJEA resources to help your membership succeed, as well as attract and retain your volunteer corps. This workshop was previously titled "Engaging Your Members."

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$297

20. Managing Conflict Effectively (offered 8/3-5)

For: New and inexperienced negotiators

This workshop is designed to increase personal and association effectiveness in dealing with conflict in a positive fashion. Participants will learn a variety of techniques that enhance this process by developing new strategies for identifying and handling conflict. Discussion will focus on what causes conflict and how better communication can help prevent or resolve conflict. This workshop is hands-on and interactive.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



21. Educational Support Professionals (ESP): You Are Essential, You Matter! (offered 7/31-8/2)

For: Experienced negotiators who have completed Basic Collective Bargaining or members who have actively participated in the bargaining process as a member of a team

Advanced Collective Bargaining workshop topics include hot topics at the table, getting to where we want to go and how to get there, salary guides (alternative methods of distribution), what do we do when the going gets tough, legislation affecting bargaining, and bargaining health benefits.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

22. Effective Political Advocacy Through Your Legislative Action Team (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

If you are a member of your local or county Legislative Action Team (LAT), then this workshop is for you! Learn how to build a robust LAT by recruiting volunteers, communicating effectively, organizing for action, and building and maintaining relationships with elected public officials. This training will give you the skills to make your voice heard.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

23. Advanced Political Advocacy Training for Legislative Action Teams (offered 8/3-5)

For: Members who have completed Effective Political Advocacy Through Your Legislative Action Team

Take political action in your local to the next level by learning best practices for developing relationships with policymakers and influencing their decisions. Hone your organizing skills for use in issue campaigns and in the 2020 election.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

24. Social Media for Local Associations (offered 8/1-3)

For: Local association social media editors

Learn how to successfully manage your local's social media platforms to activate your membership, engage your community, and maximize your organizing efforts.

This workshop is for advanced social media users.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

25. Using Evaluation as an Organizing Tool (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Several years into TEACHNJ, evaluation continues to provide challenges for both individual members and local leaders. This session will provide an overview of the evaluation statute and associated regulations, but more importantly strategies for organizing your members around effective and transparent evaluation practices.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

26. Organizing for Participatory Leadership (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Looking for ways to increase participation in your association? Interested in finding ways to build consensus and allow new leadership to emerge? Trying to find ways to include all the voices in the room when you run a meeting? Using practices from the Art of Hosting Meaningful Conversations, develop new skills to work collectively to harness the shared knowledge, and wisdom of your membership, creating a stronger union that can move forward towards wise action.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



27. Organizing for Participatory Leadership Advanced: Planning and Harvesting (offered 8/3-5)

For: All members

If you have some experience with World Café, Open Space, Circle Practice or other hosting practices but have wondered how to plan the right practice for the right project, or what to do with the harvest after the conversation is over, this workshop is for you. This workshop will focus on learning to design the right hosting practice, developing questions to lead you to the conversation you want to have, and using the information you harvest to plan next actions.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

28. Leadership Development 101 – A Beginner’s Guide for Association Leaders (offered 8/1-3)

For: Association representatives; open to all members

In this workshop we will explore principles of effective leadership and team building, effective communication and listening skills, principles of time and stress management, facilitation skills for leaders, importance of change management, and leadership scenarios for association leaders.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$357

29. Advocating for Trauma Informed Care in Our Schools (offered 8/3-5)

For: All members

In this workshop, participants will briefly overview the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study. Learn the impacts of trauma on the brain and the implications that it has in the classroom. Discuss how Restorative Practices should be used as trauma-sensitive practices and procedures. Explore the next steps your local can take to effectively respond to students exposed to trauma.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

30. NJEASites (offered 8/1-3)

For: Association editors and webmasters

Have you been thinking of starting a website for your association but don’t know where to start? Already have a website but want to take it to the next level? NJEA’s affiliate website service, NJEASites, offers an easy-to-use page builder solution to do just that. This workshop will provide attendees the opportunity for hands-on instruction on the WordPress platform and other digital communications tools to create and edit their association website. Some technology skills recommended.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397 Commuter: \$357

31. How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker (offered 8/1-3)

For: All members

Learn how to look and sound your best when presenting to a group. Participants review techniques for preparing and delivering a speech. Each speaker will be videotaped for a self and group critique.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local).

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

32. The Business of Membership Chairs (offered 8/1-3 and 8/3-5)

For: New, current, veteran, or up-and-coming membership chairs

This course is designed for both new and “seasoned” membership chairs. Learn what your responsibilities are and how to manage them using the various membership resources. You will be presented with an overview of all membership forms as well as the calendar of events and member engagement organizing tools. Participants will receive an in-depth understanding of the reports and information available to them while using MARS on the Web.

Please bring your own device (laptop, tablet, or phone). Part of the class will be spent online going through MARS on the Web.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

33. Health Benefits and Pensions for Your Local (offered 8/3-5)

For: All members

Become your local’s go-to person for all your members’ health benefits and pension questions. Learn the ins and outs of what you need to know when assisting your members in understanding health plan options, minimizing out-of-pocket health care costs, premium sharing contributions, preparing for retirement, understanding their pensions and more.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257



34. Moneywise Members (offered 8/3-5)

For: Member Benefits Coordinators and all members

This training will encompass all programs and services offered through NJEA Member Benefits. Attendees will learn more about the full referral service of AID-NJEA and important financial matters including life insurance, income protection, supplemental retirement income and member discounts on everyday items and services.

Resident: \$297 Commuter: \$257

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However, behind the wheel is the worst time to try to balance it all.

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ASBESTOS

KILLER DUST IN YOUR SCHOOL?

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHAT TO DO

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

For many years, asbestos, the “magic mineral” was used in thousands of products found in homes, workplaces and schools. Starting in the 1920s, studies confirmed suspicions about its hazards. Today, it is a “member” of what the Union of Concerned Scientists calls “40,000 Death Club”—a list of things such as traffic fatalities and gun violence responsible for killing that many Americans.

Despite widespread information about the hazards, asbestos has recently been found in trace amounts in products containing talc, beauty products, children’s make-up, crayons and crime kits.

Until 1972, the fibrous material was used in many building materials in the U.S., including:

- Plaster (boards, ceilings, walls)
- Ceiling and floor tiles
- Zonolite vermiculite insulation
- Insulation for pipes, boilers, beams, ventilation ducts wire covering
- Roofing and siding materials

In good condition, asbestos-containing materials (ACM) won’t harm us. Disturbed—without special controls—by things such as punctures, poorly controlled routine school maintenance, renovations, or removal—tiny fibers get into the air and/or settle as dust. They can be inhaled or ingested, creating a health hazard.

Even small amounts of asbestos are harmful

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.

and cause lung diseases and cancers in and beyond the respiratory system, sometimes as long as 40 years later. Mesothelioma, a rare, fatal cancer, is becoming more common, especially among those with less frequent or direct contact with asbestos.

The U.S. has not joined almost 70 other countries that have banned asbestos. Some states have acted. Last May, New Jersey banned the sale or distribution of asbestos-containing products as of September 1, 2019. Any person convicted of a violation of the ban can be fined \$2,500 for each offense.

SCHOOL “EMERGENCY RESPONSE” LAW IN 1986

The federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) was passed in 1986, with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) responsible for it. The goal was to force school districts to identify ACM sites in their buildings and remove or manage it effectively.

As reiterated in a 2019 compliance advisory, districts must, among other actions:

- Inspect known or suspected ACM every three years (after an initial inspection), unless a school is certified asbestos-free and check its condition every six months.
- Make and maintain a management plan, with regular updates, keeping a copy in each school and the district office.
- Name and train a designated person to implement it.
- At least once a year, tell parent and staff organizations—in writing—about the availability of the plan and anything completed or planned related to it.
- Put warning labels in all routine maintenance areas with ACM.

- Within 60 days of starting work, train maintenance/custodial staff (two hours awareness training plus another 14 hours if their activities will disturb ACM).
- Let short-term workers who may disturb ACM know about the location(s).
- Ensure only trained, licensed individuals conduct inspections and needed removal/fixes.

LEGACY ASBESTOS NEEDS ATTENTION

Legacy asbestos—what’s still in buildings and products—is a problem in schools built before 1972. Many inspected schools ignore asbestos hazards and AHERA processes by not labelling ACM, not training maintenance/custodial staff or designated persons, and not telling school staff or parents about the plan or its most recent status. When schools fail to tell contractors about the presence of asbestos in requests for renovation and/or maintenance work, the results can be disastrous.

“(S)chool boards neither understand facility conditions and leave them alone to deteriorate and definitely don’t understand the impacts on the health, safety, and welfare of children and staff,” Jerry Roseman, Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) environmental science director, told Derrick Z. Jackson of Environmental Health News for an article titled “Asbestos, ubiquitous and avoidable, is a deadly threat to our kids.”

New Jersey isn’t alone. In August, the PFT announced that teacher Lea DiRusso, a 51-year-old mother of two, has mesothelioma after working for 30 years in two buildings with documented asbestos hazards. She would frequently clean “dust” off students’ desk. In

February, the union demanded the city school district be declared a disaster area after similar hazards led to closing about 12 schools.

“It’s the result of long-term neglect and under-investment in the facility side,” says Roseman. “Asbestos issues have been “horribly handled,” including “terrible work practices to deal with damage, especially in highly-accessible, high-contact and high-traffic locations.”

One solution: a crowdsourcing app. The “incredibly powerful tool that’s made an enormous difference” allows staff and parents to report school asbestos conditions to the union. The anonymous reports are vetted using specific criteria and sent to the district.

Others have shared lessons too. The Massachusetts Teachers Association’s former health and safety committee chair, Dr. Charles Levenstein, told a 2013 conference:

- Passing a law doesn’t solve the problem.
- AHERA paperwork requirements are essential, not incidental.
- Only vigilance by staff and parents ensures compliance, and sometimes may not be enough.

““

Even small amounts of asbestos are harmful and cause lung diseases and cancers.

Resources

Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization (ADAO): advocacy organization providing information, education and help for those with asbestos-related diseases: asbestosdiseaseawareness.org

Chuck Levenstein’s presentation for MTA: bit.ly/2W7GEh9.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Asbestos and school buildings: bit.ly/33ifMMT

How to manage asbestos in school buildings: The AHERA designated person’s self-study guide bit.ly/38GCyza

What local association healthy and safety committees can do?

- Through NJEA develop checklists—including follow-up needed—for AHERA rules.
- Develop and work with allies (e.g., parent groups, health and safety/environmental health organizations;) to push districts to obey AHERA, using the adapted app as one form of leverage.
- Request all records related to the required asbestos management plans, comparing them to the rules;
- Use the checklists and recommend follow-up;
- Find “your” designated person, asking about their training (see resources), ask them to show you the asbestos management plan and any operation and management plans that are in place and any activities currently underway; and
- Work with the UniServ rep and local allies to use the adapted app, make complaints, and follow-up;
- Report activities and results to the local and its members.

Who does what about asbestos in NJ schools?

Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization • The New Jersey

Department of Health’s (NJDOH) Indoor Environments Program administers AHERA for EPA, trains and certifies asbestos trainers, and provides information.

- The NJDOH’s Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health program (PEOSH) enforces health and safety asbestos regulations.
- Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) staff regulate and investigate issues about transporting and disposing ACM.
- Department of Labor & Workforce Development’s Asbestos Control and Licensing Section licenses contractors, issues permit cards to their supervisors and workers, and checks abatement projects (enforcing the NJ Asbestos Control and Licensing Act and regulations)
- Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Asbestos/Lead Unit enforces the Asbestos Hazard Abatement Sub-Code for education facilities, public buildings, daycare centers and nurseries, where any asbestos abatement work must be monitored and inspected by “asbestos safety technicians” they certify working for a monitoring company that DCA authorizes.



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OPINION: FOSSIL FUEL DIVESTMENT PROTECTS OUR PLANET AND OUR PENSIONS

BY PRANITA BIJLANI

The science is clear: we are at a singular and irretrievable moment in human history—our planet is in deep ecological crisis of a magnitude never experienced by humans, and the rate of human-caused climate change and ecosystem collapse is accelerating.

Moreover, climate impacts are hitting New Jersey particularly hard with sea level rise twice the global average. Temperatures are also rising faster than the national average, causing algal blooms, record cases of West Nile virus, and devastating impacts on our fisheries and other ecosystems.

We teach future generations. We have an obligation to leave them a living, habitable planet. Every day, I have to look at my students' faces knowing the harm we inflict on our planet by allowing the destructive practices of the fossil fuel industry to continue. With knowledge comes the responsibility to act.

"The U.S. is Set to Drown the World in Oil," reads an August 2019 report from Global Witness. That report indicates that "a staggering 61% of the world's new oil and gas production over the next decade is set to come from one country alone: the United States."

"This new production, a result of the fracking boom, sets the U.S. on a course to produce eight times more fossil-fuel-derived energy than Canada, 20 times more than Russia, and 40 times more than Saudi Arabia. If individual U.S. states were countries, seven of the top 10 producers worldwide would be states. Pennsylvania is set to produce twice that of Russia, and 25% of all new

production globally will come from Texas alone," according to Julie Anne Miranda-Brubeck, U.S. communications manager for Global Witness.

In the next decade, this level of fossil fuel production will certainly put us far past the 1.5 degrees Celsius warming threshold that scientists consider the safe limit, with the U.S. largely responsible.

This is not a moment for measured, careful steps. Just a few months ago, all of Australia was engulfed in smoke and a billion wild animals were left dead. The time of leading lives in which global climate change is not part every decision we make is over.

Divestment from the fossil fuel industry is a necessary way to push back. It is a powerful, symbolic move that stigmatizes the industry and sends a message to our government to stop supporting and subsidizing it. Divestment is a potent way to send a message to powerful oil, gas, and coal companies, as well as the governmental structures that support them, that there must be a just and rapid transition to renewable forms of energy.

The argument for divestment is not only an ecological one, it is a financial one.

Our pension is one of the least funded in the country. We need to make sure that every dollar is invested for maximum reliable growth. The fossil fuel sector is no longer the dependable blue chip stock it once was. During the early 1980s, seven of the top ten companies in the S&P 500 were fossil fuel stocks; today, there are none. In 2018,

energy stocks were the worst performing sector of the S&P 500. According to the New Jersey State Investment Council's own report, dated Sept. 25, 2019, in the first eight months of 2019, the energy sector has been down by 16%, underperforming every other sector in the portfolio.

As renewables and battery storage become less expensive and electric vehicles (EVs) become the norm, it does not make sense for us to continue investing in a sector with disappearing prospects.

My students should know the vast problems they will face in the world that they will inherit. As a teacher, I feel an obligation to protect my students and their innocence, but I cannot lie to them either. They read, they listen, and they have had good teachers. They know about the devastating ecological crises that are taking place because of climate change, deforestation, environmental contamination and other factors. They know that plant and animal species are rapidly disappearing through a mass die-off in what scientists call the sixth mass extinction of the Anthropocene. They know that human activity is at the root of this die-off.

There is a human tendency toward staying the course. For long periods of time, staying the course has meant stability and predictability, but there comes a moment when staying the course becomes perilous.

This moment demands not a mild and measured response, but a decisive and resounding one. To paraphrase my favorite C.S. Lewis quote, "Every virtue at its testing point is courage." I would like you to tether your courage to the goodness of the universe, to the goodness you see in your students' faces, and join me in the call to divest our pensions from fossil fuels. 🌱

Pranita Bijlani is a seventh-grade English teacher at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in Edison Township. She can be reached at pranita.bijlani@gmail.com.

A CLOSER LOOK ...at school libraries



April is National School Library month. School libraries are the heart of a school and an essential resource for students and staff. Even as school libraries in many places have been rebranded media centers, the core mission remains: to connect students and open their minds to a wider world of ideas.

To survey the broad selection of show segments “Classroom Close-up NJ” has produced about school libraries, visit classroomcloseup.org, click on drop-down menu under “Categories” and select among the multiple subject areas.

On this page, we highlight three stories about school libraries and the people who reach beyond the books to connect students with a wider world.

BEHIND THE DREAM

Palmyra High School honors former graduate Clarence B. Jones for his achievements in civil rights history. History teacher Dan Licata inspired his students to research the former graduate, and as a result, the school dedicated a library in Jones’ name. The 89-year-old attorney is the former personal counsel, advisor, draft speech writer and close friend of Martin Luther King Jr. He is a Scholar in Residence at the Martin Luther King Jr. Institute at Stanford University.

BOOKS AND BEYOND

Teaching children 21st-century technology skills in a new, interactive media center that fosters independence and social communication is the goal of Vernon Township Walnut Ridge Primary School media teacher Benjamin Joseph. With the help of a giant tree in the middle of the library, the children can learn in a protected space to read books, explore technology and conduct research.

21ST CENTURY SCHOOL LIBRARY

LaDawna Harrington, a teacher librarian in Avenel Middle School in Woodbridge Township at the time the show initially aired, actively promotes reading and literacy through a multitude of projects, including a parent-child book club. Harrington connects the selected book to a community service.



WATCH CCU ON NJTV



classroomcloseup.org

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

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

INCORPORATING STUDENTS' WORLD INTO THE CLASSROOM

BY AMANDA MAHN, SETON HALL UNIVERSITY NJEA PRESERVICE AMBASSADOR

Let me be honest, I have never been good at math. After third grade—once math did not just consist of plugging in numbers in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division formulas—I started to struggle. I am currently a junior at Seton Hall University majoring in early special education and social and behavioral science. With the few math classes I've had to take in these majors, I still struggled.

In the spring semester of my sophomore year, I taught a third-grade math lesson at Far Hills Country Day School that was observed by one of my professors. I was nervous for many reasons, but the two main reasons were that math is not my strong suit and that my first observed lesson in the previous fall semester did not go as well as I would have hoped.

To settle the doubts I had about my upcoming observation, I decided to truly apply myself in math and mathematics instruction. In one of my courses, Teaching Math in the Classroom, I committed myself to taking excellent notes and to asking pointed questions about how to create a successful lesson.

Coincidentally, the professor I had for that course was the same professor who had supervised my earlier less-than-stellar lesson. She knew my weak spots and what I needed to work on, so I took her notes from my previous lesson and her notes in class and incorporated them into my new lesson. The most beneficial thing I took away from the course was that to make a lesson successful and engaging, you must incorporate the students'

interests. That changed the game for me.

At the time of my student teaching placement, all that my third-graders would talk about was “squishes,” which are soft toys that resemble animals, food and other objects of interest to children. So it was squishes that I incorporated into my lesson. The objective was for students to be able to estimate sums in word problems by rounding numbers to the nearest hundred and place the sums on a number line.

I started my lesson with an anecdote about how the family I have been babysitting has a lot of squishes just like the ones they had in their classroom.

“I need your help with estimating about how many squishes this family has,” I told them.

The students' faces lit up immediately, not only because I was talking about squishes but because I wanted their help. Almost every student volunteered to come to the board and estimate the number of squishes this family had and place the value on the number line. I created guided practice experiences, partner worksheets and exit slips with word problems that included some of the students' names. They smiled from ear to ear.

I ended this lesson with a completely different

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I ended this lesson with a completely different view of myself as an educator.

view of myself as an educator. I felt confident, successful and effective. This may sound a bit dramatic for a third-grade math lesson about rounding numbers to the nearest hundred, but it reinforced for me why I went into this profession. The smiles on the students' faces made me believe that they had forgotten they were even in a math class. They were just having fun. They were engaged, asking questions and eager to complete each problem handed to them.

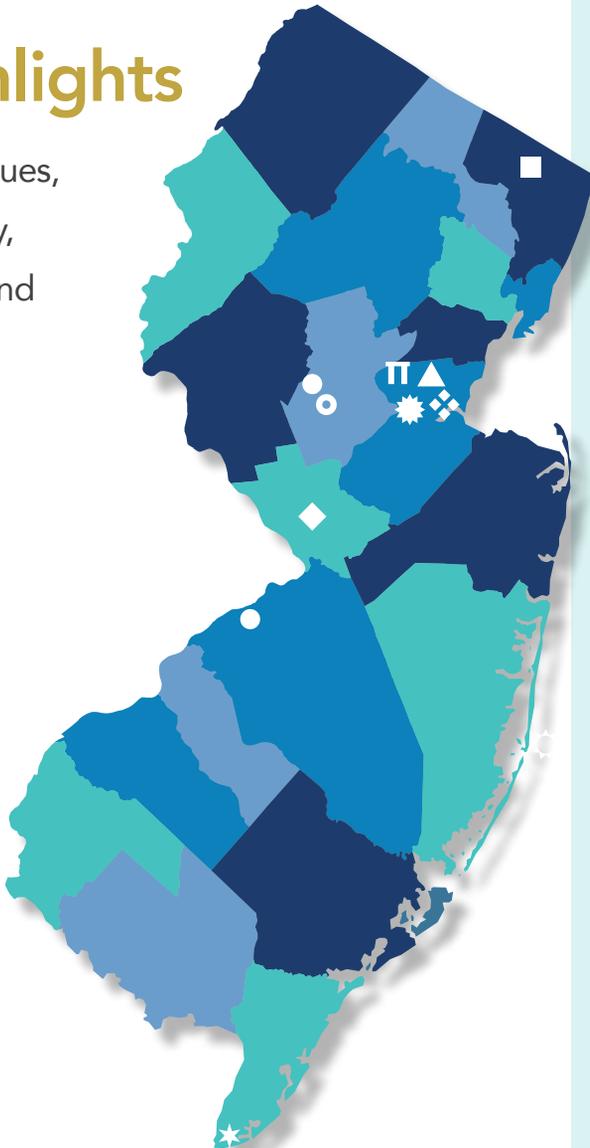
I could not help but think about when I was their age and how I felt about math. My own third-grade experience with math caused me to question my intelligence from then until today. Now I wonder if my years-long lack of confidence in math could have been avoided if only I had had a teacher who took the time to get to know their students' interests and incorporate them into their lessons. While I can't change the past, I can change the future for students like me and incorporate their world into the classroom. 🏠

SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and conferences

highlights

Core values, empathy, equity and more



To ensure events listed in Sussex to Cape May are still scheduled to occur, see the websites associated with each conference and workshop, or contact the event organizers listed.

★ CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION REGION 1 CONFERENCE

The Correctional Education Association is hosting its 59th annual conference from May 27 to May 29 at the Grand Hotel of Cape May. This program is open to alternative and special education teachers. This year's conference will highlight useful techniques that aid at-risk, incarcerated or detained students in successful re-entry and progression in society.

Participants will have a host of workshops to choose from including "Motivating the Disaffected and Hard to Handle Students" and "Resilience Can Be Taught: 10 Strategies Proven to Motivate Any Student." Workshops will focus on the education needs of students in specialized initiatives including those incarcerated or participating in other alternative applications.

Presenters include Jeffrey Abramowitz (executive director of Re-Entry Services at JEVS Human Services Program and program director of Looking Forward Philadelphia), Reverend Dr. Atkins (chaplaincy supervisor at the Garden State Youth Correctional Facility) and Pamela C. Zamel, Ph.D., Ed.M. (psychologist trained in equine-based therapy, reiki and earth medicine). These presenters will share their skills and experiences with facilitating under-advantaged students in education.

Costs for this workshop run between \$175-\$200. Contact Kevin Kavanaugh at 609-775-7981 or send an email to njceapres@gmail.com for additional information. Registration ends May 8, 2020 online at cearegion1.org.

◆ CORE VALUES: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF GOOD CHARACTER

The New Jersey Alliance for Social Emotional and Character Development is sponsoring Core Values: The Building Blocks of Good Character. This workshop's target audience is K-12 teachers, counselors, administrators, and child study team members. It will take place on May 29 at Rider University.

Participants will look at the importance of social, emotional and character development, school climate, as well as core values and how it helps schools. In schools of character everyone speaks the same language based on core values and determine rules to live by for all. Establishing these values is the cornerstone for building a positive culture and climate in your school. Participants will learn strategies for choosing values, practicing them, and mastering them as a character builder.

The cost for this event is \$149. You can register at bit.ly/njasecdcorevalues or call Leigh Cline at 609-670-8230 for additional information.

★ EMPATHY & EQUITY: CREATING EQUITABLE CLASSROOMS THROUGH HARKNESS PROTOCOLS

Bergen County Technical Schools is offering an Empathy & Equity Workshop for humanities teachers grades 6-12. This workshop will be held on May 22 at 540 N. Fairview Avenue in Paramus. This program targets humanities educators but all are welcome to attend!

Participants will be prepared to learn how to design and lead classrooms that engage in Harkness-style dialogues that promote empathy and equity. The Harkness Method employs a conversational setting within a whole-class environment that allows for classrooms to be democratized to ensure all voices are heard and promote global empathy. Specifically, participants will be able to learn the necessity and empathy in the development of equitable schools and classrooms.

This workshop will address multiple degrees of the New Jersey Learning Standards. Participants will tackle New Jersey Learning Standards 1-3 and 5-8, focusing on learner development, learning differences, learning environments, application of content, assessment, planning for instruction and instructional strategies.

There is no cost for this workshop. Call Jonathan Lancaster at 201-661-0548 or email Lancaster.jonathan@gmail.com.

● NEW JERSEY EARTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE EDUCATOR'S INSTITUTE: CONNECTING MODELS AND EVIDENCE

Join Model-Evidence Link (MEL) team for the Connecting Models and Evidence Institute June 24-26, 2020 at Duke Farms in Hillsborough, NJ. This institute will provide professional development in the use of MEL activities centered on current Earth science topics. These three-dimensional (core ideas, practices, crosscutting concepts) instructional scaffolds facilitate critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, construction of scientific explanations, and collaborative argumentation to support scientific reasoning within challenging Earth science topics.

This three-day institute is free, and a stipend is provided. Applications are open to middle and high school Earth and Environmental science teachers in New Jersey and nearby states. Pairs of teachers from the same school who teach the same subject are encouraged to apply. Those teaching Earth science content in their courses are also encouraged to apply.

The application deadline is March 9. Applicants will be notified of a decision by March 23. For more information and to apply, visit bit.ly/melpdatduke.

★ MULTISENSORY STRATEGIES FOR ALL

The New Jersey Association of Learning Consultants conference, Multi-Sensory Strategies for All, is for teachers, administrators and child study members. It takes place on May 1 at The Palace in Somerset. It will focus on in-depth multisensory techniques for classroom use with tools for math and reading. Another workshop will explore strategies for dealing with students of all ages who have ADHD or executive function disorders.

To maintain NJALC's policy of being "green", no handouts will be available, unless provided by the speaker. Please plan to bring your own note-taking materials.

The cost of this workshop will be \$100- \$130. To register, visit newjerseyalc.org, click on "NJALC Events" and go to May 1 on the calendar page.

For additional information please call or email Maureen Mahon at 908-635-6235 or springconference@newjerseyalc.org.

MORE TO LEARN

▮ 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 May. Direct online registration for all workshops can be accessed at tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-2019-2020.

High school workshops

May 4 – Principles of Effective Use of Technology in Teaching Mathematics, Grades 9-12

May 13 – Precalculus and Astronomy: "A Match Made in the Heavens!", Grades 10-12

May 15 – Physics for Math Teachers, Grades 9-12

May 19 – Nothing but Desmos, Grades 7-12

May 20 – Reinventing and Reimagining the High School Mathematics Classroom, Grades 9-12

Registration and information: tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-HS-2019-2020A

Middle school workshops

May 11 – Principles of Effective Use of Technology in Teaching Mathematics, Grades 6-8

May 19 – Nothing but Desmos, Grades 7-12

Registration and information: <https://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-MS-2019-2020A>

For more information or questions, contact AMTNJ at amtnj@juno.com

■ IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION

S-1569 and Transformative Learning in New Jersey's Schools, Exploring LGBT and Disability Curricula

Panels, workshops and resources on the recently passed state legislation requiring "each board of education to provide instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of persons with disabilities and lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgender people in an appropriate place in the curriculum of middle and high school students." Explore ways in which this educational mandate is already being implemented in New Jersey's middle and high school classrooms. Create action plans for schools and classrooms with the guidance of leaders in the field.

The program will take place at William Paterson University College of Education

1600 Valley Road, Wayne on April 27, 2020, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

There is no fee to attend, but participants must register. Email Dr. Alison Dobrick at dobricka@wpunj.edu or Dr. Sue Mankiw at makiws@wpunj.edu to register, and/or for more information.

● NGSS SUMMER INSTITUTES FOR GRADES K-12

July 20-24 at RVC College (Branchburg)

Aug. 3-7 at Delran HS (Delran)

As we begin our fourth year of implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), many educators are ready to deepen their understanding of several foundational aspects of the NGSS:

- Developing and using phenomena.
- Developing instructional and assessment tasks that meaningfully integrate practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas.
- Prompting student responses using crosscutting concepts.
- Supporting students in using core ideas to construct explanations supported by arguments.
- Supporting students in defining engineering problems and developing/optimizing solutions.

The Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community College offers a weeklong Institute designed to support K-12 teachers and administrators with the implementation of the NGSS. This institute follows the recommendations from the latest National Academies of Sciences Report and incorporates what we are learning about NGSS implementation through our work with thousands of teachers in New Jersey and across the nation.

The Summer Institute provides an immersive experience with the vision behind the NGSS and its three dimensions: the core ideas, the practices and the crosscutting concepts. Participants engage in NGSS-aligned investigations to experience how practices, crosscutting concepts and core ideas are meaningfully integrated in instruction and assessments in physical science, life science, earth science and engineering. The institute includes K-12 sessions to illustrate how the NGSS develops across grades as well as breakout sessions for grades K-5 and 6-12. Every day there will be multiple opportunities for reflection and structured time to plan NGSS-aligned investigations.

The weeklong Institute is held twice: on July 20-24 at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg and on Aug. 3-7 at Delran High School in Delran.

Each day begins promptly at 9 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The Institute is led by Dr. Wil van der Veen, a nationally recognized expert on the NGSS and science education. Participants will work in small groups that are facilitated by experienced classroom teachers from our NGSS Teacher Leader Program.

The fee is \$300 for the Institute in July at RVCC College and \$350 for the Institute in August at Delran High School.

For more information and to register online visit our website at raritanval.edu/ngss or contact Tina Gandarillas at tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu or 908-526-1200, ext 8942.

To develop a long-term NGSS professional development plan for your district, contact Dr. Wil van der Veen at wil.vanderveen@raritanval.edu.

❖ MASTER TEACHER INSTITUTE IN HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Summer minicourse on history of the Holocaust

A free minicourse on the history of the Holocaust will be held at Rutgers-New Brunswick from June 29 through July 2 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. This professional development course is presented under the auspices of the Herbert and Leonard Littman Families Holocaust Resource Center (HRC) and the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life at Rutgers.

The minicourse will offer a comprehensive chronological history of the Holocaust, including the origins of anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, victim groups, perpetrators, accomplices, and bystanders, resistance efforts, and American policy on immigration in the 1930s and 1940s. The course will emphasize practical applications for using testimonies, film, and primary sources in the classroom.

Educational materials, professional development credits, and lunch will be provided.

Advance registration by May 5 is required. Apply at BildnerCenter.Rutgers.edu. Free parking will be available.

To register, one must be a current 6-12 grade teacher with at least one-year teaching experience, or currently be pursuing a master's degree in education. Teachers who are new to this topic are encouraged to apply.

For further information, email Sarah Portilla at sarah.portilla@rutgers.edu.

▲ SPECIAL EDUCATION LAW CONFERENCE

Conference is to be held as a virtual conference

The Special Education Law Conference is a one-day program based at Lehigh University that provides a year-in-review case law keynote and various breakout sessions on May 8 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

Originally planned as an in-person conference, Lehigh University has encouraged the alternative of remote technology events can continue without jeopardizing public health and safety. Based on this policy and subject to further developments, the conference planners have started planning for a virtual conference.

The topics for this year's sessions are:

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): Does It Have New Legal Meaning?
- Transportation under the IDEA: Are the Wheels Coming off the Bus?
- Avoiding Due Process Hearings: "It's All About the Approach"
- Methodology Litigation in the Education of Students with Disabilities: Is There a Change in Direction?
- "Executive Functioning" in K-12 Disability Law: From Disorder to Order;
- Extracurricular Activities in the IEP or the 504 Plan: What Are the Legal Boundaries?
- Mental Health: The Legal Obligations of Schools under Disability Laws
- Who Do the Courts Find More Persuasive: School Personnel or Outside Experts?
- Medical Marijuana in Schools: Implication for Educators and Parents
- Disability, Discipline, and Disproportionality: How to Answer the Call for Equity
- Cyber Bullying of and by Students with Disabilities: Recent Legal Developments
- Ethics in Special Education Litigation: Who's the Client?
- Lost in Translation: Eligibility and FAPE for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students
- Compensatory Education: When Payment Due Exceeds Accounts Received

Registration is \$195 per person.

Registration and more information is available at bit.ly/leighsplawconf.

The registration deadline Friday, May 1.

CYBER CITIZENSHIP AND SECURITY FOR STUDENTS

By the NJEA Technology Committee

Students and educators alike must navigate a digital landscape that is filled with twists, turns, peaks and valleys. The members of the NJEA Technology Committee share their top websites and apps to help you learn about cyber citizenship and security in the 21st century.

Digital Citizenship Everything You Need to Teach Digital Citizenship

Grades K-12

commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship

The nonprofit organization Common Sense Media has updated its digital citizenship. The grade-appropriate lesson plans are simple to follow and all aspects—videos, photos, worksheets, and more—are included with the lessons. The lessons cover numerous digital citizenship topics including privacy, digital footprints and cyber bullying. A great wealth of resources.

Be Internet Awesome

Grades 2-7

Be Internet Awesome

beinternetawesome.withgoogle.com

These resources are for everyone, and are designed to best serve families, educators and students. Interland has been particularly well-received by children ages 7 to 12 but can certainly be enjoyed by older and younger children, too.

Digital Citizenship and Cyber Security Brainpop!

Grades K-12

brainpop.com/technology/digitalcitizenship

Brainpop Jr!

jr.brainpop.com/artsandtechnology/technology

It is vital that the foundations for digital citizenship and cyber security are built at the elementary level and continued to be revisited throughout all grade levels. BrainPop provides excellent, free resources on digital citizenship and cybersecurity. These sites incorporate videos, quizzes, games, vocabulary, graphic organizers and writing prompts all linked to standards and includes teacher lesson plans.

Anti-Virus/Security

AVG and Avast

4-12

avg.com/en-us/free-antivirus-download

avast.com/en-us/index#pc

While discussing digital footprints and security, computer viruses always enter the discussion. It is surprising how many students do not have a simple anti-virus on their home computers. It's great to inform students about the dangers on the internet,

but it is more important to give them the resources, skills and ability to protect themselves. AVG and Avast are both highly rated by *PC Magazine*.

Online Safety Educational Program NetSmartz

K-12

missingkids.org/netsmartz/home

NetSmartz is NCMC's online safety education program. It provides age-appropriate videos and activities to help teach children be safer online with the goal of helping children to become more aware of potential online risks and empowering them to help prevent victimization by making safer choices online and offline.

Online Safety

Wired Safety

K-12

wiredsafety.com

WiredSafety is the first online safety, education and help-group in the world. Originating in 1995 as a group of volunteers rating websites and helping victims of cyber-harassment, it now provides one-to-one help, resources, extensive information and education to cyberspace users of all ages on myriad internet and interactive technology safety, privacy and security issues.

Cyberwise

Grades K-12

cyberwise.org/online-security-hub

CyberWise is a resource site for busy grown-ups who want to help youth use digital media safely and wisely.

Childnet

Grades K-12

childnet.com/resources

Childnet's educational experts deliver a range of national and international information aiming to empower children and young people to use the internet safely and positively.

Online Safety and Cyber Security

Ferpa/Sherpa

K-12

ferpasherpa.org

FERPA/Sherpa, an initiative of the Future of Privacy Forum, is an education privacy resource center website that was developed to make digital security and citizenship a one-stop experience. Everyone struggles with the ever-changing student privacy legal landscape in education. Named after the core federal law that governs education privacy, FERPA/Sherpa delivers information, news and opinions on maintaining student data privacy.

The NJEA Technology Committee

The NJEA Technology Committee studies the impact of technology on educational programs, curriculum, and educators in New Jersey. The committee is also responsible for helping to coordinate the Digital Boulevard at Convention and launching the new Radical Imagination Summit for Educators (RISE) at Montclair State University on July 16. Be sure to register as soon as possible at njea.org/rise.

Committee members:

Committee Chair: Peter Moran,
Hunterdon County

Christopher Bowman, Burlington County

Sabina Ellis, Essex County

Edith Farrell, Union County

Olive Giles, Mercer County

Christina Gras, Atlantic County

Bethany Hannah, Salem County

Jessica Hoertel, Morris County

Virginia L. Hoden, NJREA

Melissa Krupp, Ocean County

Lori Lalama, Passaic County

John McLean, Middlesex County

Ann Moyle, Monmouth County

Arden Niessner, Camden County

E. Alix Polynice, Hudson County

Camille Ragin, Somerset County

Aaron Righter, Cumberland County

Michael Ryan, Bergen County

Julie Stratton, Cape May County

Stephen Whitehead, Gloucester County

The NJEA staff contact to the committee is Gabriel Tanglao, associate director, Professional Development and Instructional Issues. Brielle Allison is the associate staff contact.



PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

ENROLLMENT IN MEDICARE



As required by law, retired members or their dependents who qualify for the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP) state-paid, post-retirement medical benefits, or those more recent retirees who may be contributing a percentage of their premiums and are eligible for Medicare, must enroll in both Parts A and B of Medicare. Medicare Part A is paid for while actively employed and Part B is paid for during retirement, usually through a deduction from the members' Social Security checks. State law requires the SEHBP to reimburse these eligible retirees and their dependents for the cost of enrolling in Medicare Part B.

Most members and their dependents will qualify for Medicare benefits under one of the following four conditions:

- Have reached age 65.
- Have received Social Security disability benefits for 24 months.
- Have end-stage renal disease.
- Have ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease).

Members currently receiving Social Security retirement benefits, will be automatically enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B. They do not need to contact anyone. They will receive a package in the mail three months before their 65th birthday with the new Medicare card.

However, members who are 65 but are not receiving Social Security retirement benefits, will need to actively enroll in Medicare. Members should sign up for Medicare online at socialsecurity.gov or by calling Social Security at 800-772-1213 approximately three months prior to turning 65.

To continue post-retirement medical benefits without interruption, when a Medicare-eligible member or dependent receives their Medicare card, they must send a copy of the card to show proof of enrollment in Parts A and B to the Division of Pensions and Benefits. If this is not done before they are eligible for Medicare, their health benefits could be temporarily terminated. However, retirees enrolled in SEHBP should not sign up for alternate supplemental Medicare coverage. Enrollment in

another plan would result in the loss of SEHBP coverage.

The Division of Pensions will send a reminder letter to those who are about to qualify by means of turning 65. However, the Division of Pensions will not send a reminder letter to those who qualify by means of receiving Social Security disability benefits for 24 months, end-stage renal disease, or ALS.

Any questions about this process should be directed to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524.

MBOS: YOUR SOURCE FOR PENSION INFO

Do you have questions about your retirement account? Need to change your withholding? Having trouble getting through to the Division of Pensions by telephone? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, consider signing up for the Member Benefit Online System (MBOS). Signing up will enable you to check the status of your account at any time, from anywhere.

MBOS is an internet-based application that allows registered members to check on their pension retirement accounts, as well as change their addresses, change or begin direct deposit of pension checks, change life insurance beneficiaries, acquire federal and state tax information, and update federal and state tax withholdings.

In addition, the site plans to have future applications that will give you access to your School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP)

account and allow for online designation of beneficiaries and submission of documentation.

Registration is easy. New users need to follow the directions provided on the tear-off card found in the March NJREA Newsletter and remember to write down their logon information for future use. If you are already registered before retiring, you do not need to register again. Simply continue to use your logon ID and password from the account you established when you were an active employee, but you will need your retirement account number to switch to a retired user.

If you have registered for MBOS but cannot remember your logon ID, there is a system to automatically request that it be e-mailed to you by visiting the MyNewJersey portal online. The MyNewJersey portal is the access point through which state-administered retirement system members

sign on to MBOS. The logon ID retrieval process is like any password reset feature and uses the same user-defined and provided challenge question, response and e-mail address for confirmation and contact. For additional information about MyNewJersey, or to contact the MyNewJersey support staff, visit nj.gov/mynj/myNJRestrHelp.html.

More detailed information is available on the New Jersey Division of Pensions website at state.nj.us/treasury/pensions. Once there, slide over to "Access MBOS." If it's your first time there, select register from the drop-down menu to view the additional information. You may also call the division's MBOS Help Desk at 609-777-0534.

Around the counties

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

ATLANTIC COUNTY REA'S spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, May 5 at the Mays Landing Country Club in Mays Landing. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Linda Young at 609-226-6202.

The **BURLINGTON COUNTY REA'S** next general membership meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 14 at Marco's in the Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. The cost is \$20. To attend, call Doriann Dodulik-Swern at 856-722-8952.

CAMDEN COUNTY REA welcomes you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 7 at the Tavistock Country Club in Haddonfield. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Barbara Haase at 856-627-3391.

The **CAPE MAY REA'S** next business meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 20 at the Sunset Lounge in the Cape May-Lewes Ferry Terminal in North Cape May. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Sharon Popper at 609-602-0046.

ESSEX COUNTY REA will host its annual spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 20 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Beverly Johnson-Showers at 862-955-4177.

The **GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA'S** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, May 12 at Nicolosi Catering in West Deptford. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 856-228-6854.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA looks forward to seeing you at its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, April 7 at Branches in Long Branch. In addition to a Member Benefits fair, MCREA officers will be installed and philanthropic awards presented. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

HUNTERDON COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 28 at the Mountainview Chalet in Asbury. To attend, call Ray Braun at 215-264-4624.

MERCER COUNTY REA welcomes you to its general membership meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 14 at the Mercer Oaks Golf Club in West Windsor Township. NJEA Pensions and Benefits and Government Relations staff will be the guest speakers. The cost is \$27. To attend, Susan St. Karolkiewicz at 609-223-2570.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA'S end of the year meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, June 4 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. The annual MCREA scholarship awards and installation of officers will take place. The cost is \$32. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

The **MONMOUTH COUNTY REA** looks forward to seeing you at its 60th Anniversary Jubilee Celebration on Tuesday, June 9 at the Jumping Brook Country Club in Neptune. The cost is \$40. To attend, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

The **MORRIS COUNTY REA** will hold its scholarship fundraiser on Friday, April 24 at the Zeris Inn. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

MCREA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 13 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The cost is also \$35. To attend, call John Beekman at 973-514-1080

The **OCEAN COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 14 at Jack Baker's Lobster Shanty in Point Pleasant Beach. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

The **SALEM COUNTY REA'S** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Monday, May 18 at the St. John's Episcopal Parish in Salem. Nicki Burke, Salem County surrogate, will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-467-4795.

The **SOMERSET COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 6 at the Elks Lodge in Bridgewater. Raritan Valley Community College theater staff will be the guest entertainment. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-359-2870.

Join **WARREN COUNTY REA** for its meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, June 3 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. For more information, visit wcrea-njea.org To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995.

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Search all of the following travel benefits on the NJEA Travel Page. There are multiple sources, so check them all to be certain that you find the best offer. Visit memberbenefits.njea.org/travel for these and other offers.

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Airport parking

Print a discount coupon for The Parking Spot* at all New York City, New Jersey, Philadelphia, and Baltimore airports. Please note that the discounted rates are printed on the coupon. Go to bit.ly/njeaparkingspot.

EZ Way Parking, 901 Spring St., Elizabeth, N.J. offers NJEA family members discounted pricing of \$6.50 per day. Visit ezwayparking.com and use promo code NJEDU for the special pricing as you make your reservation. School or NJEA identification is required upon check-out.

NEA MEMBER BENEFITS**

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BE IN THE KNOW: BECOME A MEMBER BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Do you want to be one of the first to know about discounts and services for NJEA Members? You can be in the know and share the good news with your colleagues. Ask your local president about becoming an NJEA Member Benefits Coordinator. Or email Beth Buonsante at bbuonsante@njea.org for more information.

*Member Discount Program and Access:

Products and services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access are provided as a service to NJEA members and do not constitute an endorsement by NJEA or a representation regarding the products' quality or characteristics. NJEA makes no warranties expressed or implied, including the warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose regarding any products or services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access.

**Sponsored Vendors:

Products and services that are sponsored by NJEA Member Benefits are believed to have broad-based appeal and provide superior quality and value. To the best of NJEA's understanding, these products and services are worthy of sponsorship. However, NJEA cannot be responsible for the quality or performance of these products and services which ultimately is the responsibility of the vendor.

STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA welcomed **SANDRA MARTIN** on Feb. 18 as a facilities assistant for Building and Grounds in the Business Division. Martin has a vast amount of experience in construction, facilities and maintenance. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Martin worked for the Simon Property Group at Gloucester Premium Outlets, a 370,000 sq. ft. retail property in Blackwood. There, she was assigned to maintenance and repairs, including preventative maintenance of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems. Martin lives in Mount Laurel with her significant other, James.



NJEA welcomed **ALLYSON PONTIER** on March 2 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 15 office in Cranford. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Pontier had been a media specialist in the Lodi School District since 2005. She began her career in education in 2000 as a third-grade teacher. Pontier served as president of the Lodi Education Association for 13 years, in addition to other local association leadership positions. She also served on the NJEA Delegate Assembly and the Leadership and Public Relations committees. Since 2017, Pontier has been a part-time NJEA UniServ consultant in Regions 23 and 25 in Bergen County. She earned her associate educational medial specialist certificate and master's degree in educational technology from Montclair State University. She earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Rider University. Pontier lives in Lodi with her husband, Rob, and three daughters, Amanda, Allison and Emma.



NJEA welcomed **OSCAR GEE** on Feb. 18 as a facilities assistant for Building and Grounds in the Business Division. Gee is a familiar face at NJEA's headquarters in Trenton, where he has been working in a temporary capacity for almost a year. Gee previously served in the U.S. Army Reserve as a stock controller. He received an honorable discharge following 11 years of service. Gee lives in Trenton with his wife, Rontel.

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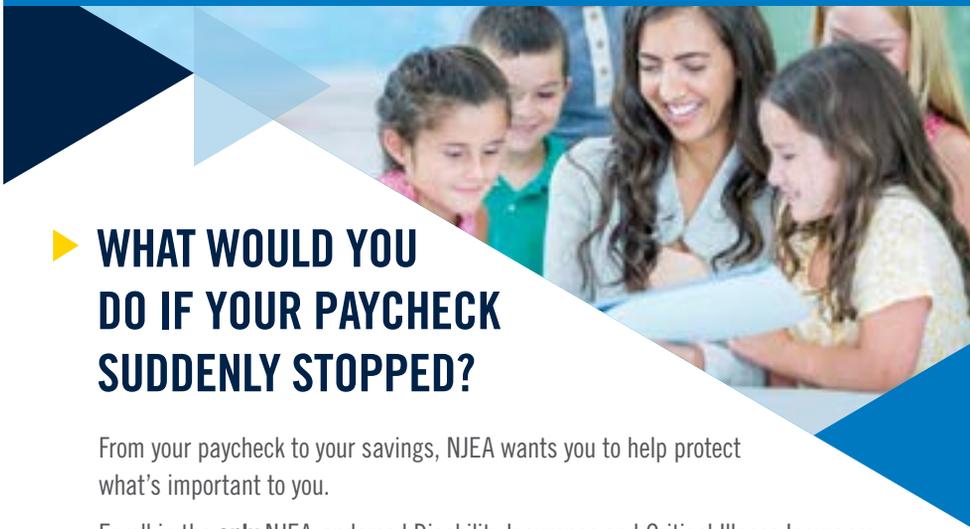
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2526239

TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF NJEA

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of August 31, 2019, and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence

about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to NJEA's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of NJEA's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the New Jersey Education Association as of August 31, 2019, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Change in accounting principle

As discussed in Note 18 to the financial statements, the New Jersey Education Association adopted new accounting guidance ASU 2016-14, Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities. Our opinion is not modified with respect to that matter.

Report on summarized comparative information

We have previously audited NJEA's 2018 consolidated financial statements, and we expressed an unmodified audit opinion on those audited consolidated financial statements in our report dated December 14, 2018. In our opinion, the summarized comparative information presented herein as of and for the year ended August 31, 2018 is consistent, in all material respects, with the audited consolidated financial statements from which it has been derived.

Novak Francella, LLC

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania
December 17, 2019

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	August 31			August 31	
	2019	2018		2019	2018
ASSETS			LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$13,755,956	\$11,126,955	Liabilities		
Receivables			Accounts payable	\$4,789,673	\$3,595,085
Membership dues	161,931	278,656	Unremitted NEA dues	572,930	514,480
Due from National Education Association	245,734	881,803	Accrued expenses	261,252	250,960
Contributions receivable	7,000	7,000	Deferred revenue	1,144,389	1,144,129
Advances to employees	59,690	55,358	Current maturity of capital lease obligations	345,519	355,337
Accrued investment income	152,349	80,255	Long-term liabilities	542,325	901,020
Total receivables	626,704	1,303,072	Accrued vacation	6,210,411	6,425,224
Investments - at fair value	149,859,153	137,408,958	Accrued postretirement benefit cost - other	154,320,150	114,080,010
Prepaid expenses and other assets	2,344,072	2,049,992	Accrued pension cost	46,660,247	3,112,938
Fixed assets - at cost			Total liabilities	214,846,896	130,379,183
Land and buildings	26,702,383	24,537,314	Net assets		
Computer equipment	7,259,159	6,565,098	Without donor restrictions	(35,689,777)	32,867,102
Furniture, equipment and vehicles	4,862,004	4,771,551	Board-designated restrictions	3,139,042	3,191,697
	38,823,546	35,873,963	With donor restrictions	357,445	859,135
Less: accumulated depreciation	(22,755,825)	(20,465,823)	Total net assets	(32,193,290)	(36,917,934)
Net fixed assets	16,067,721	15,408,140	Total liabilities and net assets	\$182,653,606	\$ 167,297,117
Total assets	\$182,653,606	\$167,297,117			

**NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES
YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2019 AND 2018**

	2019				2018
	Without Donor Restrictions	Board-Designated Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total	Total
REVENUE					
Membership dues	\$120,786,922	\$-	\$-	\$120,786,922	\$117,053,876
Pride dues	12,096,813	-	-	12,096,813	11,746,291
National Education Assn. grants and reimbursements	6,360,304	-	-	6,360,304	6,901,138
Conferences	762,931	-	-	762,931	973,159
Convention	539,792	-	-	539,792	530,051
Investment income	3,130,435	41,113	-	3,171,548	7,397,645
Representation fees	-	-	-	-	591,509
Member benefits income	80,543	-	-	80,543	104,376
Publication income	231,535	-	-	231,535	277,970
Contributions	-	12,874	-	12,874	63,895
Disaster Relief Fund	14,000	-	-	14,000	9,000
Other income	78,156	-	-	78,156	50,918
Net assets transferred to other funds (released from restrictions)	<u>(3,113,584)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,113,584</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total revenue	<u>140,967,847</u>	<u>53,987</u>	<u>3,113,584</u>	<u>144,135,418</u>	<u>145,699,828</u>
EXPENSES					
Program services					
Governance	5,622,553	-	-	5,622,553	5,886,252
Executive org development UniServ	6,164,323	-	-	6,164,323	6,903,706
Regional offices	19,398,343	-	-	19,398,343	20,326,943
Field office	6,947,234	-	-	6,947,234	7,700,262
Legal services	13,613,104	-	-	13,613,104	14,357,329
Communications	5,037,017	-	-	5,037,017	5,482,591
Professional development	3,887,523	-	-	3,887,523	4,349,920
Research and economics	4,685,899	-	-	4,685,899	4,831,006
Government relations	3,172,824	-	-	3,172,824	3,755,483
Conventions	2,792,314	-	-	2,792,314	2,958,099
Organizational services	6,728,683	-	-	6,728,683	7,145,264
Campaign					
Garden State Forward	-	-	3,615,274	3,615,274	8,418,609
Pride	11,000,365	-	-	11,000,365	11,870,936
Frederick L. Hipp Foundation	-	106,642	-	106,642	116,340
NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group	252,390	-	-	252,390	244,018
Disaster Relief	<u>16,130</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,130</u>	<u>19,140</u>
Total program services	<u>89,318,702</u>	<u>106,642</u>	<u>3,615,274</u>	<u>93,040,618</u>	<u>104,365,898</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL					
Executive office	4,037,539	-	-	4,037,539	4,189,916
Business division	10,908,147	-	-	10,908,147	12,010,793
Depreciation and amortization	2,318,121	-	-	2,318,121	2,212,604
Gain (loss) on disposal of fixed assets	13,360	-	-	13,360	(27,268)
Postretirement benefit cost	<u>5,944,350</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,944,350</u>	<u>15,138,707</u>
Total administrative and general	<u>23,221,517</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>23,221,517</u>	<u>33,524,752</u>
Total expenses	<u>112,540,219</u>	<u>106,642</u>	<u>3,615,274</u>	<u>116,262,135</u>	<u>137,890,650</u>
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	28,427,628	(52,655)	(501,690)	27,873,283	7,809,178
NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	32,867,102	3,191,697	859,135	36,917,934	(37,870,727)
DEFINED BENEFIT POSTRETIREMENT PLANS - NET ADJUSTMENT	<u>(96,984,507)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(96,984,507)</u>	<u>66,979,483</u>
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$(35,689,777)</u>	<u>\$3,139,042</u>	<u>\$357,445</u>	<u>\$(32,193,290)</u>	<u>\$36,917,934</u>

**NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES
YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 2019**

	<u>Governance</u>	<u>Executive Organizational Development</u>	<u>Uniserv Regional Offices</u>	<u>Uniserv Field Office</u>	<u>Legal Services</u>	<u>Communications</u>	<u>Professional Development</u>	<u>Research and Economics</u>	<u>Gov't Relations</u>	<u>Conventions</u>
Personnel	\$1,275,790	\$2,526,756	\$17,226,704	\$2,014,960	\$837,835	\$3,467,250	\$2,393,835	\$4,137,802	\$2,565,525	\$-
Administrative	811,540	246,639	129,519	94,896	-	8,724	-	175,377	47,858	387,362
Facilities	114,555	58,619	2,042,120	40,165	10,686	434,323	5,087	10,784	19,350	298,229
Conventions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,925,558
Communications	1,766	2,500	-	-	-	957,234	-	63,604	94,522	-
Legislative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	445,569	-
Consultants	-	-	2,460,152	-	-	150,873	844,390	249,009	-	-
Membership svcs.	2,901,597	3,327,602	-	2,337,061	12,764,583	6,633	644,211	49,097	-	180,975
Governance	126,794	-	-	-	-	11,578	-	-	-	-
Campaign	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Committees	388,669	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
General	1,842	2,207	-	-	-	402	-	226	-	190
Disaster Relief Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and amortization	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Postretirement benefit cost	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>\$5,622,553</u>	<u>\$6,164,323</u>	<u>\$19,398,343</u>	<u>\$6,947,234</u>	<u>\$13,613,104</u>	<u>\$5,037,017</u>	<u>\$3,887,523</u>	<u>\$4,685,899</u>	<u>\$3,172,824</u>	<u>\$2,792,314</u>

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Organizational Services	Campaign: Garden State Forward	Pride	Frederick L. Hipp Foundation	NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group	Disaster Relief Fund	Total Program Services	Executive Office	Business Division	Other	Total Admin. and General	Total Expenses
\$-	\$-	\$-		\$-	\$-	\$36,446,457	\$2,107,937	\$6,378,765	\$-	\$8,486,702	\$44,933,159
-	-	-	17,134	-	-	1,919,049	937,950	1,631,835	-	2,569,785	4,488,834
8,113	-	-	2,824	-	-	3,044,855	67,549	2,897,411	-	2,964,960	6,009,815
-	-	-	-	-	-	1,925,558	-	-	-	-	1,925,558
-	-	11,000,365	2,325	-	-	12,122,316	-	-	-	-	12,122,316
-	-	-	-	-	-	445,569	-	-	-	-	445,569
-	-	-	-	-	-	3,704,424	-	-	-	-	3,704,424
6,720,570	-	-	84,359	252,390	-	29,269,078	919,198	-	-	919,198	30,188,276
-	-	-	-	-	-	138,372	-	-	-	-	138,372
-	3,615,274	-	-	-	-	3,615,274	-	-	-	-	3,615,274
-	-	-	-	-	-	388,669	-	-	-	-	388,669
-	-	-	-	-	-	4,867	4,905	136	-	5,041	9,908
-	-	-	-	-	16,130	16,130	-	-	-	-	16,130
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,318,121	2,318,121	2,318,121
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13,360	13,360	13,360
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,944,350	5,944,350	5,944,350
<u>\$6,728,683</u>	<u>\$3,615,274</u>	<u>\$11,000,365</u>	<u>\$106,642</u>	<u>\$252,390</u>	<u>\$16,130</u>	<u>\$93,040,618</u>	<u>\$4,037,539</u>	<u>\$10,908,147</u>	<u>\$8,275,831</u>	<u>\$23,221,517</u>	<u>\$116,262,135</u>



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**NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS
YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2019 AND 2018**

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received from		
Members' dues and representation fee payers	\$120,903,907	\$117,476,523
Members' Pride dues	12,096,813	11,746,291
National Education Association	7,054,823	7,083,079
Conventions, conferences and other sources	1,715,499	2,015,745
Investment income	6,794,810	4,923,080
Cash paid for personnel costs	(64,289,383)	(64,273,175)
Cash paid to suppliers, vendors and service providers	(61,983,932)	(69,444,637)
Interest paid	(84,294)	(124,427)
Grants paid	(83,799)	(94,635)
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>22,124,444</u>	<u>9,307,844</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for the purchase of fixed assets	(2,991,051)	(4,233,776)
Payments for the purchase of investments	(73,245,258)	(20,877,254)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	-	41,747
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>57,086,396</u>	<u>15,958,733</u>
Net cash used for investing activities	<u>(19,149,913)</u>	<u>(9,110,550)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Principal payments on capital leases	(345,530)	(355,327)
Principal payments on long-term debt	-	(115,029)
Permanently restricted investment income	-	-
Net cash used for financing activities	<u>(345,530)</u>	<u>(470,356)</u>
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	2,629,001	(273,062)
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Beginning of year	<u>11,126,955</u>	<u>11,400,017</u>
End of year	<u>\$13,755,956</u>	<u>\$11,126,955</u>
RECONCILIATION OF INCREASE IN NET ASSETS TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Increase in net assets	<u>\$27,873,283</u>	<u>\$7,809,178</u>
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	2,318,121	2,212,604
Gain (loss) on disposal of fixed assets	13,360	(27,268)
Net realized and unrealized (gains) losses on investments	3,695,491	(2,462,602)
Temporarily restricted investment income	-	-
FASB ASC 715 adjustment	(96,984,507)	66,979,483
Changes in assets and liabilities		
Decrease in receivables	676,368	209,706
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses and other assets	(294,080)	2,120,578
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued exp	84,767,698	(67,331,627)
(Decrease) increase in unremitted dues and deferred revenue	<u>58,710</u>	<u>(202,208)</u>
Total adjustments	<u>(5,748,839)</u>	<u>1,498,666</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>\$22,124,444</u>	<u>\$9,307,844</u>

**NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AUGUST 31, 2019 AND 2018**

NOTE 1. NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Type of Activity - The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) was established to promote the education interests of the State; to promote equal educational opportunity for all students; to secure and maintain for the office of teaching its true position among the professions; and to promote and guard the interests of employees who are in employment categories eligible for membership, exclusively in the State of New Jersey.

Method of Accounting - The financial statements are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting.

Basis of Presentation - NJEA reports the amounts for each of two distinct classes of net assets and changes therein - net assets with donor restrictions and net assets without donor restrictions.

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NOTE 1. NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (Continued)

Basis of Consolidation - The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the New Jersey Education Association, the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc., Garden State Forward, NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group, and the Bolivar L. Graham Intern Foundation, Inc. NJEA maintains a political action committee as a separately segregated fund. The assets, liabilities, and activity of this related fund are not included in the accompanying financial statements. All significant intercompany account balances have been eliminated in consolidation.

Comparative Financial Information - The accompanying financial statement include certain prior-year summarized comparative information in total but not by net asset class. Such information does not include sufficient detail to constitute a presentation in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP). Accordingly, such information should be read in conjunction with our audited financial statements for the year ended August 31, 2018, from which the summarized information was derived.

Investments - Investments in fixed income mutual funds, equity mutual funds, the international equity mutual fund, the balanced mutual fund, and short-term investments are carried at fair value as provided by the broker, which generally represents quoted market prices or net asset value of the mutual funds as of the last business day of the year. The investment in the mortgage-backed security is carried at estimated fair value as provided by the broker. The real estate limited partnership is carried at estimated fair value based on the net asset value of the limited partnership as provided by SEI.

Membership Dues - Membership dues are recognized as revenue based on the membership period covered by the individual member's dues. Allowance for uncollectible accounts is considered unnecessary and is not provided.

Fixed Assets - Fixed assets are stated at cost. Major additions are capitalized while replacements, maintenance, and repairs which do not improve or extend the lives of the respective assets are charged to expense on a current basis. Depreciation and amortization of fixed assets are computed using the straight-line method at rates calculated to allocate the cost of the applicable assets over their estimated useful lives, which are generally from two to fifteen years on furnishings, fixtures, vehicles, and equipment, and from ten to fifty years on buildings and improvements. Depreciation and amortization expense totaled \$2,318,121 for the year ended August 31, 2019 and \$2,212,604 for 2018.

Deferred Revenue - Deferred revenue consists of exhibit fees, National Educational Association (NEA) grants and reimbursements, membership dues, subscriptions, and advertising received in advance.

Cash - For purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents are considered to be amounts in bank checking accounts and overnight sweeps accounts, subject to immediate withdrawal.

Functional Allocation of Expenses - The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the consolidated statements of activities. Expenses directly attributable to a specific functional area of NJEA are reported as expenses of those functional areas.

Net Assets with Board-Designated Restrictions - NJEA records applicable membership assessments, gifts, and other assets as additions to the net assets with board-designated restrictions of the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc. Investment income from the Foundation's investments is restricted for use for the Foundation's program service. The Foundation was organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes to advance and improve the quality of education and the teaching profession in New Jersey through the study, creation and funding of innovative programs or projects which will further educational and instructional excellence. It is intended that grants for all Foundation programs or projects will be funded by earnings from the Foundation's investments.

NJEA records all applicable contributions to Garden State Forward as net assets with board-designated restrictions of NJEA. The purpose of Garden State Forward is to make independent expenditures regarding New Jersey candidates, or support of committees or organizations that make only independent expenditures regarding such candidates. Garden State Forward is funded by contributions from NJEA.

Net Assets with Donor Restrictions - NJEA records all applicable contributions and donations received from members, the general public, and NJEA affiliates for the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund (the Disaster Relief Fund) (formerly the Hurricane Sandy Back to School Fund) as net assets with donor restrictions of NJEA. These contributions and donations can only be used for either a direct benefit to a member such as replacing belongings lost as a result of the hurricane or for general support to a school such as replacing damaged books, repairs, etc.

Contributions from NJEA to the Disaster Relief Fund are unrestricted contributions that are designated for the Disaster Relief Fund. These contributions can be for either a direct benefit to a member or for general support to a school. Contributions from the NJEA Member Benefits Fund to the Disaster Relief Fund are net assets without donor

restrictions contributions that are designated for the Disaster Relief Fund. These contributions can only be used for a direct benefit to a member and cannot be used for general support to a school.

Estimates - The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Reclassification - Certain reclassifications have been made to prior year amounts to conform to the current year presentation.

NOTE 2. RECEIVABLES

Amounts due from the NEA represent funds due on various projects and programs supported in total or in part by NEA.

Advances to employees represent initial expense advances made to employees. Upon termination or retirement, a final expense reconciliation is required for all amounts advanced.

NOTE 3. INVESTMENTS

The following summary presents the cost and fair value for each of the investment categories as of August 31, 2019 and 2018:

	2019 Cost	2019 Fair Value	2018 Cost	2018 Fair Value
WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS:				
Fixed income mutual funds	\$76,135,566	\$76,507,245	\$67,013,613	\$65,625,088
Equity mutual funds	27,660,995	28,371,520	26,385,953	31,976,723
International equity mutual fund	22,513,718	24,175,203	14,449,982	17,964,255
Balanced mutual fund	4,304,542	6,199,194	4,963,051	8,014,404
Short-term investments	243,067	243,066	212,364	212,364
Mortgage-backed security	122,625	53,241	138,219	61,812
Real estate limited partnership	5,243,762	10,814,008	5,243,762	10,069,614
Total without donor restrictions	136,224,275	146,363,477	118,406,944	133,924,260
WITH BOARD-DESIGNATED RESTRICTIONS:				
Fixed income mutual funds	1,245,682	1,226,185	1,215,007	1,154,967
Equity mutual funds	1,732,576	1,555,823	1,464,019	1,587,820
International equity mutual fund	501,286	539,461	480,245	568,504
Balanced mutual fund	104,916	174,207	103,304	173,407
Total with board-designated restrictions	3,584,460	3,495,676	3,262,575	3,484,698
Total investments	\$139,808,735	\$149,859,153	\$121,669,519	\$137,408,958

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NOTE 3. INVESTMENTS (Continued)

Investment income for the years ended August 31, 2019 and 2018 consisted of the following:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS		
Interest and dividends	\$7,050,319	\$5,414,463
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(3,383,313)	2,457,845
Investment fees	<u>(536,571)</u>	<u>(494,182)</u>
	<u>\$3,130,435</u>	<u>\$7,378,126</u>
WITH BOARD-DESIGNATED RESTRICTIONS:		
Interest and dividends	\$361,930	\$23,168
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(312,178)	4,757
Investment fees	<u>(8,639)</u>	<u>(8,406)</u>
	<u>\$41,113</u>	<u>\$19,519</u>

NOTE 4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Basics of Fair Value Measurement:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that NJEA has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2019:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>
Fixed income mutual funds	\$77,733,430	\$77,733,430	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	29,927,343	29,927,343	-	-
International equity mutual funds	24,714,664	24,714,664	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	6,373,401	6,373,401	-	-
Short-term investments	243,066	243,066	-	-
Mortgage-backed security	<u>53,241</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>53,241</u>	<u>-</u>
Total assets in the fair value hierarchy	139,045,145	<u>\$138,991,904</u>	<u>\$53,241</u>	<u>\$-</u>
Investments measured at NAV (A)	<u>10,814,008</u>			
Total investments	<u>\$149,859,153</u>			

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2018:

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>
Fixed income mutual funds	\$66,780,055	\$66,780,055	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	33,564,543	33,564,543	-	-
International equity mutual funds	18,532,759	18,532,759	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	8,187,811	8,187,811	-	-
Short-term investments	212,364	212,364	-	-
Mortgage-backed security	<u>61,812</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>61,812</u>	<u>-</u>
Total assets in the fair value hierarchy	127,339,344	<u>\$127,277,532</u>	<u>\$61,812</u>	<u>\$-</u>
Investments measured at NAV (A)	<u>10,069,614</u>			
Total investments	<u>\$137,408,958</u>			

(A) In accordance with Subtopic 820-10, certain investments that are measured at fair value using the net asset value per share (or its equivalent) practical expedient have not been classified in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value amounts presented in this table are intended to permit reconciliation of the fair value hierarchy to the amounts presented in the Statement of Net Assets Available for Benefits.

The availability of observable market data is monitored to assess the appropriate classification of financial instruments within the fair value hierarchy. Changes in economic conditions or model-based valuation techniques may require the transfer of financial instruments from one fair value level to another. In such instances, the transfer is reported at the beginning of the reporting period.

For the years ended August 31, 2019 and 2018, there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2 or 3.

The unfunded commitments and redemption information are as follows at August 31, 2019:

	2019 Fair Value	2018 Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period
Real estate limited partnership					
SEI Core Property Fund	\$10,814,008	\$10,069,614	\$-	Quarterly	65 days*

* - Withdrawal request is capped at 90% with a 10% holdback in escrow until the completion of the fund's annual audit.

The investment objective of the SEI Core Property Fund is to invest in a diversified strategy of property funds.

The SEI Core Property Fund is measured at fair value, without adjustment by NJEA, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

NOTE 5. FIXED ASSETS

The following is a summary of fixed assets by category as of August 31, 2019 and 2018:

Category:	2019	2018
Buildings:		
180 West State Street	\$14,190,885	\$12,729,832
186-190 West State Street	5,555,320	5,501,394
176 West State Street	451,491	439,206
172 West State Street	2,147,457	1,486,413
Regional offices	<u>2,845,574</u>	<u>2,868,813</u>
Total buildings	25,190,727	23,025,658
Land	1,511,656	990,567
Computer equipment	6,565,098	5,394,169
Furniture, equipment, and vehicles	<u>4,771,551</u>	<u>4,675,898</u>
Total fixed assets	38,039,032	34,086,292
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(20,465,823)</u>	<u>(18,475,067)</u>
Net fixed assets	<u>\$17,573,209</u>	<u>\$15,611,225</u>

NOTE 6. OBLIGATIONS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

NJEA is obligated under certain leases accounted for as operating leases. For the years ended August 31, 2019 and 2018, rent expense relating to these leases amounted to \$1,753,998 and \$1,791,782 respectively. As of August 31, 2019, the future minimum rental payments required under these non-cancelable operating leases are as follows:

Year Ending August 31,	
2020	\$1,007,780
2021	816,680
2022	627,530
2023	358,120
2024	292,320
Thereafter	<u>775,470</u>
Total	<u>\$3,877,900</u>

Under the normal course of operations, NJEA expects to continue to lease the facilities and equipment or similar facilities and equipment covered under such leases beyond the expiration of the current agreements.

NOTE 7. LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

Long-term liabilities as of August 31, 2019 and 2018 consist of deferred compensation arrangements of one former NJEA president totaling \$345,519 and \$348,967, respectively, and obligations under capital leases totaling \$552,053 and \$907,390 as of August 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

At August 31, 2019, the fixed assets under capital leases had an original cost of \$1,984,005 and accumulated amortization of \$1,298,602. \$434,250 of amortization was charged to expense during the year ended August 31, 2019.

At August 31, 2018, the fixed assets under capital leases had an original cost of \$1,616,682 and accumulated amortization of \$864,351. \$335,346 of amortization was charged to expense during the year ended August 31, 2018.

The following is a schedule by years of future minimum lease payments required under these capital leases with the present value of the net minimum lease payments as of August 31, 2019:

Year Ending August 31,	
2020	\$ 383,632
2021	122,369
2022	<u>105,846</u>
Total minimum lease payments	611,847
Less: Amount representing interest	<u>(59,794)</u>
Present value of net minimum lease payments	<u>\$ 552,053</u>

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS

NJEA has a defined benefit pension plan covering substantially all employees. Under terms of the plan, eligible employees contribute 3.50% of their salaries and NJEA contributes an amount that is based on the recommendation of the consulting actuary. NJEA has multiple non-pension postretirement benefit plans. The plan provides postretirement medical and life insurance covering substantially all employees. NJEA reports in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standards Codification 715, "Compensation-Retirement Benefits" (FASB ASC 715).

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Projected benefit obligation at August 31	\$468,998,400	\$386,852,208	\$ 244,695,099	\$ 194,556,850
Fair value of plan assets at August 31	<u>422,338,153</u>	<u>383,739,270</u>	<u>90,374,949</u>	<u>80,476,840</u>
Funded status	<u>\$(46,660,247)</u>	<u>\$(3,112,938)</u>	<u>\$(154,320,150)</u>	<u>\$(114,080,010)</u>
Accumulated benefit obligation at August 31	<u>\$415,370,781</u>	<u>\$345,683,311</u>	<u>\$ 244,695,099</u>	<u>\$ 194,556,850</u>
Accrued benefit cost recognized in the consolidated statement of financial position	<u>\$(46,660,247)</u>	<u>\$(3,112,938)</u>	<u>\$(154,320,150)</u>	<u>\$(114,080,010)</u>

Amounts recognized as deductions from net assets include:

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (23,885,070)	\$ (28,643,184)
Net loss	<u>137,472,511</u>	<u>90,546,297</u>	<u>102,543,350</u>	<u>57,364,661</u>
	<u>\$137,472,511</u>	<u>\$90,546,297</u>	<u>\$ 78,658,280</u>	<u>\$28,721,477</u>

The amounts that will be amortized from net assets into net periodic benefit cost over the next fiscal year are:

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$(4,758,114)	\$(4,758,114)
Net gain	8,133,512	4,804,542	6,652,465	3,450,861

Weighted average assumptions at August 31

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Discount rate	3.00 %	4.19 %	3.00 %	4.19 %
Expected return on plan assets	7.50	7.50	8.00	8.00
Rate of compensation increase	6.58	6.58	6.58	6.58

The expected return on plan assets was determined by review of historical rates of return on assets similar to those in the Plans' portfolios.

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (Continued)

For measurement purposes, the per capita costs of covered health care were assumed to be the following:

Pre-65 Plans				
Grandfathered Plan				
Age	Traditional	PPO	HMO	New PPO
55	\$ 17,199	\$ 16,584	\$ 15,432	\$16,227
60	20,671	19,917	18,503	19,479

Post-65 Plans		
Age	0/0/0 Plan	0/7/7 Plan
65	\$ 12,838	\$ 9,969
70	13,761	10,598
75	14,526	11,119
80	15,109	11,517

The healthcare trend rate has a significant effect on the amounts reported. If the assumed rate increased by one percentage point, that would increase the liability as of August 31, 2018 by \$35,167,996.

	Pension Benefits*		Other Benefits	
	2019	2018	2019	2018
Net benefit cost expensed (periodic)	\$ 1,533,918	\$ 4,688,750	\$ 5,661,795	\$ 15,175,473
Benefit cost FASB ASC 715 (other)	47,047,704	(26,439,724)	49,936,803	(40,539,759)
Employer contributions	5,000,000	15,000,142	15,358,458	5,635,441
Plan participant contributions	1,128,041	1,215,113	-	-
Benefits paid	(18,514,661)	(16,746,346)	(5,774,428)	(5,877,650)

The Pension Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2019 and 2018 is 7.5%. The Other Postretirement Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2019 and 2018 is 8%. As defined in FASB ASC 715, this assumption represents the rate of return on plan assets reflecting the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested or to be invested to provide for the benefits included in the benefit obligation. The assumption has been determined by reflecting expectations regarding future rates of return for the investment portfolio, with consideration given to the distribution of investments by asset class and historical rates of return for each individual asset class.

* Pension Benefits are included in personnel compensation.

Changes Since the Prior Valuation

The discount rate assumption for the postretirement benefit plan was changed from 4.19% as of August 31, 2018 to 3.00% as of August 31, 2019 to match the discount rate used for the Sponsor's pension plan.

There was a plan change effective January 1, 2016. NJEA offered a one-time cash payment to Medicare eligible participants to switch to a higher copay prescription drug plan. About 70% of the Medicare eligible participants are enrolled in the higher copay prescription plan. The future Medicare eligible retirees do not have the option to enroll in the new plan.

In addition, effective June 1, 2016, the NJEA medical insurance moved from Horizon BCBS to Continental Benefits and there were slight changes to the plan's design.

NJEA is recognizing the liability for an Officers' Compensation Plan during the year ended August 31, 2017. By policy, if the State denies NJEA Officers' pension service credit in its Public Employees System, NJEA provides a non-qualified deferred compensation benefit that is actuarially determined to be equivalent to the amount of public pension benefit he or she would have received based on such service credit. Beginning in 2011, the State has limited service credit to five years. As of August 31, 2019 and 2018, the projected benefit obligation liability was \$932,178 and \$760,197, respectively.

NJEA's overall strategy is for its Plans to invest in securities that will achieve a rate of return sufficient to meet or exceed the benefit plans' actuarial interest assumption. In general, NJEA's goal for its Plans is to maintain the following allocation ranges:

	Pension Benefits	Other Benefits
Equity securities	50%	65%
Debt securities	34%	30%
Real estate	8%	5%
Opportunity investment	8%	-

Following is the information about the fair value measurements of the Pension Plan's assets:

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (CONTINUED)

Basis of Fair Value Measurement:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT AT AUGUST 31, 2019

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations	\$46,319,104	\$46,319,104	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	17,025,091	17,025,091	-	-
International equity funds	16,352,164	16,352,164	-	-
Fixed income mutual funds	<u>273,229,275</u>	<u>273,229,275</u>	-	-
Total assets in the fair value hierarchy	352,925,634	<u>\$352,925,634</u>	<u>\$-</u>	<u>\$-</u>
Investments measured at NAV (A)	<u>73,364,459</u>			
Total investments	<u>\$426,290,093</u>			

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT AT AUGUST 31, 2018

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations	\$ 54,282,303	\$ 54,282,303	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	15,250,160	15,250,160	-	-
International equity funds	20,864,264	20,864,264	-	-
Fixed income mutual funds	217,198,843	217,198,843	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	<u>7,395,017</u>	<u>7,395,017</u>	-	-
Total assets in the fair value hierarchy	314,990,587	<u>\$314,990,587</u>	<u>\$-</u>	<u>\$-</u>
Investments measured at NAV (A)	<u>67,302,340</u>			
Total investments	<u>\$382,292,927</u>			

(A) In accordance with Subtopic 820-10, certain investments that are measured at fair value using the net asset value per share (or its equivalent) practical expedient have not been classified in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value amounts presented in this table are intended to permit reconciliation of the fair value hierarchy to the amounts presented in the Statement of Net Assets Available for Benefits.

The SEI Opportunity Collective Fund and SEI Core Property Collective Investment Fund are measured at fair value, without adjustment by the Plan, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2019.

In accordance with relevant accounting standards, the unfunded commitments and redemption frequency information and redemption notice periods are as follows at August 31, 2018:

	2019 Fair Value	2018 Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency
Common collective trust - opportunity hedge fund of funds:				
SEI Opportunity Collective Fund	\$32,431,869	\$30,975,306	\$-	Biannually
Common collective trust - real estate:				
SEI Core Property Collective Investment Trust	<u>40,932,590</u>	<u>36,327,034</u>	-	Quarterly
Total	<u>\$73,364,459</u>	<u>\$67,302,340</u>	<u>\$-</u>	

* - Withdrawal request is capped at 90% with a 10% hold back in escrow until the completion of the fund's annual audit.

- Withdrawals may be limited to 25% of the net asset value of the fund on any given redemption date in circumstances where the fund's Trustee believe that any such redemption could compromise the ongoing performance or operations of the fund.

The investment objective of the SEI Special Situations Collective Fund is to invest in a diversified strategy of hedge fund of funds.

The investment objective of the SEI Core Property Collective Investment Trust is to invest in funds that acquire, manage, and dispose of commercial real estate properties.

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (Continued)

Following is the information about the fair value measurements of the Other Postretirement Plan's assets:

	FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2019			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$16,580,301	\$16,580,301	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	33,578,313	33,578,313	-	-
International mutual funds	30,676,481	30,676,481	-	-
Balanced mutual funds	<u>8,948,084</u>	<u>8,948,084</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>
	<u>\$ 89,783,173</u>	<u>\$ 89,783,179</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

	FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2018			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$16,678,145	\$16,678,145	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	50,059,246	50,059,246	-	-
International mutual funds	<u>13,167,234</u>	<u>13,167,234</u>	-	-
	<u>\$79,904,625</u>	<u>\$79,904,625</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
The amount expected to be contributed to the plans for the year ended August 31, 2020 for pension benefits is \$6,000,000. Benefits expected to be paid during the ensuing four years and thereafter are approximately as follows:	\$ 18,470,132	19,271,443	\$ 6,271,093	6,836,981
	2022	19,927,746	7,254,432	7,254,432
	2023	20,497,093	8,144,589	8,144,589
	2024	21,094,300	8,496,809	8,496,809
	2025-2029	<u>114,482,032</u>	<u>49,824,475</u>	<u>49,824,475</u>
		<u>\$213,742,746</u>	<u>\$86,828,379</u>	<u>\$86,828,379</u>

NOTE 9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

NJEA is a member of the National Education Employees Assistance Fund (NEEAF). NEEAF is a not-for-profit corporation established for the purpose of guaranteeing loans for members of the National Education Association (NEA) and Participating Affiliates required during employment crises through pooling of credit of the NEA and the Participating Affiliates.

The NEEAF by-laws state that any State Association may become a member by delivering to the Corporation (NEEAF) a notice accepting membership; said notice to be accompanied by an irrevocable letter of credit (LOC), restricted cash, or line of credit; committing \$2.00 per State Association member on the basis of the number of active and educational support membership in the State Association as of January 15 of the membership year. The irrevocable letter of credit, restricted cash, or line of credit shall be for a period of at least 12 months to expire as of March 31 of any year and shall be renewed at its expiration in order to maintain continuing participatory rights.

For the period April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, NJEA designated \$345,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. For the period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018, NJEA designated \$356,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, there were no guaranteed loans to members outstanding. As of August 31, 2018 NEEAF terminated operations. NJEA has no current or future liability related to NEEAF as of August 31, 2018.

NOTE 10. LITIGATION

Certain claims, suits, and complaints arising in the ordinary course of business have been filed or are pending against NJEA. In the opinion of NJEA's management and legal counsel, the ultimate outcome of these claims will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position of NJEA.

NOTE 11. TAX STATUS

NJEA is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey and is qualified under the provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code as a labor organization exempt from Federal income tax.

The Bolivar L. Graham Intern Foundation, Inc., the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc., and the NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group are not-for-profit organizations incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey. They are qualified under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are exempt from Federal income tax.

Garden State Forward is a qualified organization under Section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code which provides for the exemption from Federal income tax of "exempt function income" of a political committee that is a separate segregated fund of an exempt organization which is not a political organization. Contributions received are exempt function income provided that the receipts are primarily expended for an exempt function, which is described in Note 1, or for some or all of its administrative expenses. However, interest income, if any, will be taxed.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to evaluate tax positions taken by NJEA and recognize a tax liability if NJEA has taken an uncertain position that, more likely than not, would not be sustained upon examination by the U.S. Federal, state, or local taxing authorities. NJEA is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress. Typically, tax years will remain open for three years; however, this may differ depending upon the circumstances of NJEA.

NOTE 12. CASH CONCENTRATIONS

NJEA places its cash with institutions deemed to be creditworthy. Cash balances may, at times, exceed insured deposit limits. As of August 31, 2019, NJEA had cash totaling \$13,505,956 in excess of FDIC insured coverage. This included the cash maintained in overnight sweeps accounts which invest in money market mutual funds which are not insured by the FDIC.

NOTE 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

NJEA has a common officer with the New Jersey Education Association Member Benefit Fund (the Member Benefit Fund). During the years ended August 31, 2019 and 2018, the Member Benefit Fund donated \$14,000 and \$9,000, respectively, to the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund.

NJEA has common officers with the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (the Center). During each of the years ended August 31, 2019 and 2018, NJEA donated \$750,000 to the Center for the purpose of providing professional learning experiences, resources, and research to educators.

NOTE 14. LONG-TERM DEBT

During the year ended August 31, 2013, NJEA obtained a note payable from Beneficial Bank totaling \$1,900,000. This note required monthly payments of \$38,505. The note payable has a variable interest rate and final payment was due on November 1, 2017. As of August 31, 2018 the note payable was paid in full.

Interest payments for the note payable totaled \$766 for the year ended August 31, 2018.

NOTE 15. LONG-TERM CAPITAL ASSETS

Management has elected to designate a portion of NJEA's investments and investment income for the purchasing of long term capital assets. As of August 31, 2019 and 2018, investments designated for this purpose totaled \$43,255,618 and \$46,568,779, respectively. Investment income earned on the designated investments totaled \$502,065 and \$3,807,179 for the years ending August 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

NOTE 16. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

NJEA invests in various investments. Investments are exposed to various risks such as economic, interest rate, market, and sector risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investments, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investments will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the Consolidated Statements of Financial Position.

The liabilities for accrued pension cost and accrued postretirement benefit cost - other are based on certain assumptions pertaining to interest rates, inflation rates, and participant demographics, all of which are subject to change. Due to uncertainties inherent in the estimations and assumptions process, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in these estimates and assumptions in the near term would be material to the financial statements.

NOTE 17. AVAILABILITY AND LIQUIDITY

The following represents NJEA's financial assets available within one year of the statements of financial position date for general expenditures at August 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Financial assets available within one year:		
Cash	\$ 13,755,956	\$ 11,126,955
Receivables	626,704	1,303,072
Investments	<u>149,859,153</u>	<u>137,408,958</u>
Total financial assets	164,241,813	149,838,985
Less amounts unavailable for general expenditures:		
Net assets with board-designated and donor restrictions	<u>3,164,042</u>	<u>5,299,040</u>
Financial Assets available to meet general expenditures within one year	<u>\$ 161,037,771</u>	<u>\$ 144,539,945</u>

NOTE 18. CHANGE IN ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLE

In August 2016, FASB issued ASU 2016-14, Not-for-Profit Entities (Topic 958): Presentation of Financial Statements of Not-for-Profit Entities. The update addresses the complexity and understandability of net asset classification, deficiencies in information about liquidity and availability of resources, and the lack of consistency in the type of information provided about expenses and investment return. NJEA has adjusted the presentation and terminology of these statements accordingly. The ASU has been applied retrospectively.

NOTE 19. NET ASSETS

Net assets with board-designated restrictions were as follows for the year ended August 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Specific Purpose		
F.L. Hipp Foundation	<u>\$3,139,042</u>	<u>\$3,191,697</u>
Total financial assets	<u>\$3,139,042</u>	<u>\$3,191,697</u>

Net assets without donor restrictions for the year ended August 31, 2019 and 2018 were as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
NJEA General Fund	\$(35,990,789)	\$32,566,090
B.L. Graham Foundations	1,012	1,012
F.L. Hipp Foundation	300,000	300,000
NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing	32,320	38,615
Eliminations	<u>(32,320)</u>	<u>(38,615)</u>
Total financial assets	<u>\$(35,689,777)</u>	<u>\$32,867,102</u>

Net assets with donor restrictions were as follows for the year ended August 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Garden State Forward	\$(1,690)	\$500,000
NJEA Disaster Relief Fund	<u>359,135</u>	<u>359,135</u>
Total financial assets	<u>\$357,445</u>	<u>\$859,135</u>

Net assets released from net assets with board-designated restrictions for the year ended August 31, 2019 were \$3,113,584.

NOTE 20. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

NJEA has evaluated subsequent events through December 17, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and they have been evaluated in accordance with relevant accounting standards.



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PROUD MOMENTS



The members of the **MILLTOWN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Middlesex) were proud to support their school's Parent EdCamp on Jan. 25. A survey was sent to parents to request the topics they were interested in discussing. MEA members facilitated most of the sessions. A keynote speaker kicked off the event. Over 25 sessions ran the gamut from academics to parenting to online safety and more.

The **JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Morris) is proud to have teamed up with the Jefferson Township Municipal Alliance Committee and district PTAs to host an event for parents and students, featuring speaker John Morello, who presented a lively program addressing substance abuse, bullying and depression. JTEA members staffed a table and gave out educational and prevention information to parents to help them talk with their children about these important issues.



The **MERCHANTVILLE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Camden) and its PRIDE Chairperson Sherry Iannucci were proud to welcome families to Merchantville School for parent conferences. Iannucci applied for a grant through the NJEA PRIDE in Public Education program to fund welcome table materials and goodies.

The **MINE HILL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION** (Morris) was proud to sponsor MHTA Family Game Night to give families a fun night out during the winter months. Families rotated through board games, music exploration and active games. The evening wrapped up with a large group dance. Each child went home with a Pride-funded drawstring bag. The NJEA Pride in Public Education program also funded the purchase of Giant Jenga and Giant Connect 4 games, which were big hits.





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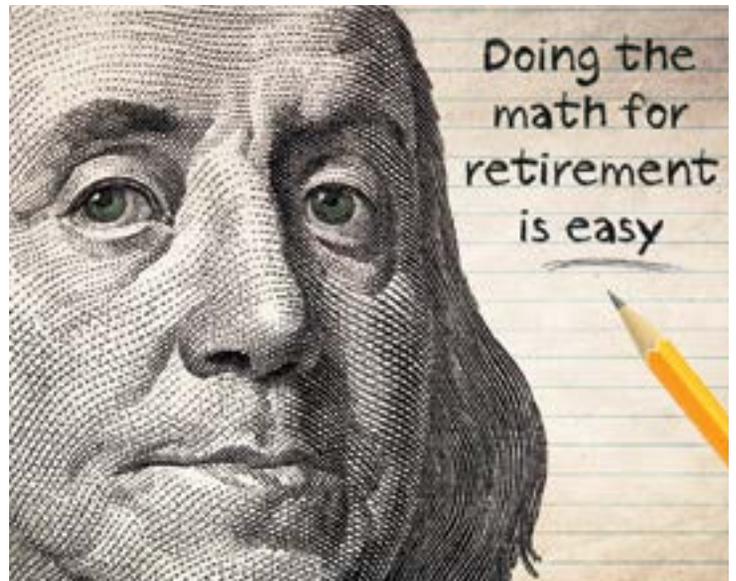
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RISING TO THE OCCASION

Schools in crisis, educators step up

As governments around the world work to mitigate the effects for the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, NJEA members are rising to the challenges of protecting their students and continuing to educate them despite extraordinary circumstances. On the same day that New Jersey announced its first death resulting from the novel coronavirus the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a pandemic. People in countries around the world are adjusting to life in the face of this pandemic, and educators are easing this difficult for transition for many families.

On the day the *Review* went to press (March 16), there were 98 confirmed cases of the novel coronavirus in the Garden State and more than 400 school districts had announced they would close for long period of times. Gov. Phil Murphy announced that all schools that had not already closed, would close no later than March 18.

This is unprecedented.

Murphy has assured education officials that the state will waive the 180-day requirement for students this school year. This is the first time since the law's passage that this has happened. School districts across the state are entering into extended periods of remote learning for the first time in our state's history. This means school will go on—learning will continue—even when class is not in physically in session.

As disruptions to daily life begin, educators are stepping up in every way one might imagine to help students, families and communities feel safe and prepared for extended school closures.

Prior to major announcements by school districts around the state, school nurses played a critical role in keeping schools safe. School nurses identified sick children, communicated with families and made sure entire school communities were safe. Without the guidance of these health care professionals, schools around the state could have faced many more challenges.

During school closures, school nurses will no doubt continue to assist students and families, using new tools to provide that critical support.

Educational support professionals (ESP) have played a critical role in keeping schools safe, and many around the state are poised to play an equally important role in helping students retain some semblance of normalcy as schools transitioned to long-term periods of remote learning.

Prior to this situation, it was ESPs, often students' most trusted adult role models at school, calming nerves and keeping schools safe by keeping them clean. It was school bus drivers who helped school nurses identify sick children before they entered the buildings. It was the custodians who worked longer hours and rearranged their daily schedules to ensure they could clean "high touch" areas, keeping everyone safe. It was paraprofessionals who helped comfort our schools' most vulnerable children, and, as schools moved to remote learning, the work was only beginning. It was ESPs in every job classification who stepped up in a time of transition to make sure that our schools keep working, even as most employees go home, so that our schools and communities are safer.

In districts everywhere, ESP members in every job category are working with district administrators to develop plans that meet the needs of students while taking all necessary measures to keep students, staff and communities safe. It's a difficult balance, and not every school will come up with the same solution. But in every situation, NJEA members will strive to do the right thing for our students and our communities.

For example, nearly 15% of students who attend New Jersey's public school receive free or reduced-priced lunches, and many schools intend to keep delivering those meals to those

students. Extraordinary circumstances call for extraordinary measures, and we've seen districts across the state respond with smart, safe plans to meet those needs. Where districts have worked in partnership with NJEA members, amazing things are happening.

Of course, teachers, as they so often do, made magic happen with almost no time. As March began, schools in New Jersey were not even considering a move to remote learning. Teachers were planning lessons as they always did. Yet as this crisis evolved, teachers made adjustments, teachers helped keep students informed and calm, and teachers did what they do best: teach children.

As the situation quickly evolved, thousands of teachers around the state made contingency plans with almost no notice for the sake of their students. They shifted their materials to new, online platforms they've never used before. They met, shared ideas, and collaborated to shift years of in-class instruction-related materials to online coursework. An almost impossible task that was completed while maintaining all regular duties. They did it all for children—all while seeing to the critical needs of their own children and, in many cases, their aging and vulnerable parents.

While no one is under the illusion that online learning is a substitute for in-person instruction, NJEA members have consistently sought to do the very best for their students under very challenging conditions.

This crisis is unlike any other our state—or nation, or world—has faced in recent memory, and educators have remained steadfast throughout. So as these uncertain times unfold before us, let us acknowledge the role educators play in keeping students safe and pushing learning forward. 



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Tuition
Rates!**

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Excellent schools must be able to reach all students with respect to race, gender, first language and disability.

At FDU, we are developing leaders who can guide schools to pursue both excellence and equity as mutual goals.

The program emphasizes rigor and access for leadership candidates.

- **Supervisor Certificate** – 100% online 2-semester program
- **Principal Certificate and M.A.** – 2-year program

More Than 20+ Graduate Degree & Certificate Programs in:

- Bilingual Education
- Educational Leadership
- Dyslexia
- ESL
- Instructional Technology
- Learning Disabilities
- Literacy/Reading
- Mathematical Foundations
- Pre-School, Elementary or Secondary Education

All programs are fully accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).



Personal. Global. Transformational.

PHONE: 201-692-2554 EMAIL: grad@fdu.edu

fdu.edu/soe

– CONVENIENT PROGRAM DELIVERY OPTIONS –

ON-CAMPUS: FLORHAM CAMPUS (MADISON, NJ) • METROPOLITAN CAMPUS (TEANECK, NJ)

ONLINE: FDU.EDU/ONLINE • **OFF-CAMPUS:** SELECT LOCATIONS STATEWIDE



Thursday July 16, 2020

8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Montclair State University

Our sessions offer opportunities to relax, reflect, and connect with other educators. We will discuss ways to integrate equity, inclusion, and technology into your classroom practices toward **transformative possibilities of our collective imagination and power as educators!**

Register at njea.org/rise

RSVP (Early Bird) \$29:

March 1, 2020 – April 9, 2020

RSVP (Regular) \$39:

April 10, 2020 – June 10, 2020

Keynote Speaker: Saber Khan

Saber Khan is a veteran educator with over fifteen years of experience teaching math, science, and computer science in public and private middle and high schools. He teaches multiple introductory and advanced computer science classes in creative coding and web development. Saber also organizes events and spaces for educators to engage with coding, ethics, equity and inclusion.

This summit is a merger of our Summer Professional Learning Institute and Techstock Conference. Eleven breakout sessions to choose two from, or one of two special three-hour sessions.

Escape Rooms: Puzzling Our Way to Increased Student Engagement

Google Classroom for Beginners / Intermediate Users

Microsoft Immersive Reader

Prezi and WeVideo

Rethinking Schools Resources for Social Justice Classrooms

Scratch Coding

Social Activism and Social Media

Supporting Your LGBTQ+ Students

Teacher Leadership Academy

Restorative Circle: Healing and Celebration (Special: 3-hour session)

Restorative Circle: Power and Freedom (Special: 3-hour session)

Bring your own device to all sessions