

# REVIEW

OCTOBER  
2020

njea.org



*an education and advocacy resource*



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# I AM NJEA

The Burlington County Special Services Education Association (Burlington) used an NJEA Pride grant to fund yard signs thanking local first responders.



The Hopewell Valley Education Association (Mercer) Pride in Public Education Committee, chaired by Lisa Strigel, proudly donated to the HV Mobile Food pantry on June 4. These funds were reallocated from events the association canceled due to COVID-19. HVEA members Kathy Neggia, Andrew Romanelli, Molly LaPorte, Lisa Strigel, and Danielle Arias shopped at Costco for groceries and hygiene products, using \$3,700 of reallocated grant funds.



The Vineland Education Association (Cumberland) showed its support for a local community charity by reallocating \$9,000 of NJEA Pride grant money toward a substantial donation of various food and beverages for the Vineland Soup Kitchen.

The Linden Education Association (Union) repurposed its NJEA Pride grants to support the purchase of personal protective equipment for Trinitas Hospital and baby monitors for Rahway Hospital. They also made donations to support the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless and the Linden Emergency Food Relief Fund. They collaborated with the unions representing police and firefighters in Linden to purchase shirts for the Class of 2020.





# FEATURES



## 16 | WHY WE NEED MORE BLACK MEN IN THE CLASSROOM

Close your eyes and think about a teacher. Who comes to mind? More than likely you didn't think of someone who is Black, Latinx, Asian, or someone whose lineage is from a predominantly Muslim country. You probably thought of a white person. Being more descriptive, you more than likely thought of a white female. All children benefit from a more diverse teaching force, but Black male students in particular need to see Black men as teachers.

BY SUNDJATA SEKOU



## 22 | ELECTIONS 2020

By Nov. 3, most New Jerseyans will have voted by mail to elect a U.S. president, a U.S. senator, 12 U.S. representatives, and two state legislators. Learn more about the NJEA PAC endorsement process and read a statement from each endorsed candidate.



## 28 | AN APP(TITUDE) FOR HELPING

Computer science students at Point Pleasant Borough High School develop apps to meet the social-emotional and special learning needs of their fellow students. This includes the Depression Anxiety and Wellness Network (DAWN) app, built not only through a deep knowledge of coding, but through the personal experiences of the students who created the app.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



## 32 | AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY RESOURCES FOR THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The year 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of New Jersey's and our nation's break from England to seek independence. There are many opportunities to continue collecting, sharing, building upon and developing new, inclusive resources about New Jersey's place in the revolutionary war story, including African American contributions. Find resources to help your students learn the often hidden story of slavery in New Jersey and the resilience of the state's African Americans.

BY SUE KOZEL

## 36 | VIRTUAL FEEDBACK TO FOSTER STRONG LEARNERS



Many subtle classroom nuances that provide students with valuable feedback—both verbal and nonverbal—do not transfer as well across the internet. But there is a body of research indicating that with intentional planning among staff, feedback could be just as effective when given in the virtual learning environment as it is when given in the classroom.

BY ASHLEY LIPUT



# COLUMNS

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 7***First in the nation***THE ADVOCATE 8***Know. Lead. Act.***THE BULLETIN BOARD 10***Cool stuff to check out***THE NJEA REPORT 12***Education in the news***JUSTICE 20***Dear educators***HEALTH AND SAFETY 48***Health and Safety Committees***SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY 50***Workshops and conferences***SPEAK OUT 51***PUSHOUT***MEMBER BENEFITS 53***Get your money's worth***PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 55***Teacher leaders evolving***PRESERVICE MEMBERS 56***Preservice at the NJEA Convention***RETIRED MEMBERS 58***News and events***COMING UP 61***What's next at NJEA***FINAL EXAM 62***Elections have consequences*

# \$4.9 Billion



**Gov. Phil Murphy's proposed state contribution to the pension system. In three years, Gov. Murphy has contributed more to the pension system than any of his predecessors.**

Source: Governor's Fiscal 2021 Revised Budget Proposal.

# 40

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## On the cover



Irvington Education Association (IEA) member Sundjata Sekou. His feature story, "Why We Need More Black Men in the Classroom" appears on pages 16-19. To ensure proper social distancing, the cover photo was taken at the IEA office rather than in Sekou's classroom.

**PHOTO BY**  
LAUREN GREENFIELD



## GOOD NEWS

**For the second consecutive year, New Jersey's public schools have been named the best in the nation by Education Week!**

Source: "Quality Counts,"  
Education Week – [bit.ly/nj1edweek](https://bit.ly/nj1edweek)



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# REVIEW

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## MEMBERSHIP

Active professional: \$991 (full time); \$198.20 (full time \*low-earner); \$495.50 (part time); \$495.50 (on leave); \$198.20 (part time \*low-earner). Active supportive \$483 (full time); \$96.60 (full time \*low-earner); \$241.50 (part time); \$96.60 (part time \*low-earner); \$241.50 (on leave). Retired professional: \$87; \$1,080 (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*. \*Low earner threshold 2020-21 is \$21,200.





# FIRST IN THE NATION TWO YEARS IN A ROW

I was so pleased and proud when *Education Week* once again named New Jersey's public schools the best in the nation for the second year in a row. We have often been among the top states, but it was so gratifying to see all of our hard work, advocacy on behalf of our students and colleagues, talent, training, and tenacity pay off with the top spot.

As we face new challenges, this achievement is a bright spot that I hope will encourage and motivate us all to continue the excellent work we have done and to grow and change as educators and as advocates. We can only be number one in the nation when we are number one for every student in our schools. In these most challenging times, we know that our members are worried, concerned, and anxious about the unknowns of this year. But we also know that our members are going to excel, as they always do, in their caring and dedication to providing a quality education for all students.

In order to be excellent, we need the support of administrators, parents and public officials. None of us wants to see our hard work eroded by public policy that does not meet the needs of our students or our staff. That is why political engagement is such a vital component in building a truly excellent system of public education—and it must be felt at all levels of government.

In this issue, you will learn more about NJEA PAC's endorsed candidates for federal and state elections. The 125-member NJEA Political Action Committee is a committee like any other at NJEA: it is composed of NJEA members who interview and evaluate candidates before determining who will best represent the interests of our students, our members and our families.

I'm proud to share these endorsements with you because they represent a lot of hard work, research and engagement by NJEA members, for NJEA members, to help you exercise your fundamental right to vote.

There are many things that go into your decision on how you cast your vote; NJEA is, as always, a resource to help you make informed decisions. We know the impact that elected officials have on our country, our state and our communities. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about why these candidates have earned NJEA PAC's endorsement.

*Marie Blistan*



NJEA President Marie Blistan traveled to Cape May to help campaign for the election of Amy Kennedy to Congress representing CD-2. From left: Kennedy, NJEA Associate Director in the Executive Office Gary Melton, Blistan, NJREA member Bob Blistan, NJREA President Judy Perkins, NJEA Government Relations Director Al Beaver, and Patrick Kennedy.

## OFFICERS ONLINE

### MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: NJEA AMISTAD TASK FORCE recommendations & next steps—making progress. NJEA member Tamar LaSure-Owens, Sec-Treas. Steve Beatty and staff Al Beaver, Gary Melton, & Steve Swetsky meeting with McGraw Hill regarding the role of textbooks, primary sources, and how we can collaborate to move the TRUTH forward!

On Sept. 10, Marie Blistan shared an image from an online meeting that she and NJEA members and staff had with textbook distributor McGraw Hill. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate and reimagine the role that textbooks and primary sources have in perpetuating false, overly rosy elements of our nation's past, particular when it comes to teaching about slavery. The meeting is part of NJEA's ongoing work toward social, racial and economic justice for New Jerseyans.

### SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: Happy Labor Day... and thank you!

On Sept. 7, Sean M. Spiller wished all NJEA members a happy Labor Day in a video he posted on Facebook. "As we do every year, it's time for us to celebrate labor," Spiller said. "From shifting to distance teaching and learning on a moment's notice, to fighting to ensure a safe return to students and staff, this year, educators and labor everywhere deserve a very special thank you."

### STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@Steve BeattyNJEA: The governor today has signed into law S-2302/A-4140—our subcontracting bill—the results of a long fought organizing campaign by so many on every level. Now our ESP brothers and sisters have not only gained due process rights, but protection from outsourcing (firing) without negotiations. With that, our three biggest legislative priorities are done. We did that. You all did that. As long a struggle as it was for years, we have achieved Chapter 78 relief and job justice for all of our ESPs. The most important title in our organization is member. And today, I'm especially proud to be one. Congrats to all of us!

Steve Beatty celebrated the signing of a Job Justice bill in September. The new law will prevent school districts from privatizing their employees during an active collective bargaining agreement. Gov. Phil Murphy signed the third and final bill that NJEA members worked for on their #FixTheUnfairness campaign, capping off a historic, member-driven campaign with an important legislative win.

# KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS IN THE COVID-19 ERA

### Download the Educators' Bill of Rights

NJEA has developed an Educators' Bill of Rights that enumerates your rights as an NJEA member and as a public school employee. The text which follows is available as a PDF that can be downloaded from [njea.org/covid](https://njea.org/covid).

#### Right to Teach

Members have the right to teach and work in a safe, secure, orderly environment.

#### Right to Organize

Members have the right to organize individuals to address concerns, including engaging a school district health and safety committee, school board members, other elected representatives, community members, and/or parents.

#### Right to Report

Members have the right to report violations of safety requirements to the county superintendent, county/local board of health, and New Jersey Departments of Education and Health.

#### Right to Request

Members have the right to request colleagues and visitors uphold district mandates, including the wearing of masks and physical distancing during the workday.

#### Right to Technology

Members have the right to employer-provided technology devices and professional development to provide high-quality remote instruction.

#### Right to Request/Paid Leave

Members who have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19 or who are seeking treatment for COVID-19 symptoms have the right to request paid leave in accordance with their local association contract, as well as up to 10 days (80 hours) of paid leave (up to \$511/day) under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA).

Members who are unable to work because of a need to provide care for a family member who is sick or subject to quarantine due to COVID-19, have a right to request paid leave if available under the local contract, as well as up to 10 days (80 hours) of two-thirds paid leave (up to \$200/day) under the FFCRA.

Members whose school or childcare provider is closed due to COVID-19 and who are unable to work due to a need to provide childcare for a child, have the right to request up to 10 days (80 hours) of paid leave up to two-thirds of an employee's daily rate of pay (up to \$200/day) for employees under the FFCRA.

Members who have been employed for at least 30 days have a right to up to an additional 10 weeks of paid expanded family medical leave at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay (up to \$200/day) where an employee is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19 under the FFCRA.

#### Right to Reasonable Accommodations

Members have the right to ask for reasonable accommodations if they have an underlying health condition that puts them at greater risk for infection, serious illness, or death if infected with the COVID-19 virus.

#### Right to Assistance

Members have the right to ask for assistance from colleagues, the district administration, school board, superintendent and their local association in dealing with the challenges of COVID-19.

#### Right to Bargain

Local associations, with the assistance of their UniServ Field Rep, have the right to bargain protection of pay and leave benefits if a member exceeds the allowable entitlements under the FFCRA.

## PROTECTING THE VOTE DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

### A lesson from history

The 2020 Election is around the corner and like so many things in our lives these days, it will look very different.

For more than 200 years, through civil and world wars and disease, federal elections have taken place. And, except for the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic, a midterm election year, during which the Democratic party under President Woodrow Wilson sought to maintain control of Congress, this country has never been faced with a crisis that comes close to resembling the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Because of the continued high rate of transmission of the virus, in November 2020 every voter needs to have a plan to vote. What will your plan look like? The following will help guide you in making your plan.

### Am I registered to vote?

- You can check at [voter.svrs.nj.gov/registration-check](https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/registration-check) or call 1-877-NJ-VOTER (1-877-658-6837); or download the NJ Elections Mobile App on Apple or Google Play.

### What do I need to register?

**The voter registration deadline is Oct. 13.**

New Jersey recently launched the state's first online voter registration tool. The online platform allows a voter to provide their voter registration information electronically. If you decide to register online, visit [voter.svrs.nj.gov/register](https://voter.svrs.nj.gov/register).

You will need your date of birth and **one of the following** forms of identification:

- A current and valid driver's license or Identification Card issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.
- A Social Security number.

If you decide to register by paper, you can download the form at [nj.gov/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml#vrf](https://nj.gov/state/elections/voter-registration.shtml#vrf) and send it to the County Commissioner of Registration. The address is on the paper form.

### I am already registered, how do I cast my vote?

- All active registered voters in New Jersey will automatically receive their ballots in the mail, at the address where the voter is registered.
- Once received, your paper ballot must be filled out, signed, sealed and returned.



## What are my options to return the ballot?

You have four options:

- **Mail it:** If you mail your ballot, it **MUST** be postmarked on or before Nov. 3 and be received by your county's board of elections on or before Nov. 10.
- **Use a ballot drop box:** Every county in New Jersey will have secure ballot drop boxes that will be open until 8 p.m. on Nov. 3. You can find yours here: [nj.gov/state/elections/vote-secure-drop-boxes.shtml](http://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-secure-drop-boxes.shtml).
- **Drop it off at a board of election office:** You can deliver your ballot in person to your county's board of elections office by 8 p.m. on Nov. 3, 2020.
- **Visit a polling place:** You can bring your ballot to your polling place by 8 p.m. on Election Day.

## What if I decide to vote in person?

Due to the ongoing risk of exposure to and spread of the COVID-19 virus, while provisional paper ballots can be cast in person on Election Day, Nov. 3, the election is being conducted primarily with vote-by-mail ballots.

Because of this shift, there will be at least one polling place in each municipality in the state, and each county will operate at least 50% of its normal polling location capacity.

**It is important that you** check with your local government to identify where you should go to vote as some locations may be changed. You can also visit this website to find your polling location: [nj.gov/state/elections/vote-polling-location.shtml](http://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-polling-location.shtml).

Accommodations will be made for voters with disabilities.

If you choose in person voting, mask up and be safe.

## How can I check that my ballot has been counted?

You can track and check your status of your ballot at [nj.gov/state/elections/vote-track-my-ballot.shtml](http://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-track-my-ballot.shtml).

## DOESN'T #ONLYWHENITSSAFE NEED AN APOSTROPHE?

Several members wrote to NJEA concerned that the cover of the September *NJEA Review* was missing an apostrophe in the hashtag #OnlyWhenItsSafe. While the phrase "Only when it's safe" would have an apostrophe, Twitter hashtags do not include punctuation.

Hashtags are a tool for Twitter users to find tweets related to their interests. #OnlyWhenItsSafe is the hashtag adopted by those campaigning around New Jersey and the U.S. to ensure that schools are safe for students and staff in the wake of COVID-19.

On Twitter, any character other than a letter or number breaks the hashtag. Users of Twitter find posts by searching a hashtag. If the poster on the cover of the September *Review* were written with #OnlyWhenIt'sSafe, Twitter would read the hashtag as "#OnlyWhenIt," ignoring anything that followed the apostrophe. That is why there is no apostrophe in that hashtag.

## WHERE'S MY CALENDAR?

For generations, NJEA members have placed the iconic NJEA tent calendar on their desks and other workspaces in public schools. New Jersey public school students who grew up to become New Jersey public school teachers or educational support professionals remember seeing the calendar on their teachers' desks—making it almost a right-of-passage to receive a tent calendar of their own for their desks once they became NJEA members themselves.

In any other school year, it would be rare to walk into a public school classroom or office and not see the calendar. But because this fall's circumstances preclude so many locals from safely distributing the calendar in person, this year's calendar is a little different.

Instead of the traditional tent calendar, NJEA has created a wall calendar that can be reproduced at NJEA's headquarters in Trenton and mailed on request. That process also allows it to be updated if needed in this year when the date and format of future events is always tentative.

To receive your calendar, go to [njea.org/calendar-order](http://njea.org/calendar-order) and order a copy.



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# COOL STUFF



## FREE PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES FROM THE NEW JERSEY STATE BAR FOUNDATION

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) is a nonprofit educational and philanthropic organization. NJSBF offers a variety of free law-related, civics and violence prevention education for New Jersey educators and their students. The programs address a wide range of topics and offer a broad menu of materials, including:

- Bullying, school climate, conflict resolution and peer mediation.
- Social-emotional learning and anti-bias training.
- Breaking Bias: Lessons from the Amistad
- Holocaust education.
- The Bill of Rights.
- Law Fair Competition and programs for grades 3-6.
- Law Fair Adventure Competition for grades 7-8.
- High School Mock Trial Competition.
- Mock Trial Webinars.
- Courtroom art contest for high school students.
- A blog, newsletters and law-related publications.

These are just some of NJSBF services. All are available free of charge. For more information, download the PDF available at [njea.org/njsbfresources](http://njea.org/njsbfresources).

Look for NJSBF online at [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org) or call 1-800-FREE-LAW. You can follow the NJSBF on social media—@NJStateBarFdn can be found on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.



## LEAD4CHANGE: A STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Lead4Change is a leadership curriculum with a Community Service Framework that works in a virtual, classroom or club setting. It is designed for grades 6-12.

Lead4Change provides access to leadership lessons and service project plan. Complete a service project and enter the Lead4Change Challenge for a chance to win up to \$10,000.

Lead4Change is free to educators. Learn more at [Lead4Change.org/NEA](http://Lead4Change.org/NEA).



## SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORTS RESEARCH OF NEW JERSEY

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

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

Applications for the spring rotation will be accepted until March 1, with announcements made March 15. Visit [njsaa.org](http://njsaa.org) for more information, and look for the student research scholarship under the awards tab.



## TOUGH TIMES? AID-NJEA CAN HELP

The AID-NJEA helpline has served NJEA members and their families for over 10 years. NJEA members and their families have access to this free and confidential service 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Educators and school counselors are on the line from noon until 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and until 6 p.m. on Fridays to provide peer-to-peer support and information to callers. In addition, University Behavioral Health Care provides mental health professionals who answer the helpline during all other hours for 24/7 coverage.

Callers seeking help from AID-NJEA can count on:

- Help from a staff of Education Support Specialists experienced in education and trained in behavioral health
- Immediate personal response — a “real voice” with no buttons to push
- Access to thousands of resources from the AID-NJEA Information Directory
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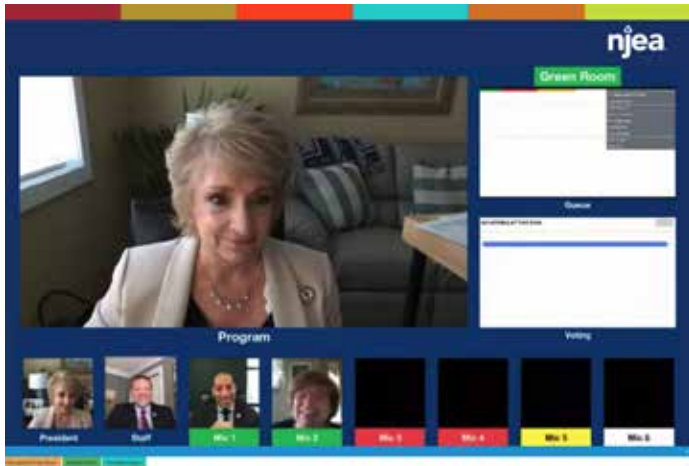
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# NJEA Report

## Blistan delivers annual "State of Our Union" at NJEA Delegate Assembly



The September DA meeting was virtual, with speakers "stepping" to "microphones." At "Mic 2" delegate Susan Dziob asks NJEA President Marie Blistan a question about meeting rules.

Beginning in 2018, NJEA President Marie Blistan began the tradition of delivering an annual "State of Our Union" overview at the September Delegate Assembly meeting in place of a standard president's report.

"I wanted to highlight the accomplishments, especially during our times of strife and take the time to celebrate the successes of our union as a collective body," Blistan said. "I also wanted to note what we saw as challenges for this next upcoming school year."

Blistan began her speech where she left off last year, by listing the challenges the association faced as we entered the 2019-20 school year. These included organized and well-funded anti-union campaigns aimed at dismantling NJEA's role as a powerful advocate for teachers and educational support professionals (ESPs) in New Jersey, privatization threats against ESPs, amplifying the value of community colleges, diversifying the teacher workforce, and ensuring that the state meets its obligation to fully fund the pension system.

"Then there is perhaps our greatest challenge," Blistan said. "A challenge that never ends or subsides: the challenge to remain relevant to our members, the challenge to engage our members in our work. Because when our members are engaged, the work that we do, the advocacy that we pursue is our members' work!"

### RETAINING AND EXPANDING MEMBERSHIP

"I am happy to report that the evidence of our efforts reflects the support of our members and the support of our new people entering the profession," Blistan said.

Blistan reported on the concerted effort made by NJEA members and staff to promote membership. Using the Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act of 2018, local associations in every region of the state have identified potential

members for dedicated outreach. Blistan made special note of increased transparency in membership procedures and a new digital membership form available at [njea.org/join](http://njea.org/join).

"As an example of the fruits of this labor the Cherry Hill Education Association in Camden County, has just reported that all the new incoming potential members, the largest group of potential new members in its history, joined the union," Blistan said.

Blistan also addressed *Rosenblatt v. Jersey City*, a case that sought to end negotiated agreements that provide for full-time-release presidents. In addition to winning a stay in the New Jersey State Supreme Court of an adverse decision, members rallied around their presidents in locals where full-time-release presidents were assigned district work.

"The support sent a message to boards of education that members value their leaders and this work and also educated the newer members on how quickly their jobs could be at the whim of politics rather than the professional treatment that they have earned," Blistan said.

Blistan lauded the work of the NJEA Early Career Network.

"Since the attacks began on our profession almost 10 years ago, we all also know educators who began in our profession and left," Blistan said. "The NJEA Early Career Network created and provided online training to support our members in the topics that they identified."

These topics included programs and events covering student loan debt, wellness, what NJEA has to offer, social events, and help in the early years in the profession or on the job.

### RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC

"It's not surprising that, despite a pandemic, despite the chaos caused by the pandemic, and despite unprecedented challenges, NJEA members also kept learning," Blistan said.

NJEA provided members with up-to-date information and guidance on representing members' and students' interests through three new websites. *Learning.njea.org* was developed to offer professional development webinars. *NJEA.org/covid* provides health and safety information, as well as guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and Department of Health. *NJEAtogether.org* provides resources and ideas for remote teaching and an opportunity for members to share their stories and for members of the public to thank educators.

Blistan also highlighted "NJTV Learning Live," which was created by New Jersey Teacher of the Year Kimberly Dickstein Hughes in conjunction with Vice President Sean M. Spiller, the NJDOE and NJTV. The show provided televised lessons for grades 3-6 and four hours of daily programming taught by our outstanding educators. It began April 6 and ran through June.

"We didn't just learn, we shared the incredible stories from our members—in every job classification—from communities around the state," Blistan said. "We created special public media campaign—TV commercials as well as social media ads, all showcasing our members—to reinforce that schools were open and working, and to highlight the importance of ESPs during remote learning."

Blistan also reported on NJEA's standards for reopening including the association's comprehensive report, the NJEA Education Recovery Plan which has received national recognition. She pointed out that when school buildings were closed in March one of NJEA's first actions was to urge the governor to make sure all employees should continue to be paid. One of the first things the governor did, Blistan noted, was to issue an executive order that directed all districts to pay all school employees during the remote learning.

She commended the work of the NJEA Research and Economic Services Division for its School Reopening Survey, which over 27,000 members responded to, and the intentional focus of NJEA Member Benefits to respond to member's needs in a critical time.

"This is a tribute to the work that NJEA did to get a governor elected who respects public education and school employees, all of whom saw the relevancy and value of their union voice!" Blistan said.

## REPRESENTING MEMBERS

"As educators, we deserve to be well compensated for our work, and as a union, we continue to fight for respect through decent compensation and quality, affordable health benefits," Blistan said. "We changed Chapter 78 to Chapter 44. In doing so, we put money back in our members' pockets without losing benefits."

In addition to a discussion of the health benefits relief bill, Blistan hailed the enactment of the two ESP Job Justice bills, which provides educational support professionals (ESPs) with due-process rights and protections against privatization of their work.

"The attacks against our ESPs to privatize and fire them without due process continued this past year, and so we became even more committed to getting our two ESP bills passed through the legislature so that Gov. Murphy could sign them into law," Blistan said.

Murphy signed the due-process bill on Aug. 13 following its June passage in the Legislature. On Sept. 11, he signed the anti-privatization bill, which had initially passed both houses of the Legislature by June. But differences in the bill needed to be reconciled before it could be sent to the governor.

Blistan also addressed the work of representing ESP members' interest at the bargaining table.

"Throughout this year, our Research and UniServ divisions continued to assist our locals with collective bargaining, and our latest information from research is that our ESPs are beginning to achieve increased salary settlements."

## DIVERSIFYING THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE

"We don't just talk about diversifying the educator workforce, we work at it," Blistan said. "From our Professional Development (PD) and Organizing divisions to Human Resources to the Executive Office to government relations, there was an intentional focus to reach out and address our racial and social justice priorities."

With an NEA Media Grant through the Communications Division, NJEA ran parallel and intersecting media campaigns to encourage more people of color to pursue careers in public education to encourage all potential college students to pursue New Jersey Community Colleges.

Blistan noted the work of staff in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division for launching NJEA's REAL Movement: Racial Equity, Affirmation and Literacy as well as leading RISE: The Radical Imagination Summit for Educators in July.

Through the Organizing Division, the Members of Color Network has grown into a core part of NJEA within less than a year, holding meetings and conversations with members in every county, and helping build an

association with leaders and staff who represent the diversity of the state.

Blistan noted that one indicator that the association is moving in the right direction was increased participation by members of color in the annual NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference. In 2019, 234 members of color attended the conference; in 2020, 467 attended—an 83% increase.

Blistan pointed to NJEA's commitment to the Amistad Curriculum mandate, including the creation of the Amistad Journey—an NJEA-funded program through the NJDOE that will take educators to the sites of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in Africa and the U.S.

Blistan also pointed to NJEA's work with its own staff.

"We continued to encourage both governance and staff to participate in an intense three-day training called Undoing Racism," Blistan said. "Our session last fall yielded over 80 staff members and governance leaders participating."

The NJEA Human Resources Division partnered with the NJEA staff union, the United Staff Association, to form a Design Committee and a Feedback Committee to offer trainings in unconscious bias.

Blistan also discussed NJEA's hiring practices.

"As we work to continue to diversify our teaching force, we are also dedicated to diversifying our staff," Blistan said. "As one example, for the most recent two years, we've hired 38 consultants, 82% were female and 61% were members of color. Since our consultant pool is often on the track for full-time employment, this is significant. This is change."

Consultants are NJEA members who are part-time staff members in the UniServ, Professional Development, Communications, and Research divisions.

## THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

As during her 2019 address, Blistan concluded her remarks by looking to the challenges ahead.

"Reopening plans and working in any form throughout the COVID pandemic

will continue to be the primary goal to address the challenges and needs of our members in the coming months," Blistan said. "We are working to ensure our members are prepared, protected and ready to lead the way and are going to demand the resources for health and safety and for the education of our students."

She noted the inequities that have long existed in our school system from a statewide perspective.

"We are committed to getting through this pandemic, learning from our experiences, and addressing those inequities as we move forward," she said.

Blistan discussed the need to elect Joe Biden as the next president of the United States.

"NJEA is a nonpartisan union as we do not vote based on 'party' lines," Blistan said. "We vote for public education. It's crystal clear that Vice President Joe Biden, and his running mate Kamala Harris, are the only candidates who support our profession, who support public education, who support unions and our members!"

Blistan also discussed the challenges for fairer charter school legislation, the protection and fortification of public education from Pre-K through community college, the full funding of the pension system, high-quality health benefits in retirement, and adequate funding of public education.

"New Jersey's public schools were rated Number One in the nation last week for having the best quality public schools," Blistan said. "That is a testament to our members and a testament to this union, which has advocated and fought for working conditions that enable us to provide the learning conditions conducive to student learning!"

“  
As educators, we deserve  
to be well compensated for  
our work, and as a union,  
we continue to fight for  
respect through decent  
compensation and quality,  
affordable health benefits.”

# Murphy signs anti-privatization law



During the NJEA Delegate Assembly meeting on Sept. 12, Gov. Phil Murphy stopped by to discuss the anti-privatization law he had signed the day before. On screen for the virtual meeting are (clockwise from left) Murphy, NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.

On Sept. 12, a day after Gov. Phil Murphy signed landmark law that places restrictions on how and when public school employers can subcontract the work of educational support professionals (ESPs), he addressed the NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA). The new law protects ESPs and others at risk of privatization in the state's public schools and community colleges.

S-2303/A-4140, the anti-privatization bill signed into law on Sept. 11, provides common-sense job protections for ESPs. It prevents boards of education from privatizing the work of its ESPs while a collective bargaining agreement is in effect. It also places conditions on how a board of education can enter into a subcontracting arrangement when a collective bargaining agreement expires: the employer must provide written notice and must offer the local association the opportunity to meet and discuss the decision to subcontract and negotiate over its impact.

The law also mandates that 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.

The signing of this bill follows the governor's enactment of Ch. 78 relief on July 1 and due-process protections for ESP on Aug. 14.

"I was incredibly proud fulfill my commitment and sign my name to Ch. 78 relief for every NJEA member and educator," Murphy said. "I was proud in August to fulfill my commitment to enact Job Justice to protect our ESPs—that includes the due-process law I signed last month and the anti-subcontracting law that I put on the books yesterday."

Blistan recalled Murphy's first introduction to members when he attended the 2016 NJEA Convention prior to his election.

"In that first introduction you firmly pledged your support for Ch. 78 relief and Job Justice for ESPs," Blistan said. "And you promised that when those bills reached your desk, that you would sign them. We took you at your word and we got to work to organize to get those three bills to your desk."

Murphy called the ESP Job Justice laws "no-brainers."

"We are all educators as Marie, Sean, Steve their colleagues reminded me from the moment we met," Murphy said. "Every adult that a kid comes in contact with in school is an educator."

NJEA President Marie Blistan applauded Murphy for his long-standing commitment to all educators, including ESPs."

"You made sure that even when our buildings were closed, our ESP members continued to be employed and paid," Blistan said. "Our position from the beginning was that there is a role for every school employee. You stood above and beyond everyone else, governor, in this country, and you led the way elevating our ESPs like no one before."

## BLISTAN HIGHLIGHTS MURPHY'S RESPECT FOR EDUCATORS

In her introduction of Murphy to the DA, Blistan recounted Murphy's commitment to NJEA members.

"Gov. Murphy listens to the voice of educators on education policy issues," Blistan said. "He promised to change the hostile negative rhetoric about public schools and about the work that we do. Both as a candidate and as a governor he has lived up to what he promised on that state in 2016."

Blistan noted the governor's accessibility to NJEA members, lauding his presence at several NJEA Conventions, the NJEA ESP Conference, two DA meetings, and other events.

"Gov. Murphy never wavered in the commitment on return to full pension funding," Blistan said. "He knows that it's not only fiscally responsible, but he sees it as a moral responsibility for New Jersey to keep its promise to educators. And with his leadership it has been kept."

Blistan also pointed out the governor's actions to cancel statewide standardized tests and his common-sense approach to educator evaluation during the school building shutdown.

Murphy commended educators for the actions they took to help make New Jersey safe.

"The start of this school year has brought challenges unlike any we have ever seen, and my respect for you and each and every one of your colleagues has only grown during this time," Murphy said. "I commit to remain your partner every step of the way. I remain committed unambiguously to your safety."

# DA recognizes service of accomplished educators

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) paused from its deliberations at its Sept. 12 meeting to recognize the service of two accomplished educators.

## BLISTAN RECOGNIZES ESP OF THE YEAR

Stacy Yanko, a guidance secretary at Hopatcong High School, is the 2020 NJEA Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the year. She is the president of the Hopatcong Office Personnel Association and was the first ESP to serve as president of the Sussex County Education Association.

"Stacey doesn't just make a difference for the students she works with, she makes a big difference for the colleagues she works with," Blistan said.

In her remarks, Yanko reflected on the impact of the pandemic and the value of the contributions every staff member, regardless of job title can make.

"I see our association like a baseball team," Yanko said. "We need all the different positions: infielders, outfielders, catchers, pitchers and coaches. Each of our members serves an active role in what we accomplish. Some are on the field every day, and others will do what they can when they can and when they receive an ask. But each play in the game matters."



“

***“Kimberly represented our profession with grace, class and style.”***

#### SPILLER LAUDS TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Kimberly Dickstein Hughes, an English teacher at Haddonfield High School, is the 2019-20 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

“Kimberly showcased the level of excellence that New Jersey educators possess, and she represented our profession with grace, class and style,” NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller said.

Knowing that many students lacked access to the devices necessary for virtual learning, Dickstein Hughes turned to public television bringing together a network of teachers across the state who recorded 55-minute lessons for daily broadcast on NJTV.

“Even before the crisis, Kimberly displayed this kind of leadership, innovation, and expertise in education to benefits her students, her colleagues and our state,” Spiller said. “She is an educator who wants to amplify the voice of other educators.”

In her remarks, Dickstein Hughes demonstrated that she not only seeks to amplify the voices of educators, but the voices of her students as well. She credited the structure of her remarks to her students in general, and one named Michael in particular.

“I am grateful for my colleagues whom I humbly serve and work alongside,” Dickstein Hughes said. “The ones who made that possible. I did nothing alone. We did this together.”

#### SPILLER UPDATES DA ON STATE’S HIGHER ED BUDGET

In his report to the DA, Spiller provided updates on funding for higher education in the governor’s proposed budget, the reopening plans of the state’s community colleges, and the association’s work with its health and safety partners.

Spiller reported that NJEA is engaged in a lobbying effort with our higher

education members to restore a proposed \$25 million cut to funding for New Jersey’s community colleges in the Fiscal Year 2021 state budget. NJEA is working with the New Jersey Council of Community Colleges to make sure all of the funding is restored.

“We are all engaged in a lobbying campaign to make sure those dollars are restored,” Spiller said. “It’s important that our community colleges receive the funding that they need.”

Spiller also reported on the re-opening plans at the state’s community colleges and NJEA’s work to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. NJEA continues to partner with the New Jersey Work Environment Council, and particularly the expertise of its industrial hygienists, to examine school reopening plans at all levels.

#### BEATTY REPORTS ON PANDEMIC RELIEF

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the DA approved at its May 2020 a recommendation to repurpose a minimum of 50% of the unexpended funds from the virtual or cancelled programs of the 2019-20 NJEA budget. These funds are to be utilized to support members and local associations in dealing with the effects of the current pandemic and be reexamined by the Budget Committee in November 2020 if any funds remain.

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty reported that the NJEA Budget Committee has discussed establishing a committee to determine how the budgeted funds, earmarked for pandemic relief, would be allocated to support members and local and county associations in handling the effects of the pandemic.

To that end, delegates to the Sept. 12 DA meeting approved a motion to that the DA convene a committee to determine allocation for the pandemic relief funds.

In addition to presenting the report of the NJEA Budget Committee, which can be found in “NJEA Reports to the Delegate Assembly,” available at [njea.org/da](http://njea.org/da), Beatty updated members on NJEA’s 200K conversations initiative, the association’s work with the Center for Future Educators, LBGTQIA initiatives, and training for members on the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).

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# WHY WE NEED MORE BLACK MEN IN THE CLASSROOM

BY SUNDJATA SEKOU

Who a student's teacher will be is a lesson in segregation! If you don't believe me, close your eyes and think about a teacher. Who comes to mind?

More than likely you didn't think of someone who is Black, Latinx, Asian, or someone whose lineage is from a predominantly Muslim country.

You probably thought of a white person. Being more descriptive, you more than likely thought of a white female.

You almost certainly didn't think of someone like me. I am Black, male and a teacher. Yes, we exist in New Jersey! But our numbers are bleak. According to New Jersey Policy Perspective, only 1.7% of New Jersey teachers are Black males. This issue of Black men not being teachers in the classroom affects every student, but it affects Black boys disproportionately.

When it comes to educational attainment, as a group, Black boys are normally at the bottom of most statistical categories. For Black boys, this educational crisis starts the moment they are born in a racist American society that applauds their athletic abilities yet shuns their intellectual capabilities.

This educational crisis is exacerbated in K-12 classrooms where most Black boys are placed with teachers who may

not understand them and cannot relate to them. In turn, the teacher may seem boring to the Black male students. To them, the teacher may appear scared of them or agitated by their presence.

This atmosphere of bias and educational displeasure turns into situations where Black boys are thrust into special education at an alarming rate and exhibit a lack of proficiency in reading and mathematics compared to their white counterparts. They are punished more harshly than any other student group. Faced with these circumstances, many Black boys drop out and end up being incarcerated.

## MY LIFE AS A BLACK STUDENT

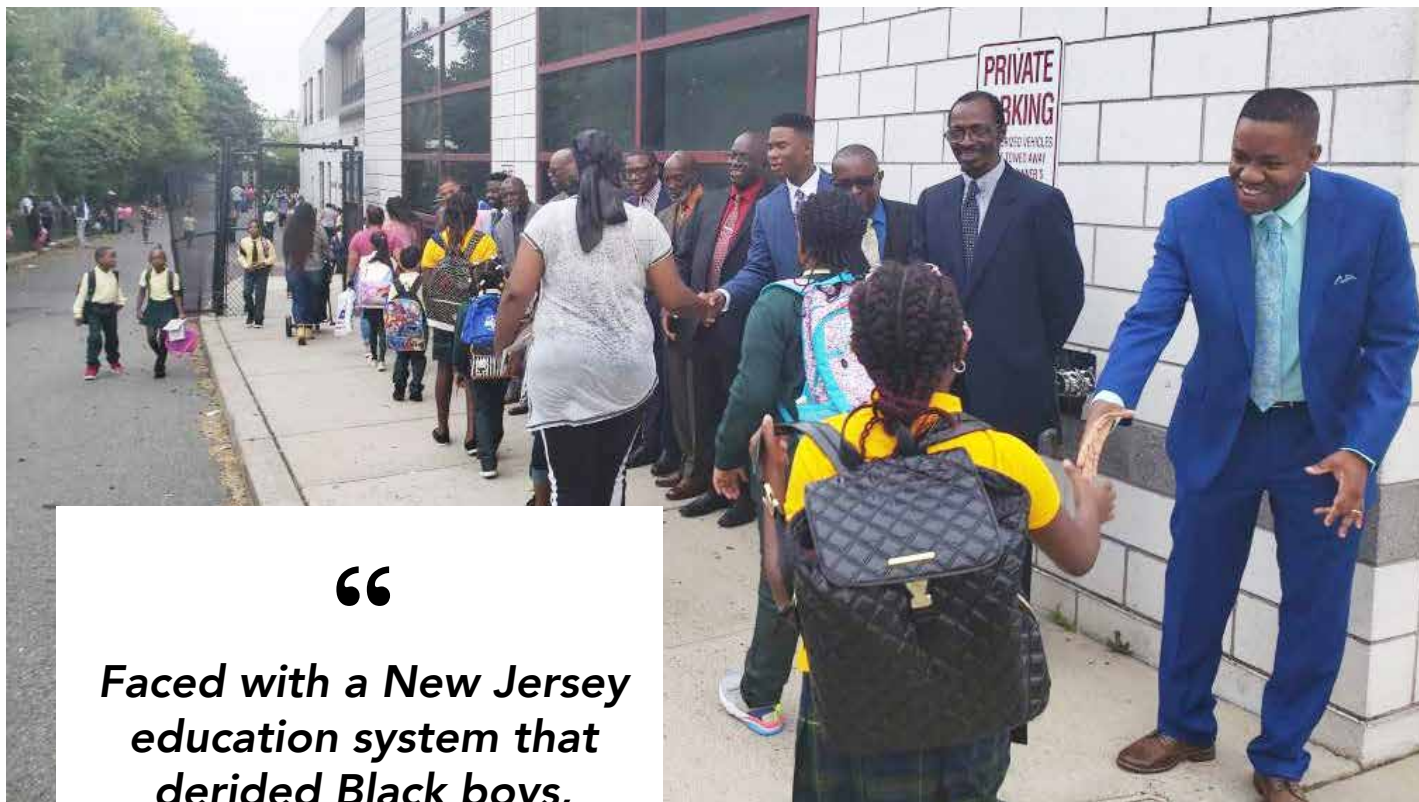
I was one of those Black boys who was disillusioned by the educational system. After arriving from Jamaica at the age of 9, I witnessed a New Jersey educational system that neglected and showed outward contempt to Black boys. This system of education hid the contributions of people of African descent and exalted the contributions of people from European descent. This New Jersey educational system rarely had any Black, Latinx, or Asian teachers. Even more rare, was the sight of Black men in the classroom.

Faced with a New Jersey education system that derided Black boys, concealed the historical contributions of our ancestors, and rarely had Black male teachers, we rebelled against the system.

Starting in elementary school, my friends and I disrupted

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*Sundjata Sekou is a third-grade math and science teacher at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School in Irvington. He can be reached at [sundjata.sekou@gmail.com](mailto:sundjata.sekou@gmail.com) or 908-247-7136.*



**“**  
***Faced with a New Jersey education system that derided Black boys, concealed the historical contributions of our ancestors, and rarely had Black male teachers, we rebelled against the system.***

On the first day of school in 2019-20, teacher Sundjata Sekou (foreground) joined men in Irvington to greet students as they entered Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School.

the class, our lessons and the teacher. Instead of seeking a program that would reach us, bring out the best in us, and engage us intellectually, our schools suspended us at an alarming rate. By the time we reached the 10th grade, many of my friends stopped going to school.

#### MY AWAKENING

When I was in the 11th grade, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X: As Told to Alex Haley* came into my possession. That book spoke to my existence, to what was going on in my urban community, and to my role as a Black boy transitioning into being a Black man in America. That book answered the who, what, where, and why of the way things are in America.

At the root of it was that America has struggled and has not sufficiently dealt with the legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, slavery, Jim Crow, “Separate but Equal” and racism. These maladies are in the DNA of America and imbued in every system, including the education system. It is not hyperbolic to write that this book changed my life by answering my questions about America.

Armed with this new invigorating knowledge, I graduated high school, community college, state university, and ultimately earned two graduate degrees. Although I endured the educational system and worked for a nonprofit, I kept thinking about Black boys like Jimmy Drama, P-Andre,

Debo, Mike, Andy, Sal, and many of my friends who stopped going to school. I wondered what would have happened if these brilliant Black boys were given a book that resonated with them, had a teacher who believed in them, or were introduced to a curriculum that expanded their knowledge?

#### BECOMING A TEACHER

As I shared these thoughts with my wife and people who I worked with, each individual would say, “You should become a teacher.” For years, I fought the feeling to become a teacher because of what teachers DIDN’T do for my friends. But, I constantly had two questions in my mind. The first one was should I become a teacher? The second and more important question was, “What type of teacher will I be?”

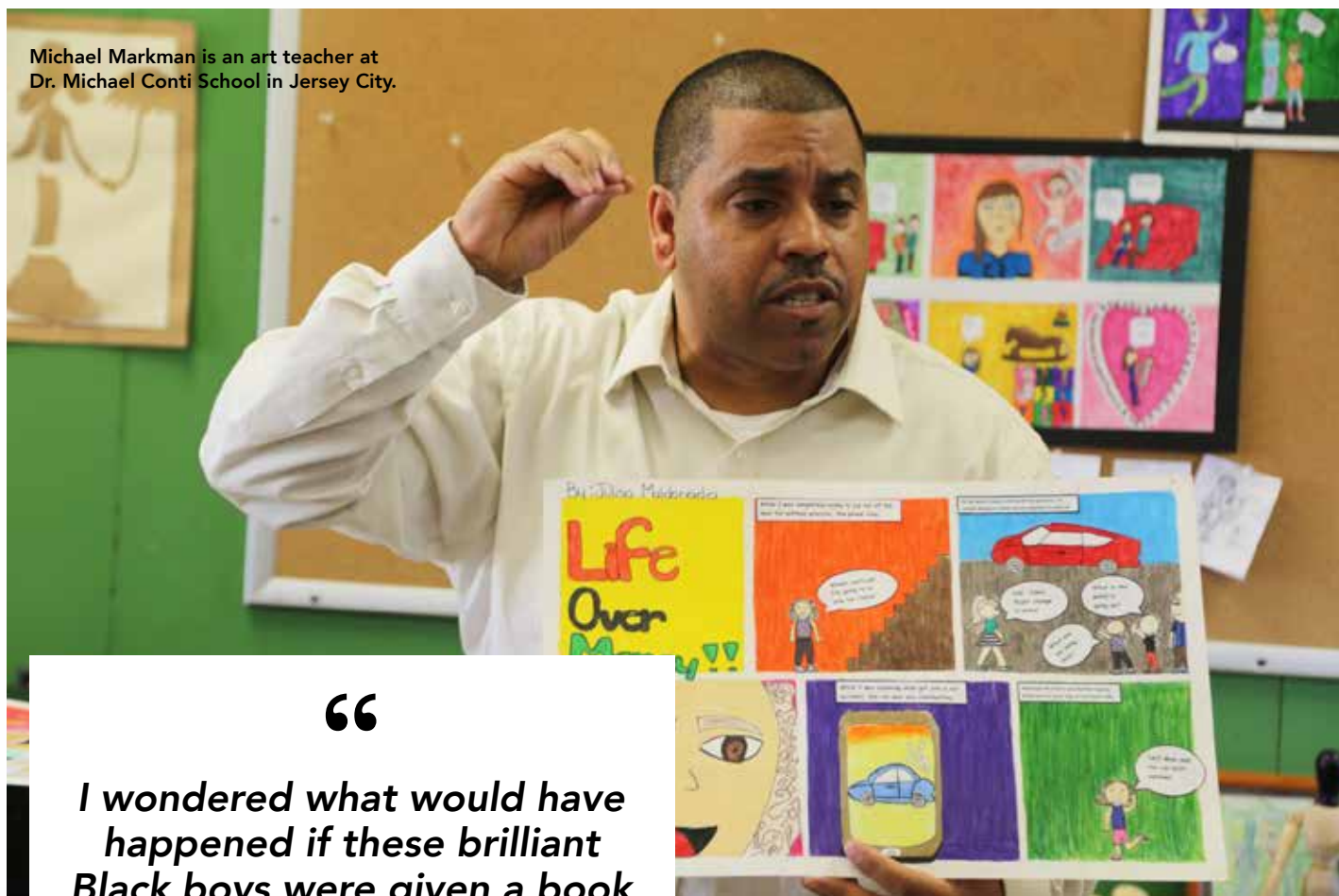
I decided to become a teacher and vowed to be the teacher I never had. I also sought out the opportunity to work in an urban community. It was the best professional decision I made in my life.

I have taught third and fourth grades, but learning is more than what happens in a classroom. Therefore, with support from the principal of my school, I have organized men in the community to welcome students back on the first day of school. I have organized boys-only assemblies where all the men in the building speak to the boys and equally all the women speak to the girls.

Also, every year, I’ve arranged for students who get suspended, written up, and are disruptive in class to go with National Honor Society and Student Council students to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. There they witness evidence of their historical African and Mesoamerican greatness. In the museum, students get knowledge of who they are, what can be accomplished, and why there are artifacts from their ancestors in the museum.



Michael Markman is an art teacher at Dr. Michael Conti School in Jersey City.



“

***I wondered what would have happened if these brilliant Black boys were given a book that resonated with them, had a teacher who believed in them, or were introduced to a curriculum that expanded their knowledge?***

#### A CALL TO ACTION

Thus, this article is a call to action for the following to occur in New Jersey:

1. All New Jersey boards of education (I am a former board of education member) should hire more Black men as teachers. All students need to see Black men in the classroom. But Black boys, in particular, many of whom are withering instead of flourishing in New Jersey classrooms, need to see Black men in the classroom.
2. Once Black men are hired, value, support, and invite your Black male teachers to be a part of the school leadership team.
3. DO NOT SIMPLY MAKE YOUR BLACK MALE TEACHERS THE UNOFFICIAL DEANS OF DISCIPLINE!
4. The New Jersey Department of Education should make existing laws more robust by recruiting Black men to become teachers and supporting those Black men who are teachers. New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy signed S-703 into law in 2019, establishing a pilot program within the Department of Education to recruit disadvantaged or minority men to teach in certain underperforming schools under an alternate-route program. Also, the New Jersey Legislature should pass Senate Education Chair Teresa Ruiz's recently introduced bills to diversify the state's teaching profession.
5. Become culturally competent in order to academically motivate Black boys. The New Jersey School Performance Report indicates that 83.6% of teachers in the state are white. A report from New Jersey Policy Perspective titled "New Jersey's Teacher Workforce, 2019" points out that New Jersey teachers are overwhelmingly white and female. The report states that white women made up 66% of the teacher workforce. Because of residential segregation in New Jersey, a classroom could be the first time that a white female teacher is interacting daily with Black boys. To build relationships with Black boys, white female teachers should become knowledgeable about different aspects of Black culture. They must not disregard the impact of racism on Black boys' schooling experiences. They must keep in mind the effect of a lack of resources in their communities and parents' negative interaction with the educational establishment.
6. When teaching Black boys, train and educate yourself on how to CHECK YOUR BIASES AT THE DOOR! This means to make sure that your stereotyping of Black boys is not causing lower academic expectations and a refusal to recommend them for gifted and talented programs.

Over half of all public school students in New Jersey are students of color, but the teaching workforce does not reflect this reality. Thus, moving forward, districts should hire people of color and, in particular, more Black men! 🗣️

## Resources

### **TCNJ: The Center for Future Educators and the Urban Teacher Academy**

[futureeducators.tcnj.edu](http://futureeducators.tcnj.edu)

**Twitter:** @cfetcnj

The **Center for Future Educators** (CFE) at the College of New Jersey is a focused, organized, grassroots campaign designed to usher in a new era in the field of teaching. It offers a unique vision for the recruitment and development of middle school and high school students. These future educators, in the capacities of scholars, leaders and social entrepreneurs, will help to shape New Jersey's communities. As such, they must have rich and varied opportunities to prepare for this reimagined role—a role that will bolster the image of the teaching profession across the state.

The College of New Jersey's **Urban Teacher Academy** (UTA) is offered to high school juniors interested in pursuing careers in urban education and/or high shortage subject areas. This intensive, two-week summer program is designed to attract students to teaching in high poverty schools and/or high shortage subject areas through exposure to a curriculum and practicum experiences that focus on teaching.

### **New Jersey Department of Education: Educator Recruitment, Preparation and Recognition**

[state.nj.us/education/rpr/](http://state.nj.us/education/rpr/)

The Office of Recruitment, Preparation, and Recognition (RPR) leads policy development to ensure that every student, school, and district will have access to well-trained, effective educators that meet the particular needs of their local communities. To do this, we must attract and retain excellent educators in New Jersey, ensure that they are prepared to be effective on their first day on the job, and recognize their contributions to our students and to the profession.

- Emergency response
- School safety and security
- Confined space entry

### **NJEA Members of Color Network**

[real.njea.org/members-of-color/](http://real.njea.org/members-of-color/)

The NJEA Members-of-Color Network is an intentional organizing effort to connect and engage with an underrepresented affinity group within our association. Our goal is to elevate the advocacy, engagement, and ownership that all members have in their union. Through targeted conversations and continual advocacy and educational opportunities, we believe we will grow a stronger association reflecting our rich diversity of membership.

### **NJEA REAL Movement**

[real.njea.org](http://real.njea.org)

Join NJEA's REAL Movement, which stands for racial equity, affirmation, and literacy. Racial equity is our aspirational purpose in this work of transforming New Jersey's public education system. Racial affirmation challenges the "colorblind" narrative with the power of diversity and visibility. Racial literacy connects NJEA members to their power as educators to be generational gamechangers. Movements elevate a collective vision for a better world by activating and organizing the power of the people. By joining the REAL Movement, you will embark on a learning journey with a diverse community of colleagues who are connected through shared values.

## Demographics in New Jersey Public Schools

Students of color: 57.6%

Teachers of color: 16.4%

Non-Latinx Black students: 15.0%

Non-Latinx Black teachers: 6.6%\*

Male teachers: 22.9%

Source: *New Jersey Department of Education*, [state.nj.us/education/data/cs/cs19](http://state.nj.us/education/data/cs/cs19).

\*According to New Jersey Policy Perspective, only 1.6% of all teachers are Black men.

## *Dear Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) educators,*

It is with love that I present this letter. We are connected within a profession we pledge to commit our lives to for the children we serve. That's a kind of unconditional love so powerful that it cannot fully be articulated. Please receive this love letter.

Daily we walk a fine line between cultures, complicated loyalties, and nuanced survival. We contort our spines and bend our knees in search of our centers of gravity. We remind ourselves that this single wire is our economic lifeline, and in order to sustain ourselves through the day, we must sway and adjust to balance our many roles. These maladaptive practices cause immeasurable harm across generations.

BIPOC educators, this is our time to heal.

We are underrepresented, combat racial attacks on our humanity, burdened to carry the disciplinary load, and are expected to do the heavy lifting for anti-racist work as if we are the ones that created the inequities.

We are counselors, social workers, translators, advocates, nurses, and defenders of humanity. We are storytellers, coaches, historians, and warriors fighting for kids' safety.

We are saddled with more work as our talents, ideas, and cultures are appropriated yet the minute we say "NO," we are labeled angry and divisive, and are dismissed.

We are everything, but cared for, nurtured, and protected.

According to Dr. Robert Berezin, "Trauma is an assault so extreme that it overrides and rewrites our established play of consciousness." (From "Trauma Outpaces Our Ability to Adapt," *Psychology Today*, Sept. 15, 2015).

Racialized trauma lives within us all and to endure this violence, we have had to arm ourselves with different methods of survival.

If you've exceptionalized yourself because of your class privilege, status, or education, while distancing yourself from your roots, ask yourself why. If you've echoed the statement, "As long as my family is taken care of, then it doesn't affect me," or argued that all lives matter while disparaging the strategies of the Black Lives Matter Movement, again why? Have you felt the need to justify why BIPOC are angry and plead with white folk to acknowledge our pain? Have you tone policed yourself when talking about race? Have you made excuses for individuals and institutions based on their intentions instead of their impact on BIPOC? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then it's time to work on healing.

Race-based traumatic stress has been passed on through generations and transcends our attempts to armor ourselves and protect our children. These unhealthy coping mechanisms are chipping away at our very being and require us to periodically engage in what author and organizer Awo Okaikor Aryee-Price calls, "an internalized racial oppression colonoscopy."

In James Baldwin's 1963 book, *The Fire Next Time*, he writes, "Love takes off masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within."

It is reckless to continue as we have without first tending to our wounds. We must reject internalized sentiments of white supremacy in the way we operate. Our lessons must not center around devaluing one's own cultural capital, teaching the art of code-switching, and assimilation because we are scared to remove "masks" forced on us to perpetuate systems of racial oppression.

Baldwin also observed, "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

Kids are observant. If they see us adjusting for the white gaze, then that is the lesson they will internalize. Culturally responsive educators know who they are; intelligent, creative, resilient folk, our histories intertwined and liberations rooted in Black resistance. With great intentionality, we must represent our authentic selves to students so that they too feel safe and proud being their genuine selves. Our fight is being healthy, embracing our complexities, and unpacking the truth about our nation we love so dearly yet has not loved us in return. We have the power to refill our tanks with radical love to support young folk who will continue the struggle for social justice with their crowns held high.

Healing is hard work.

We must first let go of the trauma that has chipped away at the lifespan and humanity of our ancestors, ourselves, and future generations. Grieve all that has been stolen attempting to navigate spaces that were never designed with us in mind. Understand that healing is a lifetime and formulate a plan that includes safe spaces to unpack our experiences. Find communities rooted in love, truth, and support to nourish our spiritual, physical, and intellectual selves.

Liberation is breaking the cycle of internalized racial oppression and generational trauma through radical self-love.

Unapologetically prioritize our cultures, histories, and needs. BIPOC educators believe Black excellence, breathe Black excellence, build lessons to teach Black excellence, and learn from Black excellence to cultivate the next generation of social justice leaders.

**Raquel James Goodman, NJEA member**

*Raquel James Goodman is the author of "Student Voices Lead Black Lives Matter at Schools Week in Hackensack," which appeared in the April 2020 edition of the NJEA Review.*



## *Dear white educators,*

In 1954, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the unanimous ruling against the “separate but equal” mandate and demanded desegregation of schools.

It’s been 66 years since that ruling, yet we still do not have a school system that is not segregated.

It’s true, there are outside forces that continue to uphold institutionalized racism of segregation, racist practices such as redlining that do not officially exist but still flow within the undercurrent. But can we honestly look within our schools and say that there is not a microcosm of segregation within our individual buildings? Do the demographics of our teachers reflect the demographics of our students? Are there a proportional number of students in our accelerated and Advanced Placement courses that reflects our student populations? Do racial and ethnic groups even commingle in our school cafeterias?

White educators have led the classroom and public education in so many ways, standing behind our podiums or at the front of the room, all but willing to impart our knowledge into the sponge-like minds of the youth that sat before us. But what is our knowledge really? It’s time that we admit to ourselves that we were not taught all sides of history when we were children. It’s time to recognize that it is our responsibility to finally break the chains of a Eurocentric curriculum and not to replicate a system that upholds the centering of white lives and instead pushes our future generations to really build toward the inclusive society that we all state we believe in. We must recognize that it is indeed time to not only say “Black Lives Matter,” but that it is time that we mean it and show it with action.

Action means more than creating a facade of acceptance by hanging our inclusive messaging on the wall; “Diversity rocks!” and “All students are welcome here!” It means rolling up your sleeves and doing the actual work of having the hard conversations, with yourself and with others—without needing the praise and acknowledgement of doing so. It means taking responsibility for your power and your privilege and making sure that you do not wield it as a weapon but instead give it freely as a way to elevate your Black coworkers and your Black students.

Action means checking your inclination to ask your Black coworker to discipline a student because you think that they are not listening to you and instead ask yourself where you might have failed in developing a relationship with that student. It means pausing to do your own research when trying to find lessons that incorporate culture into your curriculum. It means recognizing that Black people are not a monolith and refraining from expecting your coworker to answer a question in the category of “All things Black”

Action means listening to what our Black colleagues say we need to do to recognize our own inherent biases, read the books and articles they

suggest, advocate for culturally responsive professional development and ethnic studies, push for restorative justice practices, and even listen when they talk about police-free schools. It means biting your tongue and staying silent when the “Yes, but what about...” comment pops into your head. It means listening without the intent to respond and listening to only hear, recognizing feelings of fragility when being told that you made a mistake, even leaning into the process of learning from it

Action means recognizing your own relationship with whiteness by questioning whose norms you are upholding when you talk about closing the achievement gap or strategies to address students that are falling behind. It takes an understanding of the fact that our students are measured, tested and graded by a system that upholds white supremacist ideals. It means stopping yourself from correcting students that are not speaking proper English, or even not holding a conversation in English at all.

Action means taking responsibility for your role in the work of dismantling racism and power structures in our own faculty lounge, having those difficult conversations and not only recognizing racism when we are confronted with it, but also naming it for what it is. It’s time to admit that there is a “white chalk line” that encircles us as we push to hide stories about how educators have mistreated students in the classroom, particularly our Black students. It’s a line that we are too easy to step behind when we hear a comment in the faculty room that makes us cringe.

It’s a line that would be so easy to erase, if only we would just pick up the eraser and get to work.

### **Melissa Tomlinson, NJEA member**

*Melissa Tomlinson is a special education teacher at Buena Regional Middle School and a member of the NJEA Delegate Assembly, among other state and local association leadership roles.*



# UNDERSTANDING NJEA PAC'S ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

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By Nov. 3, most New Jersey voters will have voted by mail to elect a senator and 12 members to the United States Congress. They will join all Americans in electing a president and vice president. Voters in Legislative District 25 will elect a state senator and an assembly member. The federal and state governments have a profound impact on what happens in New Jersey's schools. That's why the NJEA Political Action Committee (PAC) carefully screens candidates for public office.

NJEA PAC prides itself on having a sound, fair, and democratic process leading up to the endorsement of a candidate. The purpose of the process is to identify the candidate most supportive of NJEA's legislative program. Endorsing and electing candidates who support NJEA's goals significantly increases the association's ability to pass favorable legislation and stop negative legislation.

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## THE SCREENING PROCESS

### ESTABLISHING A SCREENING COMMITTEE

PAC screening committees are established for each congressional district (CD). Each committee includes members of the NJEA PAC Operating Committee who represent their respective counties and the New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) legislative county chairperson.

Screening committees also include NJEA Government Relations Committee and Congressional Contact Committee members from counties involved, the county president, and NJEA Executive Committee members from the counties involved.

### EVALUATING THE CANDIDATES

Screening committees invite candidates for an interview, typically early in the summer. Prior to meeting the candidate, the committee reviews completed NJEA questionnaires submitted by the candidate and if he or she is an incumbent, the candidate's voting record.

Each candidate screening session lasts about an hour, allowing time for candidates to make a presentation and answer questions from the screening committee. Questions are based upon the issues in public education and concerns within the county membership.

When evaluating the candidates, screening committees consider candidates' positions on issues and electability. For incumbents, committees also consider legislative voting records, committee assignments, leadership positions, sponsorship of pro-public education legislation, and accessibility to NJEA members.

### ENDORSORING THE CANDIDATES

The screening committee does not make the final endorsement. Rather, it recommends a position to be considered by the NJEA PAC Operating Committee.

To make its recommendation, the screening committee discusses the merits of each candidate. The committee may recommend the endorsement of one candidate in a race, recommend no endorsement, or recommend a "your choice" option, which indicates that both candidates are in agreement with NJEA's goals and positions.

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

For the November general election, the committee usually meets in August. It reviews the recommendations of the screening committees and brings votes to determine who will become NJEA PAC-endorsed candidates.

For congressional endorsements, NJEA PAC's recommendations are sent to the National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education for final endorsement.

### THE ENDORSEMENT PROCESS DURING COVID-19

Despite the challenges imposed by the global pandemic, NJEA PAC maintained its standards and practices for endorsements. Candidates responded to the questionnaire about their public education and labor priorities, and they were invited to attend a virtual screening with members of their local screening committee.

The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education and NJEA PAC have endorsed

## JOE BIDEN FOR PRESIDENT and KAMALA HARRIS FOR VICE PRESIDENT



Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will unite our country, protect our public schools and invest in the success of every student. With Biden's wife, Dr. Jill Biden—an educator and longtime NEA member—educators will have a friend and colleague in the White House.

Biden and Harris respect educators and are committed to ensuring we have a seat at the decision-making table and providing the support we need and have earned. They know that a return on America's success starts with an investment in public education, supporting universal pre-k for all, tripling the Title I (IDEA) investments for students with disabilities, providing nutritious meals to students at risk of going hungry, and tuition-free community college.

Biden and Harris are committed to attracting and retaining the most qualified educators by supporting pay raises, improving emergency paid leave and expanding student loan forgiveness programs.

Biden and Harris agree that we must listen to doctors and scientists on when to reopen school buildings and listen to educators and parents on how best to support our students during and coming out of these tough times.

Biden and Harris will defend public education from those who want

to divert funds into voucher schemes that subsidize unaccountable private schools or use tax-dollars to expand charter schools; and they support more community schools for an additional 300,000 students. As State Attorney General, Harris also investigated a for-profit charter school company for false advertising, inflated attendance numbers and financial mismanagement.

Biden and Harris are committed to listening to diverse voices, bringing leaders together and being honest about what it takes to deliver justice for all. Their "Lift Every Voice" plan to dismantle systemic racism would close economic opportunity gaps, improve access to high-quality public education and double the number of nurses, counselors and parental engagement staff that better serve student needs.

For more about the Biden-Harris plan for education and justice and other issues go to [EducatorsforJoe.com](https://www.educatorsforjoe.com).

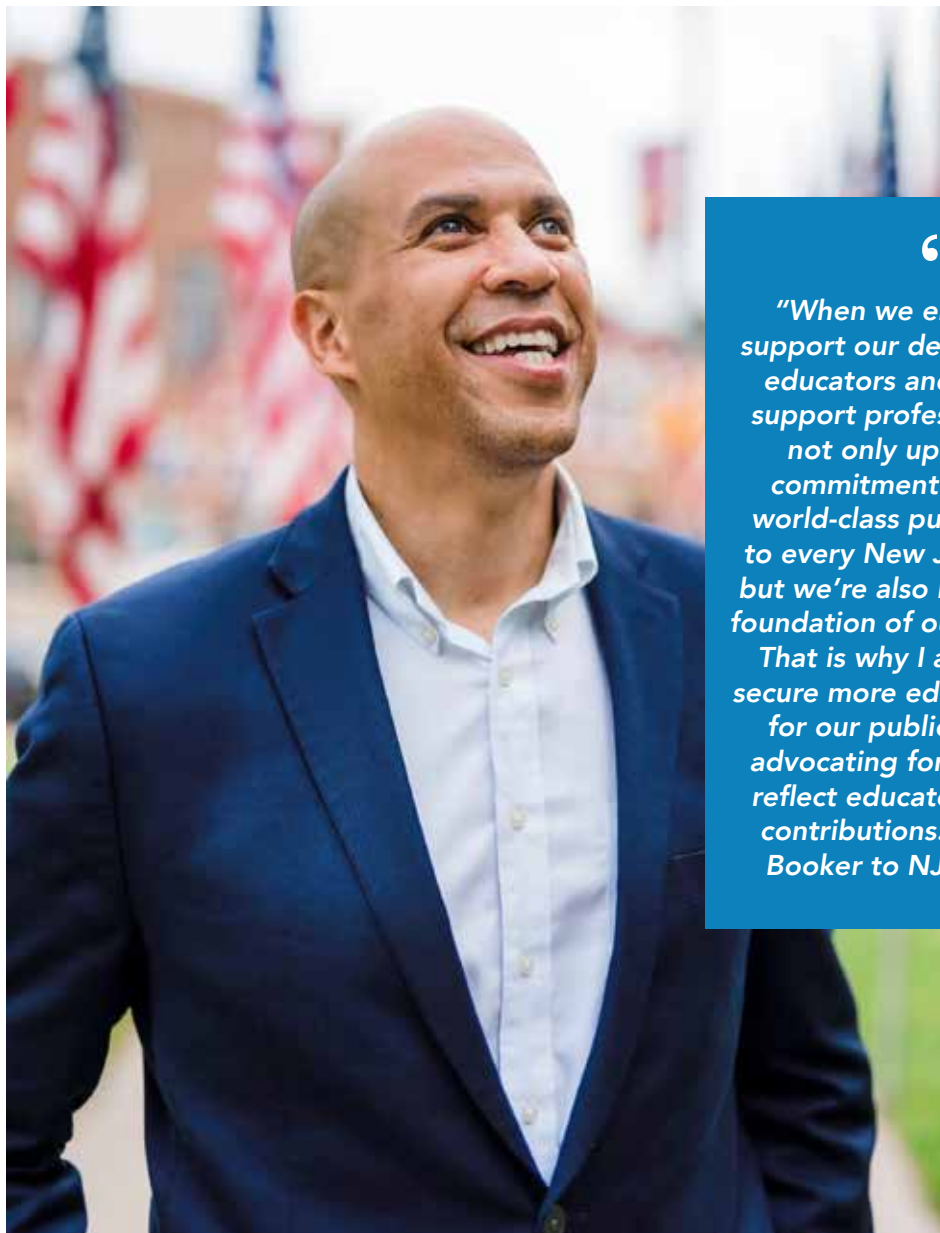


The NEA Fund for Children and Public Education and NJEA PAC have endorsed

# CORY BOOKER

for re-election to the United State Senate

Cory Booker believes that a student's ZIP code should not determine the educational and economic trajectory of their lives. During his time in the Senate, he has worked to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality education. From making sure our nation's teachers and early childhood educators have the resources and support they need, to improving educational outcomes for vulnerable students, educational equity has been central to his work.



“

*“When we empower and support our deeply dedicated educators and educational support professionals, we’re not only upholding our commitment to provide a world-class public education to every New Jersey student, but we’re also investing in the foundation of our communities. That is why I am fighting to secure more education funding for our public schools and advocating for better pay to reflect educators’ invaluable contributions.” – Sen. Cory Booker to NJEA members*

# NJEA PAC-ENDORSED CANDIDATES 2020

By Nov. 3, most Americans will have voted by mail or gone to the polls to elect a president and vice president and their representatives to the United States Congress. New Jersey voters will elect 12 members to the House of Representatives and one U.S. senator. NJEA and NEA have endorsed candidates and one U.S. senator. NJEA and NEA have endorsed candidates in 11 congressional districts.

New Jersey voters in Legislative District 25 will vote to fill an open seat in the state Senate and the General Assembly.

Each candidate was screened in their congressional district (CD) or

legislative district (LD) by a committee of NJEA members who analyzed their responses in an interview and on a written questionnaire. For incumbents, their voting records were reviewed by the committee.

The committee's recommendations were submitted to the NJEA PAC Operating Committee for consideration. NJEA PAC's recommendations for the U.S. House of Representative and U.S. Senate were then sent to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education for final endorsement.

Endorsed candidates were invited to submit a brief statement for publication in the *NJEA Review*.

## CANDIDATES FOR THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### CD-1



**DONALD NORCROSS, D**  
[donaldnorcrossforcongress.com](http://donaldnorcrossforcongress.com)

"As a father and grandfather, I want a better future for the next generation. That's why I stand with our teachers, ESPs, parents and children as we fight the coronavirus and work to properly equip our schools for safe reopenings. I'm a union member myself, so you can count on me to focus on jobs and higher wages, health care and retirement benefits, great public schools, and affordable higher education opportunities through my service on the House Education and Labor Committee.

### CD-3



**ANDY KIM, D**  
[andykimforcongress.com](http://andykimforcongress.com)

"As a proud public school kid from Jersey and a dad to two baby boys, I'm honored to be endorsed by NJEA. Our public schools are the bedrocks of our communities, and every day in Congress I'm fighting for our teachers and educational support professionals. Thank you for everything you do."

### CD-2



**AMY KENNEDY, D**  
[amykennedyforcongress.com](http://amykennedyforcongress.com)

"As a former public school teacher and mental health advocate, I understand the challenges we face as a community. When Jeff Van Drew switched parties, I knew that South Jersey was in need of a leader who would serve our communities and not themselves. In Congress, I will fight for the educators and educational support professionals of South Jersey."

### CD-5



**JOSH GOTTHEIMER, D**  
[josh4congress.com](http://josh4congress.com)

"A good education is key to opportunity and achieving the American Dream, which is why it should be a basic right for all children, not just a privilege for the few. As a teacher's son, I know how critical education is to ensuring our students can compete and win in the global economy. I also know that none of that would be possible without our hardworking teachers and educational support professionals, and I will continue to fight for you every day in Congress."

## CD-6

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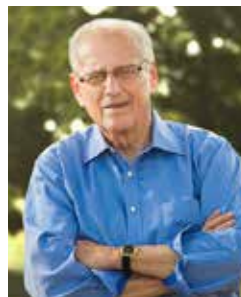


**FRANK PALLONE, D**  
*pallonefornewjersey.com*

"I am proud to receive the endorsement of NJEA for my re-election to Congress. In these unprecedented times, it has never been more important to stand in solidarity with school employees and the members of NJEA who work hard to safely provide the best education for our children."

## CD-9

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**BILL PASCRELL, D**  
*billpascrell.com*

"Educational professionals are the very backbone of America. Facing extraordinary challenges, we must ensure that they are supported and safe in the classroom. As a former public school teacher, I stand with our teachers and educational support professionals and will fight for federal aid for schools and state and local governments."

## CD-7

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**TOM MALINOWSKI, D**  
*malinowskifornj.com*

"I am grateful to receive the endorsement of NJEA. In New Jersey, we have chosen to invest in the best public schools in the country, and that investment pays off for our kids and our economy. I will continue to fight in Congress for the help our students and educators need to get through the pandemic and to make our schools even better."

## CD-10

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**DONALD M. PAYNE JR., D**  
*paynejr4congress.com*

"This will be the most challenging school year we have ever faced. Teachers and educational support professionals are rising to the challenge of teaching during a pandemic and policymakers must ensure that you are equipped to succeed while staying safe. You can always count on me as your ally and champion."

## CD-8

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**ALBIO SIRES, D**

"As a former educator and NJEA member, I understand how important the whole school community is to a student's development, and that experience encourages me to fight for the highest quality education for our students at every level. We must invest in our children, from pre-K through high school as well as ensuring that post-secondary education is more affordable."

## CD-11

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**MIKIE SHERRILL, D**  
*mikiesherrill.com*

New Jersey has the best public school system in America because of the dedicated teachers and educational support professionals who ensure our students thrive. I've proudly fought for our public schools and will continue to work for increased support during the COVID-19 pandemic. I'm honored to have the endorsement of NJEA.



## CD-12



**BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, D**  
[bonnieforcongress.com](http://bonnieforcongress.com)

Education is the great equalizer. I have always been and continue to be committed to providing every child with the opportunity to receive a safe and quality education. There are no greater resources for our children than our teachers and our school support staff, and it is my priority to ensure that every tool and resource is given to our school employees necessary to deliver the excellent education our students deserve. I will continue to work to invest in early childhood education, fight to strengthen our public schools, and make higher education more affordable.

## LD-25



**ANTHONY BUCCO, R**  
[anthonybucco.com](http://anthonybucco.com)


"I'm proud to have NJEA's endorsement based on my bipartisan record of fighting for high quality public schools and the education professionals who support them. From improving school safety, to restoring and reforming paycheck cuts as a result of Chapter 78, I always have an open door and welcome your insight to improve public education."




**AURA K. DUNN, R**  
[auradunnforassembly.com](http://auradunnforassembly.com)

"As the mother of two children who have graduated from, and one who is currently attending New Jersey public schools, I have seen firsthand the passion with which education professionals in our schools do their jobs and what excellence in education truly means. I am proud to stand with New Jersey's world-class public education professionals."

Helping you teach **remotely**  
and in the **classroom**  
*every step of the way*



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Contact us at [info@njctl.org](mailto:info@njctl.org)

New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning is a nonprofit charitable organization founded by NJEA in 2007.

# AN *APP*(TITUDE) FOR HELPING

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

Every year in Nicholas Gattuso's advanced software engineering class at Point Pleasant Borough High School, the students are given an assignment with a twist: they must build something that helps people.

"The reason I'm here as an educator is to help the students," Gattuso said. "The thing that I'm trying to instill in my students is that we're all here to make things better. It sounds Pollyanna, but I'm here to teach programming, to teach them passion and perseverance, but also to encourage them to do good. I'm trying to build the next generation of ambassadors who are creating software and tools that help people; that's how we push humanity forward. Part of our role as educators is to help students become great people who care about society."

Gattuso was inspired to enter teaching after the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I was 40 years old," Gattuso recalled. "I was too old to be a police officer or a firefighter, so I decided being a teacher was the best way I could make a difference."

Since then, Gattuso has juggled his roles as a parent, a computer programmer, and a teacher at both Point Pleasant Borough High School and Ocean County College.

This class, which is typically full of high school seniors who have already taken computer programming and AP computer programming,

is seen by Gattuso as an incubator, and it has had incredible results.

Gattuso's students regularly compete in programming competitions and have won numerous awards for their apps. In 2017, they were named the Congressional App Award Winner for Rep. Chris Smith (CD-4) and took third place in the high school division of the New Jersey STEAM Tank Championship. In 2018, Smith made a speech on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives lauding the achievements of Gattuso and his students. In 2019, they were the Congressional App Award Winner for Rep. Andy Kim (CD-3) and had three apps that were named among the Top 10 in New Jersey's STEAM Tank Championship.

In addition, Gattuso's students have gone on to work at Google, Lyft, and Twitter—and they take with them Gattuso's imperative that they work to make the world better and fairer.

Gattuso is committed to opening doors and providing opportunities for his students. Only about 7% of those working in the field of computer science are female, and that number is dropping. Gattuso makes an effort to recruit students. As a result, 40 to 50% of the students in his classes are female.

## APPS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

In the 2014-15 school year, Gattuso and his students embarked upon a project that had a major impact on them all. They decided to approach a special education teacher in the high school to ask if there were any tools she could use to help her students that the computer science class could build. The teacher was near tears when she heard the request because no one had ever

asked her that before and because there were so few tools available to her students.

The first app developed for the special needs students was called the Measuring Cup Game. It taught students units of measure using an entertaining interface. The success of that app, and the many benefits of the collaboration, led to many other apps that help students do everything from understand the bell schedule to find someone to eat lunch with in the cafeteria.

That program, known collectively as the Panther Assisted Learning Software (PALS), was featured on NJEA's "Classroom Closeup NJ" television program, won a Congressional award, and was featured in other media outlets. Those apps are still in use today.

One of the most recent apps developed in Gattuso's class is on track to reach even further.

## THE DAWN APP

The Depression Anxiety and Wellness Network (DAWN) was conceived by then-senior Caroline Shea.

"I came up with the idea for the app in October 2018," Shea said. "I drew on my personal life and took inspiration from my little sister who has OCD, anxiety, ADHD and depression."

The app is a group of resources that students can access wherever they are, either alone or with a friend or family member. There are five main components to the app:

- Helplines – Local and national helplines with a variety of methods for communication, from texts to emails to anonymous chats.
- Yoga – Online videos and ZIP code-specific yoga studios.

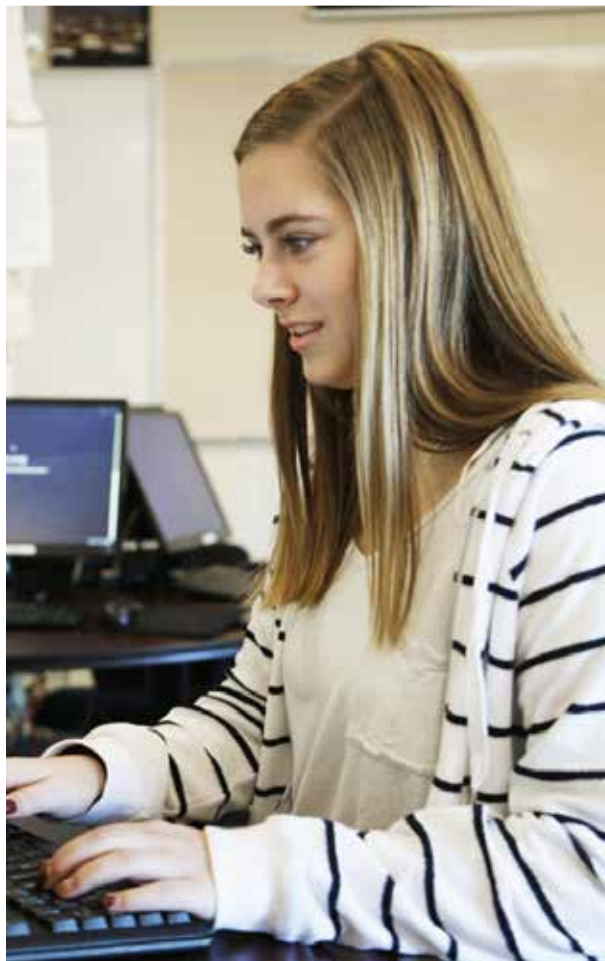
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*Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to [njea.org](http://njea.org). She can be reached at [kcoulibaly@njea.org](mailto:kcoulibaly@njea.org).*





**From left: Joseph Bobowski, Caroline Shea, and Jackson Perry collaborate on app development.**



**Caroline Shea was inspired to create the DAWN app to help her sister.**

- Breathing and grounding – Resources to help manage anxiety and panic attacks.
- Journal – An open space to write whatever you want, from school assignments to medication information. Also includes prompts to get thoughts flowing.
- Schools – Guidance resources, services and clubs specific to your school.

Caroline quickly brought in Joe Bobowski, another senior in the class who worked on programming the app. Over the next six months, they discussed ideas, made changes and talked about what the app could be.

Meanwhile, Caroline was working on expanding the reach of the app. She approached anyone she could think of who might have resources, expertise, or even just an interest in mental wellness. That brought her to Brian Barr, co-founder, along with his brother, Eric, of Feeling Swell, a classic surf inspired brand dedicated to building mentally healthy communities located in Point Pleasant.

“I quickly saw the value in the DAWN app because it shows that it’s OK to talk about this stuff and make mental health resources easily available to students,” Barr said. “It’s important that we’re talking about mental wellness in our school communities because kids are struggling; we all know someone who has to manage mental health issues.”

Barr and Feeling Swell collaborated with Caroline, Joe, and Jackson Perry, another Point Pleasant Borough senior who came on board and helped with





Teacher Nick Gattuso believes students must build technology that helps people.

design and other issues.

Caroline also brought in Dawn Doherty, the executive director for the Society for the Prevention of Teen Suicide. This organization, founded in 2005 by two families who lost a teenage child to suicide, focuses on education and awareness and working with schools and communities to provide resources.

"We love the app," Doherty said. "We know the importance of young people getting behind mental health and wellness and we know that kids and teens are more likely to get behind something is developed by them."

Doherty believes that the app is a great resource in part because it uses technology in a positive way.

"Technology is often blamed for children's mental health issues, but it really is what you make of it," Doherty said. "It can be an issue

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***Part of our role as educators is to help students become great people who care about society.”***

with respect to bullying and social media, but as with the DAWN app, you can use technology for good. Teens are using their phones; they're using their laptops and tablets, so making these resources available to them where they're at is very important."

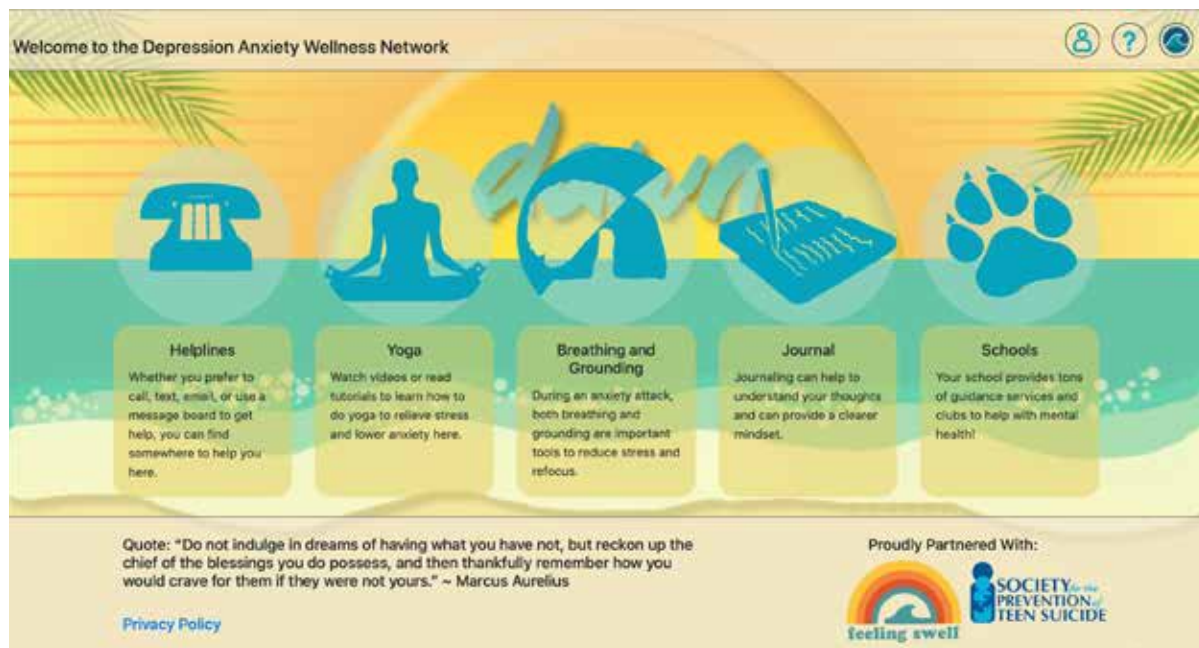
Support for the DAWN app continues to grow. Caroline, Joe, and Jackson presented the app to the superintendents of all Ocean County schools in the summer of 2019. Since then, they have presented to Hackensack Meridian who included information about the app in their newsletter and on their website.

"We've gotten a lot of positive feedback from kids in our own school who have used it and from administrators in other districts whose students are using it," said Caroline.

#### **A CAREER WHERE TECHNOLOGY AND COMPASSION INTERSECT**

Caroline, Joe, and Jackson intend to keep working on the app and promoting it even as they entered college. Caroline is studying entertainment and event management at Johnson & Wales University, Joe is studying computer science at Stevens Institute of Technology, and Jackson is studying computer science with a concentration in artificial intelligence at Drexel University.

The Depression Anxiety Wellness Network (DAWN) app is a set of resources that students can access wherever they are, either alone or with a friend or family member. There are five main components to the app.



“Building something like this makes you realize that you don’t know what is really going on in anyone’s life,” Joe said. “Working on this app really made me feel very compassionate toward people who are struggling; it makes me feel good to do something to help them.”

Even as they move on to college, they will continue to have the support of Point Pleasant Borough Superintendent Vincent Smith and Gattuso.

“It takes a lot of courage for Caroline and others to talk about mental health issues,” Smith said. “I commend her for working with her classmates to develop this app and present it as a resource to others. This program and all of the tools that have been developed have been successful by any measure, and that’s down to the students and Mr. Gattuso.”

“When students leave my class, I want them to know that they never really leave,” Gattuso said.

“We’re a community; alumni are still involved. We contact them for advice, networking, and we follow their college and professional careers.”

Gattuso takes his role as an educator and, often, father figure seriously.

“I want my students to know that someone cares about them,” he said. “A lot of students don’t have positive role models in their lives. I’m here because I care about them and because after 9/11 I wanted to make a difference. I teach my students the technical stuff, but I also want them to know they can come to me if they need help. If a student doesn’t have enough money for college, I’ll get on the phone and try to help them figure it out. They can contact me at all hours of the night if they get stuck on code. I want them to know and feel that they are part of something; that we have built something together, and that we are continuing to build.”



Last year, the NJEA Review visited Point Pleasant Borough High School. Watch [njea.org/ppbdawn](http://njea.org/ppbdawn) to see Nicholas Gattuso’s students in action as they develop apps to help people.

The NJEA Review visited Nicholas Gattuso’s class prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. After schools moved to remote learning, Gattuso wrote a piece on the transition to online instruction and the unexpected benefits he and his students encountered that appeared on NJEA’s website at [njea.org/ppbdistance](http://njea.org/ppbdistance).

## Resources

**Point Pleasant Borough High School Depression Anxiety Wellness Network**  
[pointborohs.org/DAWN](http://pointborohs.org/DAWN)

**Feeling Swell**  
[feelingswell.org](http://feelingswell.org)

**Suicide Prevention Resource Center**  
[sprc.org](http://sprc.org)



# BLACK LIVES MATTER

*in the past and present*

BY SUE KOZEL

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*Sue Kozel recently retired from teaching at several New Jersey higher education institutions where she taught a variety of courses including New Jersey history, American History, African American history, World History, and Western Civilization. In August 2021 she will be a fellow with the International Center for Jefferson Studies at Monticello studying Quakers who worked for Thomas Jefferson's slave plantations. Designated a public scholar by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, she led discussions about the murder in 1784 of a New Jersey enslaved woman named Betty. Her talk on Betty can be read at [bit.ly/kozelbetty](https://bit.ly/kozelbetty).*

*Kozel is a proud NJREA member and has dedicated her research to answering uncomfortable questions about power, slavery, and freedom.*

## NJ AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY RESOURCES FOR THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

By Sue Kozel, NJREA, retired faculty,  
New Jersey universities and community colleges

***Author's note:** When I first proposed writing this piece in the NJEA Review in early spring, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others had not yet been murdered. Community leaders, citizens, clergy, and the Black Lives Matter movement pushed for racial justice and built broad coalitions of support. In late August, Jacob Blake was shot seven times in the back by police. Any article on New Jersey African American history resources during the American revolutionary period must note that Black Lives Mattered, whether acknowledged or not in historical records. This article lists many resources that can help 6-12 grade teachers and community college faculty engage students in discussions of freedom, enslavement, citizenship or the lack thereof, and the rights of Americans in pursuit of liberty during the American Revolutionary Era. Stay safe from COVID-19, and best wishes, Sue Kozel*



## PREPARING FOR AN INCLUSIVE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL

The year 2026 will mark the 250th anniversary of New Jersey's and our nation's break from England to seek its independence. Sara Cureton, executive director of the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), noted that there are many opportunities to continue collecting, sharing, building upon and developing new, inclusive resources, including the African American contributions, about New Jersey's place in the revolutionary war story.

Many state organizations, including the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), are leading efforts to showcase historical documents and stories that communicate New Jersey's diverse history, including that of free African Americans, enslaved people, runaway slaves, the loyalists' commitment to the king, and patriotic causes.

Nationally, the Philadelphia-based Museum of the American Revolution added important elements of New Jersey history to this year's 100th anniversary of suffrage. Museum Director of Curatorial Affairs and Chief Historian Dr. Philip C. Mead shared documentation showing that three New Jersey African American men were found to have voted in the state before 1808—the year when Blacks were specifically excluded, along with women, from voting in the Garden State. The Black male voters from that era that have been found so far are Ephraim Hagerman, Tom Blue, and Caesar Trent, all of whom are documented to have voted in Montgomery Township in 1801.

New Jersey is fortunate to have so many people dedicated to a protect, preserve, and present its rich and diverse history from the New Jersey Amistad Commission to the New Jersey State Archives, for example.

There are, in fact, far too many resources to fit into the print edition of the *NJEA Review*. For a longer version of this article containing many more resources, see its online version at [njea.org/aresourcesnj](http://njea.org/aresourcesnj). All of this material can serve as preliminary and important resources to assist with the preparation for the semiquincentennial.

## NJEA CONVENTION WORKSHOP

Even this list of resources is only starting point. On Friday, Nov. 6, at 9 a.m., please join my online workshop at the virtual NJEA Convention titled, Engage, Inspire, Research, Teach: Early New Jersey Black History/ American Revolution Resources. I will discuss more about the resources.



Permission Granted by New Jersey State Archives, [state.nj.us/state/archives/eventsat.html](http://state.nj.us/state/archives/eventsat.html)

## NEW JERSEY STATE ARCHIVES

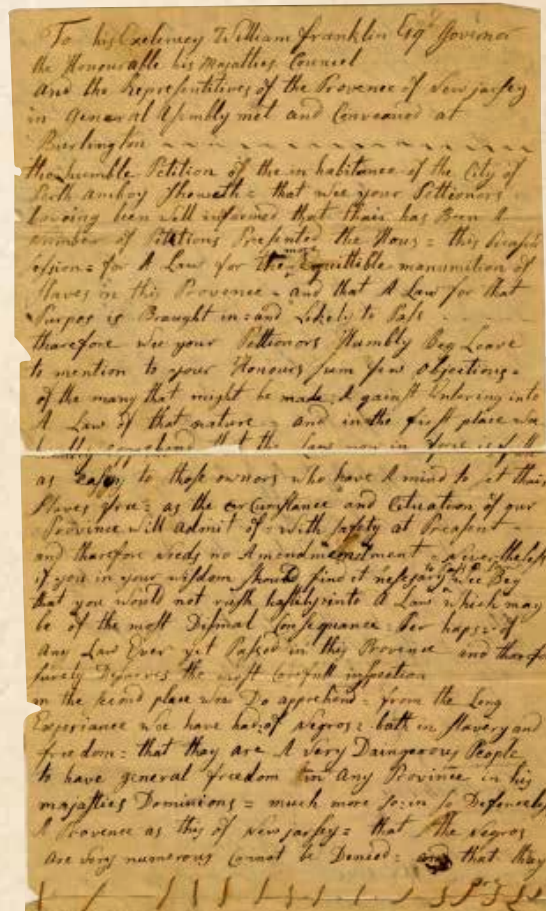
### *Petitions opposing and supporting emancipation*

Sometimes petitions or documents submitted from citizens to advocate for one position or another, in this case either keeping enslavement or granting freedom, give us insight into how New Jerseyans thought about slavery. To help us begin, we will turn to the New Jersey State Archives.

The New Jersey State Archives has extraordinary resources available to help teach African American history. These petitions show us how contested the idea of freedom was for enslaved African Americans, and how many residents of cities and towns submitted petitions against and for the freedom of enslaved people on the eve of the American Revolution. A special thank you for allowing these resources to be digitized for this issue of *NJEA Review*.



Caesar Trent, an African American voter listed as a voter (in the upper right column) in 1801, in Montgomery Township. From the New Jersey State Archives. Permission granted by the Museum of the American Revolution. Note: In the image, an individual is pointing to a woman who also voted in 1801.



Petition of Citizens of Perth Amboy to the General Assembly, opposing slave manumissions, Jan. 12, 1774: This petition, directed to Royal Governor William Franklin captures how many white citizens feared free African Americans and slaves in Perth Amboy. A direct quote with exact language, "from the long experience we have had of Negroes: both in slavery and freedom: that they are A Very Dangerous People."

Source: From Collection: Department of Education, Bureau of Archives and History Manuscript Collection, SEDSL006, Box 24



November 9<sup>th</sup> 1775

To the Honourable House of Representatives And General Assembly for the Province of New Jersey, Gentlemen. We your humble Petitioners Inhabitants of Chesterfield Township County of Burlington and Province aforesaid. Being justly alarmed with the present distressed Situation of our Country And truly thoughtful for ourselves and fellow Creatures, and desiring to Avoid the Judgment of God from our Sins, we are in our Power, And to do Justice to ourselves and others, we are taught to Judge not till we are judged, For it is said, with what Judgment ye Judge ye shall be judged. And the Measure ye mete to others shall be measured to you again. And that all things that ye would that Men should do unto ye, even so ye should do unto them. We therefore your humble Petitioners Seeing Plainly the Evil Effects and bad Attendance of keeping Negroes in Slavery And how inconsistent it is with Equity. We therefore humbly pray that your Representatives freedom for them, that are now with us, as in your wisdom you shall think fit. And for those unborn or that may hereafter be born amongst us to be free. Males at Twenty one and Females at Eighteen Years of Age. May your Gentlemeny be the beginners of this Proclamation. And may God prosper it. And your Petitioners will ever pray be

Dorretwell Wright  
Clerk of the Peace

Joseph Trenchard  
Joseph Trenchard  
Joseph Trenchard

William Middleton  
David Hill  
John Coghill  
Samuel Bunting  
Benjamin Holloway  
John Hall  
Joseph Hall

Gervas Sharp  
Andrew Ware  
William Saltwater  
John DeCon  
Joseph Brown  
William Case  
Joseph Willits

James Fields  
Joseph Field  
Wm Stevenson

Joseph Trenchard

Joseph Trenchard  
Joseph Trenchard

Samuel Trenchard  
Edward Trenchard  
The Trenchard  
John Wright  
Norman Trenchard  
John Trenchard

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Samuel Beck  
James Holloway  
William Martin  
David Trenchard

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Petition of Inhabitants of Chesterfield Township, Burlington County to the General Assembly, advocating the gradual abolition of slavery, Nov. 9, 1775: This petition was issued less than a week before Lord Dunmore's Proclamation was adopted urging enslaved people to run from their pro-American Revolutionary patriots to earn freedom by joining the British military. Written by residents of largely Quaker Chesterfield, in Burlington County, the signers called for freedom to the "unborn" and those born into slavery, with males free at age of 21 and women at age 18.

Source: From Collection: Department of Education, Bureau of Archives and History Manuscript Collection, SEDSL006, Box 24



### Manumission records and birth certificates of children of enslaved persons

The state archives also include manumission records for several counties on microfilm, but this link, [nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1003.html](http://nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1003.html), provides for Hunterdon County Slave Manumissions with scanned images. In this historical record New Jersey residents can search for family members. There is an index of names and the actual records scanned.

Additionally, there are Hunterdon County Birth Certificates of Children of Slaves, 1804-1835, at [nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1004.html](http://nj.gov/state/archives/chnc1004.html). These include scanned images, so you can see the name of the slave holder and the name of the enslaved woman who gave birth. These records are significant because of New Jersey's gradual emancipation law that freed children born into slavery from 1804 on after a certain age. Many counties are listed with finding aids, but most information is on microfilm at this time. You can search the archives at [bit.ly/archivescatalognj](http://bit.ly/archivescatalognj). Search "slavery" under the subject search.

### NEW JERSEY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Taking the lead on presenting an inclusive and diverse history of the American Revolution as part of the 250th Anniversary of our nation's founding, many older New Jersey Historical Commission resources are available for free in the New Jersey State Library (see listing to follow).

One important starting point is the agency's list of resources to mark the British history of slavery in the North America in 1619, and teachers might start with this source for background at [bit.ly/slavehistorynjhc](http://bit.ly/slavehistorynjhc).

### NEW JERSEY AMISTAD COMMISSION

Tasked with providing support and training for New Jersey school districts on the "infusion of African American content, and instructional materials and resources" for K-12 curriculum since 2002, the New Jersey Amistad Commission serves a critical partner in New Jersey's teaching of African American history. In August, this commission sponsored another Summer Institute to help faculty access impressive resources for learning.

After visiting its main website, [nj.gov/education/amistad](http://nj.gov/education/amistad) faculty can register at [njamistadcurriculum.net](http://njamistadcurriculum.net) to access web-based curriculum resources including lesson plans and supplemental primary documents and other resources.

Unit 4, "The Emerging Atlantic World: Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans" and Unit 5 "Establishment of a New Nation and Independence to Republic" have extensive online resources built around New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies. No wheel has to be recreated here because of the depth of thoughtful content. Within Unit 5, for example there is a chronology of events from 1607 to 1792 that highlights key moments from the introduction of slavery to the British Colonies in North America to rebellions against slavery.

### NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY RESOURCES

New Jersey State Librarian Deb Mercer provided some great suggestions for resources that can be used effectively in the classroom and are available online on the New Jersey State Library website.

#### *The New Jersey African American Curriculum Guide*

The 1997 publication of this guide by Larry Greene and Lenworth Gunther was published through the New Jersey Historical Commission. You can find links to each section of the guide at [bit.ly/njlibraryaacurric](http://bit.ly/njlibraryaacurric).

In Unit 4, there is a link titled "Petition of Prime for Manumission (1786)." It pertains to an enslaved person named Prime Sheweth, who was freed after the revolution ended.

#### *New Jersey's Revolutionary Experience*

This is a collection of 28 pamphlets, lesson plans, and teacher resources on New Jersey during the revolution found at [bit.ly/njlibraryrevex](http://bit.ly/njlibraryrevex).

Item Number 14 in the link focuses on African Americans during the revolution. Visit this link, and download all the PDFs to enhance your course work. They are older resources, but they are helpful while new writing is undertaken.

### Historian Giles R. Wright

The late historian Giles R. Wright prepared thoughtful historical reports on the underground railroad as well as a mini-version of history in his book, *Afro-Americans in New Jersey: A Short History* (Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1989). While this link, [bit.ly/njlibraryaahistory](http://bit.ly/njlibraryaahistory), will provide you all the chapters, pay particular attention to the section labeled "Colonial Period to 1790."

Wright served as a leading authority on Underground Railroad sites and history in New Jersey. *Steal Away, Steal Away: A Guide to The Underground Railroad in New Jersey* is very useful as students learn about the transition in the African American experience post-American Revolution. It can be found at [bit.ly/stealawaynj](http://bit.ly/stealawaynj).

While outside of the revolutionary time period, *Civil Rights in New Jersey, 1945-2020: Discrimination in Social Life*, will provide useful to teachers and students looking at change over time, especially in light of the advocacy of the Black Lives Matter movement leadership on criminal justice reform. You'll find it at [libguides.njstatelib.org/discrimination/public](http://libguides.njstatelib.org/discrimination/public).

### THE NEW JERSEY DIGITAL LEGAL LIBRARY

This bibliography of New Jersey case law, from the colonial to the Early American Republic, provides examples of laws passed to punish slaves, enable enslavement, provide from individual manumissions of slaves, pass slave code laws, and move toward gradual abolition. You'll find *The Law of Slavery in New Jersey: An Annotated Bibliography* at [njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/bibliog.html](http://njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/bibliog.html). Paul Axel-Lute provided an exceptional service to scholars, lawyers, and community members with this listing.

For example, faculty can show individual court petitions and case decisions to students about why an enslaved man, woman, or child was freed, for example, with the record including the slave's name, the date, the city/town, the county, the slave owner's name, and the details of the decision.

Students can touch history with these cases. The 1790 case, *State Against James Anderson*, involved an enslaved young man named Silas whose mother was freed, but he continued in enslavement, an act that violated his natural right to liberty. From my own research and publication, I know that the Pennsylvania Abolition Society joined with Quaker Richard Wain to push for freedom for Silas. You can read the case at [njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/cases/C21.html](http://njlegallib.rutgers.edu/slavery/cases/C21.html). 📖

## Resources

The originally submitted version of this article contained far too many resources to fit into the print edition of the *NJEA Review*. For a longer version of this article containing many more resources, see its online version at [njea.org/aaresourcesnj](http://njea.org/aaresourcesnj).

In addition to what appears on these pages, you'll find these additional resources in the online version:

- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- Sankofa Collaborative
- Haverford College Quaker and Special Collections
- Slave Voyages: Transatlantic Slave Trade Database
- The Princeton and Slavery Project
- Rutgers University Scarlet and Black Project
- Kean University: The World of William Livingston
- Using Monmouth County as an Example for Resources
- Crossroads of the American Revolution, A National Heritage Area
- The Old Barracks Museum
- African America Stoutsburg Cemetery
- Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum
- Museum of the American Revolution
- HistoricCamdenCounty.com



# VIRTUAL FEEDBACK

## TO FOSTER STRONG LEARNERS

BY ASHLEY LIPUT



“

***With so many changes and uncertainties, many teachers in my school, and likely, around the country, did not realize that some of their best teaching practices could be brought into their new virtual classroom.***

No matter how many books you read, college courses you attend, or professional development sessions you participate in, really learning how to be a teacher comes from experiences. You take all that you have learned, apply it to the classroom, make mistakes, reflect, collaborate with colleagues, and try again.

This process becomes much more challenging when the main method of communication is conveyed through a computer screen, no one is allowed to go into the school building or see each other, and the world is at the start of a global pandemic. The shift to virtual learning in March was an unexpected one that teachers did not have much time to prepare for and became a true work-embedded learning experience.

#### UNDERSTANDING THE MIDDLE MAN

So much learning, instruction, and evaluation happens in the classroom every day. A quick smile that lets you know you are on the right track, a look as a reminder to stay focused on the task at hand, the slight frown and downturn of the eyebrows that show confusion, or the light behind the eyes indicating that much sought after “Aha!” moment.

These subtle classroom nuances do not transfer as well across the internet. These messages become harder to send and receive when they must first pass through a middle man—the online format. With so many changes and uncertainties, many teachers

in my school, and likely, around the country, did not realize that some of their best teaching practices could be brought into their new virtual classroom. There are, however, some routines and good teaching practices that can transfer from the classroom into the world of virtual learning.

#### WHY FEEDBACK?

Feedback was one such teaching practice that seemed to bring much frustration to the teachers in my upper elementary school this past school year. Students were completing all of their assignments in math, reading, writing, science, and social studies online.

As assignments were handed in each day, many teachers felt that they had to leave feedback on each assignment for all of their students. This became hard to manage and overwhelming as teachers were tied to their computers for hours well past the normal school day. In reality, leaving this much feedback on student work was unrealistic. Students would not receive this type of direct feedback on every assignment on an average day in the classroom.

Students, too, were likely overwhelmed by the laundry list of

suggestions they were receiving from their teachers each day. A deeper dive into the issue showed that teachers were leaving comments on student work as a way to connect with students and motivate them to continue working. The lines between connection and feedback became blurred. In this way, feedback lost its authenticity. It quickly became clear that teachers needed support.

#### STEP 1: CONNECTION

When students have strong relationships with their classmates and teachers, the classroom environment is more conducive to learning. In a time of uncertainty, students need these relationships to continue as a support to their social-emotional development, notes education reporter and children’s book author Kara Newhouse. When the normal routines are thrown off and people are expected to stay home and away from others for long periods of time, children benefit from any structure or routine that can provide some sort of stability. Being able to maintain as many established classrooms routines and norms as possible can help to provide the needed structure. Additionally, maintaining strong relationships with students continues to be important for academic learning.

As a way to connect with students and provide opportunities for social connections, teachers in my school



*Ashley Liput is a teacher at Millstone River School in the West Windsor-Plainsboro School District. She can be reached at [ashleyliput@gmail.com](mailto:ashleyliput@gmail.com)*



held daily, virtual morning meetings. Morning meetings had already occurred in the classrooms throughout the school, so this was a familiar routine for students.

These virtual meetings provided opportunities for social connections that students had been missing. Students could greet each other, participate in a “share,” and do an activity as a class.

Special area teachers and guidance counselors were invited to attend these meetings, allowing students the chance to see some of the faces they would normally see in the school building.

These meetings also set the tone for the day and provided a routine structure. In addition, teachers held small, social groups for students over Google Meet, hosted virtual field trips for the class, read books aloud with a social-emotional learning focus, and sent letters to students through the mail. Teachers also used weekly reflections as a tool to check in with

their students.

All of these strategies showed students that even though they were not in school, their classroom community was still there to support them.

## STEP 2: FEEDBACK

Once the social connections were established, teachers could then focus on giving targeted, authentic feedback. Feedback was a major focus for teachers because when meaningful feedback is given, it can encourage student reflection, promoting student ownership of learning, and ultimately, fostering strong learners.

The effects of feedback, however, can be highly variable, and feedback can have a negative impact on student learning. According to Cameron Brooks and his fellow researchers in Australia, feedback that is perceived by students to be inaccurate or feedback that is received after an assignment has been finished could be demotivating. If an

overwhelming amount of feedback is given, students may simply ignore the feedback and any additional feedback that is given in the future.

Marianne Stenger reports in her *Edutopia* article “5 Research-Based Tips for Providing Students With Meaningful Feedback” that “if learners feel too closely monitored, they may become nervous, self-conscious, and disengaged from learning.” In a time when there are many challenges to learning, it is important that students are given effective feedback so they have every opportunity to continue learning, even at a distance.

We know from Grant Wiggins’ “Seven Keys to Effective Feedback” that for feedback to be effective, it should be goal referenced, timely, actionable, specific and descriptive, and consistent. According to Benedikt Wisniewski and his fellow researchers, the feedback channel does not make a difference in how the feedback is received, whether it is oral, written, seen through video, heard through



“

## Feedback could be just as effective when given in the virtual learning environment as it is when given in the classroom.

audio, or delivered online. This tells us that feedback could be just as effective when given in the virtual learning environment as it is when given in the classroom.

As my colleagues and I considered how to give students effective feedback virtually, many strategies emerged from educational blogs, research, experience, and collaboration. The strategies that were ultimately used by teachers to give meaningful and manageable feedback included:

- Providing prompts and cues – If a student’s writing is filled with capitalization errors, a teacher may write something like, “Remember that proper nouns—people or places—need to be capitalized. As you revise, please look for these proper nouns.”
- Charts and examples – These can be posted in an online space that students have access to, like a Google Classroom for example.
- Small groups – Use Google Meet or Zoom, in accordance with district policy, to host small groups for students who need explicit reteaching.
- Demonstrations – Record a video showing students examples of how to use a specific strategy.
- Partner feedback – Encourage partnerships to give each other meaningful feedback. You can add in an accountability piece by having students respond to a question or complete a reflection. For example, students may have to jot one thing they learned from their partner’s work or one suggestion they made.
- Student feedback requests – Have students submit one piece of work they are proud of and one piece of work (or a specific part of the work) that they want

feedback on.

- Office Hours – Have students sign up for designated office hours if they need extra support.

Each of these strategies allowed feedback to become more manageable for teachers while also promoting student learning and independence. These strategies can also be found at [padlet.com/ashley\\_liput/esbtuo7mogtv](https://padlet.com/ashley_liput/esbtuo7mogtv).

### FINAL THOUGHTS

With many schools relying on some sort of distance learning this year, it is important to notice what is working for teachers and students and what can be improved. Feedback was something that my school chose to examine because that was an area of need at the time.

Whether a school or an individual teacher is considering improving feedback or another best practice, it is important to remember that the underlying foundation of many good practices does not change when the learning is shifted to a virtual environment. Educators know what good instruction is, and they know what is best for their students. They just need the time and the nonjudgmental space to reflect, ask questions and try new strategies.

One of the most important things that came from the examination of feedback was not the strategies that teachers ultimately used. It was getting the opportunity to celebrate any successes and communicating and collaborating with colleagues that kept the cooperative learning culture of the school building alive in the virtual world.

This helped to reestablish our cycle of taking all that we have learned, applying to the virtual classroom, making mistakes, reflecting, collaborating with colleagues through Google Meets, and trying again and allowed us to continue to give our students the best learning experience. 🍕

## References

The following resources were referenced in this article:

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# Join your professional association

## Connect with others in your job description

NJEA is affiliated with many professional organizations representing educators and educational support professionals in specific fields, including all content and curricular areas and other job titles such as office professionals, guidance, world languages, library and media, technology, school psychologists, teachers of the gifted, Holocaust education, and many others. You will find these organizations and how to join them in this section of the *Review*.

In your school building or perhaps even your school district, you may

be the only one tasked with a special area of expertise. If others don't understand what you do, it is wonderful to share strategies and meet educators from other districts who are doing the same job.

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

Find your professional organizations here.

### ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

#### ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. (AEA)

[the-naea.org](http://the-naea.org)

AEA supports a full range of educational options for students whose needs are not being met in the traditional school setting. Membership is open to those working in alternative education or those interested in the development of alternative education options.

AEA disseminates information relating to research, publication, and programs in alternative education and holds a spring conference. Members receive workshop announcements, consulting services and resource materials.

Contact: Tim Morrow,  
[Region2@the-naea.org](mailto:Region2@the-naea.org)

### ART

#### ART EDUCATORS OF N.J. (AENJ)

[aenj.org](http://aenj.org)

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

AENJ provides quality professional development and advocates for visual arts educators throughout the year. This includes an annual conference, lectures and workshops, publications, member

and student exhibition opportunities, scholarships and grants to arts educators and their students.

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

Contact: Tamika Diaz, [membership@aenj.org](mailto:membership@aenj.org)

### BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

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

[njbtea.org](http://njbtea.org)

NJBTEA advocates for business/technology education and provides opportunities for professional growth leading to quality business/technology education programs. NJBTEA offers many avenues to fulfill these purposes including, but not limited to, a fall convention; conferences, workshops, tours and seminars; newsletters; award programs for students and professionals; and professional opportunities.

Dues: \$40 for professionals and associate members; \$20 for retired professional or associate members; \$10 for undergraduate students enrolled in a business/technology education program.

Contact: Robert Carson, [njbtea@comcast.net](mailto:njbtea@comcast.net)

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

[njaet.org](http://njaet.org)

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

Dues: Membership is free.

Contact: Sharon Julien, [sjulien@njaet.org](mailto:sjulien@njaet.org)

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

[njteea.org](http://njteea.org)

NJTEEA is a professional organization for K-12 design, technology, engineering, and other STEM educators that promotes the goals and objectives of technology education and technological literacy as well as STEM initiatives. NJTEEA provides various high-impact, hands-on professional development opportunities at model schools as well as at supportive industry locations. It also provides email updates to members three to four times a month, a STEM Boot Camp in the beginning of the academic year and an annual conference and expo.

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

Contact: Executive Director Frank Caccavale, [njteea@njteea.org](mailto:njteea@njteea.org)

## CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS

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

*atsnj.org*

ATSNJ is dedicated to the advancement and improvement of the athletic training profession. It continually strives to ensure that physically active persons receive the best possible health care. ATSNJ members receive discounted rates for the annual athletic training conference and have access to free CEU opportunities via regional meetings. ATSNJ continues to be active legislatively to ensure appropriate health care for active persons and to ensure proper protections for the profession of athletic training. Members also receive newsletters and electronic postings about athletic training and have membership-only access to various areas of the ATSNJ website.

Dues: \$65; \$20 for students

Contact: Keir Livingston,  
*Livingstonk@atsnj.org*

## CLASSICAL STUDIES

### NEW JERSEY CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION (NJCA)

*njclassics.org*

NJCA is an organization for educators working to advance the cause of classical studies, the Latin and Greek languages and the study of Greco-Roman mythology. Members are teachers from elementary grades through college in public, private and parochial schools. Member benefits include fall and spring meetings, scholarship offerings, materials, resources, mentoring and a placement service.

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

Contact: Marlene Weiner, *marweiner@aol.com*

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

### N.J. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES/ N.J. BILINGUAL

## EDUCATORS (NJTESOL/ NJBE)

*njtesol-njbe.org*

NJTESOL/NJBE is the professional organization of English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education teachers for all levels. Membership is open to all educators interested in current information on educating bilingual and English language learners. NJTESOL/NJBE sponsors several conferences throughout the year and keeps members informed through newsletters and online discussion of hot topics in ESL/bilingual education. The organization is very involved in advocacy/ political action and collaborative activities with other professional organizations.

Dues: \$35/year; \$59/two years with the benefits of participating in the hotlist, receiving the Voices newsletter and getting discounts on the conference payment. Retirees: \$20/year or \$35/two years—with documentation that the potential member has retired from teaching in a school district. Retiree registration is mail-in only because documentation is required. No faxes or emails of the retiree application will be accepted. All registration forms are available on the website.

Contacts: Representative Alamelu Sundaram-Walters, *asundaram22@gmail.com* or Membership Chair Joan Pujol, *mmbr@njtesol-njbe.org*

## FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

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

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

Dues: \$20

Contacts: Carol Otis, *carolotis1@aol.com*, 201-923-0898 or Patricia Digioia-Laird, *njfccla@gmail.com*, 908-791-9906 or 732-452-2862 (school)

## GIFTED CHILDREN

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

*njagc.org*

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

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

Contact: Vice President of Advocacy Michelle Falanga, *advocacy@njagc.org*

## GUIDANCE

### N.J. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. (NJCEA)

The New Jersey Association for Gifted NJCEA provides professional programs, services and opportunities to cooperative education coordinators and structured learning coordinators. NJCEA is at the forefront of workforce education issues, working in concert with the N.J. Department of Education, the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. NJCEA provides three membership meetings in various New Jersey locations annually, offering relevant presentations and professional development.

Dues: \$30

Contacts: Rob Carson, *rcarson@burltwpsch.org*, 609-387-1713, ext. 6069 or John Hillard, *jhillard74@yahoo.com*, 856-220-8457



## GUIDANCE

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

*[njceca.org](http://njceca.org)*

NJCECA is an organization for instructors involved in job placement for students. NJCECA membership provides guidance, resources and outreach for teachers to enhance their work-study and transition programs and collaborate in program planning. Meetings are held at sponsor sites the third Thursday of each month. Presentations are given by guest speakers to provide two hours of professional development. The meetings are fun and informative and offer an environment of camaraderie and professionalism.

Dues: \$25

Contact: Gerry Caroll, *[gercar@bergen.org](mailto:gercar@bergen.org)*,  
201-343-6000, ext. 4603

### NEW JERSEY SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSN., INC. (NJSICA)

*[njsca.org](http://njsca.org)*

NJSICA works to advance the school counseling profession to maximize the personal, social, educational, academic and college career readiness of each student, elementary through post-secondary. It is a division of the American School Counselor Association. NJSICA provides a bimonthly electronic newsletter, annual fall and spring professional development conferences, student and counselor recognition programs and advocacy for school counselors.

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

Contact: Jim Lukach, *[jimlukach@msn.com](mailto:jimlukach@msn.com)*,  
732-846-6468

## HIGHER EDUCATION

### NEW JERSEY COUNTY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION (NJCCA)

The New Jersey College Association (NJCCA) is an interactive networking, political action, and lobbying group. The goals of NJCCA are to create a forum where public higher education is promoted, advocate for exceptional standards of professional excellence, and serve as a liaison among the multiple local associations in the county colleges. The association advocates for all NJEA county college members. Quarterly meetings are held to discuss and act on issues affecting higher education and to support affordable higher education. NJCCA seeks members who can contribute time and ideas for meaningful contributions and projects that will cast a spotlight on the collective impactful work of the community college community. Association membership is open to full time, employed community college NJEA members.

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

Contact: President Maureen Behr, *[moseynj@yahoo.com](mailto:moseynj@yahoo.com)*

## HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

### THE COUNCIL OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATORS (CHE)

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

and professional development designed by teachers for teachers. On Facebook search for Council of Holocaust Educators.

Dues: None

Contact: Colleen Tambuscio, *[ctambuscio@aol.com](mailto:ctambuscio@aol.com)*, 609-292-9274

## KINDERGARTEN

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

*[njake.net](http://njake.net)*

NJAKE is an organization of kindergarten and early childhood educators. It promotes strategies to strengthen communication with the public regarding the intellectual, emotional, physical and social values achieved through developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs. Membership provides opportunities for networking on issues and questions pertaining to early childhood education through newsletters and workshops.

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

Contact: Bonnie Gentesse, *[BGentesse@verizon.net](mailto:BGentesse@verizon.net)*, 908-377-4344.

## LANGUAGE ARTS

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

*[njcte.org](http://njcte.org)*

NJCTE welcomes educators at every level committed to applying the power of language and literacy to pursue justice and equity. The organization hosts fall and spring conferences, webinars, and a high school writing contest; publishes a blog, monthly newsletter, and the New Jersey English Journal; and offers early-career mentoring. NJCTE sponsors Twitter chats and virtual and in-person networking meetings. The organization honors veteran, early-career, and preservice teachers.

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

Contacts: Membership Chair Denise Weintraut, *[njctemembership@gmail.com](mailto:njctemembership@gmail.com)* or President Audrey Fisch, *[njctepresident@gmail.com](mailto:njctepresident@gmail.com)*.

## N.J. LITERACY ASSOC. (NJLA)

*njceca.org*

NJLA is a professional network of educators and individuals interested in advancing literacy at the prekindergarten through adult levels, promoting effective practices and encouraging appropriate assessment through advocacy, collaboration, and professional development. NJLA provides annual conferences, workshops and opportunities for communication among educators who share common interests in literacy education.

Dues: Free

Contact: *njliteracy@gmail.com*

## LIBRARY/MEDIA

### N.J. ASSN OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (NJASL)

*njasl.org*

NJASL is a professional organization of school librarians teaching in public, private and parochial schools, prekindergarten to college level. It advocates high standards for librarianship and library programs to ensure that students and staff become effective users of information. NJASL inspires excellence in the school library program by providing school librarians with educational opportunities and current information through workshops and a conference. As allies and partners in teaching students, NJASL encourages teachers, administrators and other educational colleagues to join, with benefits including professional development and collegial networking.

Dues: \$65

Contact: Angela Delucci, *njea@njasl.org*

## MATHEMATICS

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

*njasl.org*

AMTNJ is a professional membership organization founded in 1914. AMTNJ encourages and promotes the growth of quality instruction in mathematics. Annual events include a special education conference, a winter conference, a tech conference,

a periodic supervisors' conference and a two-day annual conference. Membership is open to persons engaged or interested in the teaching of mathematics (prekindergarten through college) in public, private and parochial educational institutions. AMTNJ provides periodic newsletters and journals, online professional development, summer institutes, student activities and contests, mini-grant opportunities, mailings and e-blasts. AMTNJ will bring professional development tailored to your specific needs directly to your location.

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

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

## MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

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

*njamle.org*

The New Jersey Association for Middle Level Education (NJAMLE) is a professional membership organization focused on meeting the needs of young adolescents. As an affiliate of the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE), formerly the National Middle School Association, NJAMLE serves as a voice for middle level educators, students, parents, and other stakeholders committed to excellence in middle level education. NJAMLE provides leadership, professional learning and advocacy in support of its belief that all young adolescents must be academically challenged in an educational environment that meets their unique cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs.

Dues: Individual annual membership is \$20. Institutional or school annual membership is \$99. Dual memberships in both NJAMLE and AMLE are available. Individual dual membership is \$64.99 and school dual membership is \$314.99 for the year. Visit *njamle.org* for a membership application and more information.

Contact: Tina Monteleone, *tmonteleone@njamle.org* or follow NJAMLE on Twitter (@njamle) and like NJAMLE on Facebook (*facebook.com/njamle*)

## MUSIC

### N.J. MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSN. (NJMEA)

*nafme.org*

NJMEA is an organization of general, choral, and instrumental music educators, prekindergarten through college in public, private and parochial schools. The organization sponsors a variety of professional development opportunities and advocacy efforts that focus on emerging trends and issues in music education. Members' students may audition for regional ensembles, as well as All-State Chorus, Orchestra, Band and Jazz Ensemble. Members may also choose to participate in other NJMEA-sponsored performance activities as applicable.

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

Contact: Patrick O'Keefe, *patrickaokeefe@gmail.com*

## NURSES

### N.J. STATE SCHOOL NURSES ASSOCIATION (NJSSNA)

*njssna.org*

NJSSNA provides direction for leadership and advocacy in the specialty practice of school nursing. It promotes professional and ethical standards and guidelines through research, education and communication. Members of NJSSNA include certified school nurses, faculty at New Jersey's universities charged with preparing certified school nurses, and registered nurses working in early childhood programs or in New Jersey's private and parochial schools. NJSSNA communicates frequently with members, sponsors an annual statewide conference featuring nationally known speakers and provides timely educational programs at the NJEA Convention and throughout the year.

Dues: For a dues schedule go to *nasn.org*. Membership in NJSSNA is included.

Contact: Executive Director Marie Sasso, *njssnaexecutivedirector@gmail.com*

## OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

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

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

Dues: \$20

Contact: President Judi Schwenger, [geojud222@gmail.com](mailto:geojud222@gmail.com) or 609-965-4181 or Horizons Editor Dawn Leek, [jeffdawnleek@gmail.com](mailto:jeffdawnleek@gmail.com).

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

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

[njahperd.org](http://njahperd.org)

The New Jersey College Association (NJCCA) [njahperd.org](http://njahperd.org)

NJAPERD promotes healthy active lifestyles for New Jersey's students, educators and community members. Its advocacy campaign, "Every Child Stronger, Every Life Longer," aims to improve the quality of health and physical education programs. NJAPERD's annual events include a three-day convention, covering all aspects of health, physical education, recreation and dance. Annual, regional conferences include Health Education, Physical Education, Adapted Physical Education and Dance Education. These conferences are tailored for elementary, middle school and high school educators. Future professionals are offered an annual conference to prepare them for entry into their profession. Members receive the FYI, a monthly e-newsletter and may apply for mini-grants and awards.

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

Contact: John Russo, [executive\\_director@njahperd.org](mailto:executive_director@njahperd.org), 732-918-9999

## PRESERVICE EDUCATORS

### NJEA PRESERVICE

[njea.org/preservice](http://njea.org/preservice)

NJEA is organized on the college level and provides those services necessary to ensure preservice members are well prepared and ready to enter the teaching profession. In addition, NJEA Preservice holds an annual conference and has a strong presence at the NJEA Convention, including workshops and other programs.

Dues: \$32

Contact: Marguerite Schroeder, [mschroeder@njea.org](mailto:mschroeder@njea.org)

## PSYCHOLOGISTS

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

[njasp.org](http://njasp.org)

NJASP is dedicated to serving and advocating for the mental health and educational growth and development of all children, the maintenance of high standards for school psychologists, and the advancement of the profession. NJASP offers two professional development conferences (winter and spring), regional workshops, a quarterly newsletter and updates on political and current trends.

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

Contact: [NJASP.membership@gmail.com](mailto:NJASP.membership@gmail.com)

## RETIRED EDUCATORS

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

[njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea)

NJREA, the state's largest and oldest—101 years old!—retiree organization, promotes

the professional, economic and social well-being of retired educators and support professionals under a unified dues agreement with NJEA, NEA-Retired, and our 21 County Retired Education Associations (CREA) in New Jersey. Annual events include fall and spring informational meetings/luncheons, a convention in Atlantic City in November, and CREA meetings and workshops throughout the year. Members receive up-to-date information on pension and health benefits through our award-winning quarterly newsletter, as well as county mailing, websites and emails. Meetings will be held virtually whenever possible because of the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Fall events, including the NJREA Convention, have been cancelled. Check the NJREA website for updates at [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea).

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

Contact: NJREA President Judy Perkins, [jperkins@njea.org](mailto:jperkins@njea.org) or NJEA's Membership Division at 609-599-4594, ext. 4123.

## SPEECH/LANGUAGE

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

NJASLS advocates for students with communication disabilities that have an impact upon their educational performance. NJASLS helps to secure conditions necessary for maximum efficacy of the speech-language specialist and advances the standards of the profession of speech-language pathology in an educational setting. It actively promotes the interests of members and provides professional development at the NJEA Convention.

Dues: Two-year membership (Sept 2020-Aug. 2021): \$35 regular members, \$15 retirees. All students will be offered free membership for this time period (with proof of student status).

Contact: Membership Chair Courtney Tacinelli at [njasls@yahoo.com](mailto:njasls@yahoo.com)



## SCIENCE

### N.J. SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSN. (NJSTA)

*njsta.org*

NJSTA promotes excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all. Its vision is to excite, empower and energize all science teachers. NJSTA strives to support and recognize science educators at all levels for their dedication and professionalism; advocates high-quality science instruction in varied and diverse settings and, through leadership and service, seeks to generate and promote public interest in science and science education for all. NJSTA has worked hard this year to provide distance learning and NJSLS for Science resources for all grade levels as teachers across the state relocated their lessons to remote sites and continued to implement the new science standards. NJSTA sponsors and co-sponsors various functions and activities including NJSTACHats, NJ State Science Day, a website, newsletters, social media, NJSTA Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award Summer Institute, New Jersey Science Convention, NJSTA membership meetings, NJSTA Spring Meeting, NGSS support and resources, and the NJEA Convention.

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

Contact: Guida Faria, *njstapresident@gmail.com*

## SOCIAL STUDIES

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

*njcss.org*

NJCSS includes social studies teachers, supervisors and university faculty. It advocates for the teaching and improvement of social studies instruction, supports the development and implementation of meaningful and effective social studies curricula and instruction, provides a program of professional development for social studies educators, and provides for educational and professional interaction among social studies educators, professional organizations, and government agencies. This year NJCSS is offering New Jersey educators a digital program of pre-recorded videos for professional development credit. Each video offers one hour of PD credit for teachers who complete a registration form. The schedule is on the NJCSS website and in our monthly newsletter. The videos will be accessible throughout the year.

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

Contact: Dayna Orlak, *orlakd@waldwickschools.org*

## SOCIAL WORKERS

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

*njassw.org*

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

Dues: \$50 (regular membership); \$25 (retired or student membership)

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

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

### N.J. ASSOCIATION OF LEARNING CONSULTANTS (NJALC)

*newjerseyalc.org*

NJALC is concerned with the continuing professional development and working conditions of learning consultants in public, private, and parochial schools, as well as in private practice. NJALC provides two conferences, regional workshops, newsletters, a journal, summaries of professional books, grants and a registry for LDT-Cs in public and private practice.

Dues: \$75; \$40 for retirees and students (see website for special COVID discount for 2020-21)

Contact: Maureen Mahon, *president@newjerseyalc.org*

## N.J. COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (NJCEC)

*njcec.org*

New Jersey Council for Exceptional Children (NJCEC) is the state division of the Council for Exceptional Children, the international/national board for special education. NJCEC/CEC is the professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. This organization acts as an advocate and guide in matters of federal legislation, professional standards, professional development, education of school personnel and families, effective classroom practice and resources available for effective professional practice. NJCEC accomplishes its mission through advocacy, standards and professional development. In addition, CEC has 17 divisions for specialized information, sponsors journals and newsletters, and hosts conferences and conventions at the local, state and national level.

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

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

Contact: Julie Norflus-Good, *jandcgood@msn.com*

## SPEECH AND THEATER

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

*stanj.org*

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

winners are honored at a ceremony held in Trenton. A college theater scholarship is also offered.

Dues: \$35

Contacts: Danielle Miller, [Danielle.miller@stanj.org](mailto:Danielle.miller@stanj.org); Chuck Miller, [chuckmillermusic@gmail.com](mailto:chuckmillermusic@gmail.com); or Dan Paolucci, [dcpaolucci@gmail.com](mailto:dcpaolucci@gmail.com)

## TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

[acteonline.org/career-and-technical-education-association-of-new-jersey](http://acteonline.org/career-and-technical-education-association-of-new-jersey)

The mission of the CTEANJ is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive global workforce by fostering excellence in career and technical education; advocating national, state and local public policy to benefit career and technical education; acting as a clearinghouse for education and information relating to all aspects of career and technical education, while providing access for professional development through programs, workshops, conferences, services and opportunities that will ultimately benefit all students; and creating public awareness of career and technical education and its importance in developing a competitive global workforce. CTEANJ hosts an annual scholarship program and members may nominate deserving career and technical education students. Thanks to unification with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), members receive additional benefits, including trade publications, national advocacy for career and technical education, legislative updates and the opportunity to attend national CTE conventions.

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

Contact: John Neyhart, [jneyhart@gmail.com](mailto:jneyhart@gmail.com) or [jneyhart@ctemc.org](mailto:jneyhart@ctemc.org)

## WORLD LANGUAGES

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATORS OF N.J. (FLENJ)

[flenj.org](http://flenj.org)

FLENJ represents world language teachers from kindergarten through college. It advances and promotes the teaching of world languages, literatures and cultures. FLENJ offers professional development workshops as well as statewide meetings in the spring on topics of current interest to the profession and latest developments in methodology, materials and technology. It also offers mini-grants for teachers, a student video contest, an education abroad program scholarships, teacher and student award as well as senior scholarships.

Dues: \$40/year (\$90/three years); \$20 for student members; \$5 for retirees.

Contact: [membership@flenj.org](mailto:membership@flenj.org) or FLENJ, PO Box 385, Fanwood, NJ 07023-0385

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

[njaatsp.org](http://njaatsp.org)

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

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

Contact: Jay Duhl, [webmaster@njaatsp.org](mailto:webmaster@njaatsp.org), 973-263-7001, ext. 3359

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

# NEED HELP?

FREE AND  
CONFIDENTIAL HELP  
WITH PERSONAL,  
FAMILY AND  
SCHOOL-RELATED  
DEMANDS.

## WHY HANDLE TOUGH TIMES ALONE?

AID NJEA is your 24-hour, confidential helpline. Staffed by NJEA members and professionals from Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care, the helpline offers practical advice, direction, ideas and resources from those who have walked in your shoes.



# GET WILD!

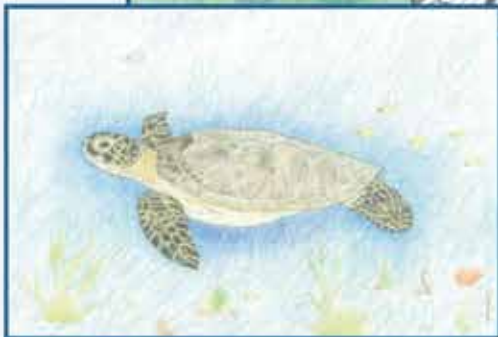


## Encourage your students' curiosity about rare wildlife

### Enter the *Species on The Edge* Art & Essay Contest



- ✓ Open to all New Jersey 5th graders
- ✓ Addresses Next Generation Science Standards
- ✓ Incorporates easily into your curriculum
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**Returning in 2021: High school social media contest**

- ✓ Up to \$1,000 scholarships for your students
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## IT'S FREE TO PARTICIPATE!



### Download your kits today at

[www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org](http://www.ConserveWildlifeNJ.org) or call 609-984-0621



@Wildlifenj



# HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEES

## KNOWLEDGE + ACTION = CHANGE

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

Indoor air quality. Mold. Toxic chemicals. The pandemic.

Most school staff face occupational health and safety (OHS) hazards, affecting their physical and mental health, spirits and job satisfaction.

Union health and safety committees (HSCs) are an essential tool to organize members to deal with those hazards. Separate from joint labor-management committees, they make issues visible, lend credibility to members' voices, and improve working conditions, while developing leaders. They protect individuals, providing a unified voice based on shared tasks, knowledge and learning.

"The only way boards and superintendents hear our voices is when we get involved," says Shawn Dudley, president of the Washington Township Schools Support Services Personnel Association. "It's a way to push the issue collectively rather than have repercussions for someone doing it alone."

In 2016, his association set up an HSC with the teachers and secretaries association, the Washington Township Education Association, to tackle mercury in rubberized floors. Alerted by a Review article and helped by the New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC), they reviewed documents, attended board of education meetings and recruited public support. The result: a huge victory to replace the flooring.

### WHO'S ON A COMMITTEE?

NJEA UniServ field reps and local leaders can help set up an HSC. Include representatives of all school staff. Diverse backgrounds (e.g., race, gender, job description) bring different ways to reach members, find hazards and propose solutions benefiting everyone affected.

### HOW TO BEGIN?

Committees often start around one issue, says Andrew Lewis, the vice president of the Old Bridge Township Education Association and a part-time NJEA organizing consultant in the central region.

"You often go in thinking there's one issue and then you discover there are ten," Lewis says. "After basic training, members can figure out which three

or four are most likely to be fixed first. A roof is a bigger ask, so it may not be the first thing. Starting with items you think are winnable builds confidence to tackle harder problems later."

Whatever happens with the pandemic, he adds, other issues won't go away.

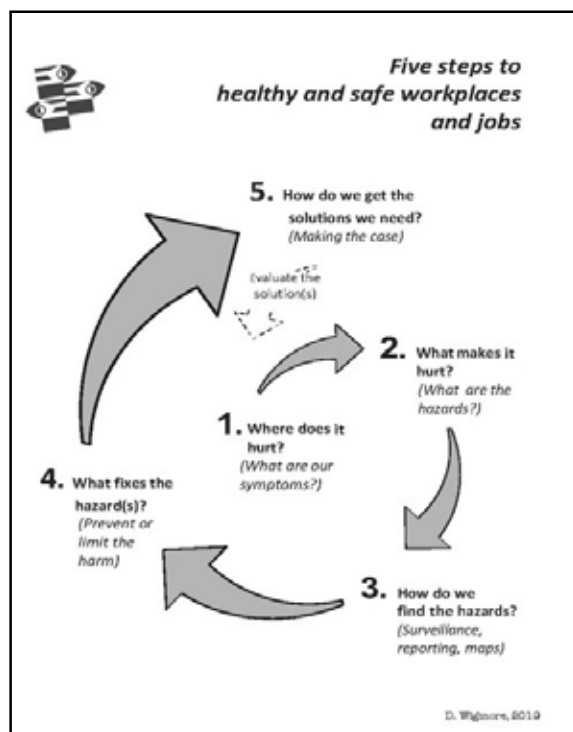
"Mold is not going to go away," Lewis says. "Mercury in gym floors won't go away. There are still things that need to be addressed after this is done."

However it begins, local leadership needs to be on board. They can support new committees getting training and time for learning and doing things. Members need:

- To learn how to listen and ask open-ended questions (the committee needs stories, not "yes" or "no" answers).
- Criteria and tools to set priorities, research and distinguish solutions (goals) from strategies (how to reach the goals).
- Training and tools to deal with conflicts, including disagreements with administration.
- Awareness of how racism, sexism and other discriminatory behaviors affect what people do and what they say or don't say.

Training topics should cover OHS principles, hazard categories, preferred solutions, workers' rights, and relevant legislation and policies. Information gathering needs to be practiced. Research skills need to be honed.

The processes should emphasize member participation with collective action and solutions. Visual tools like body and workplace maps are fun, gather information and provide overviews and connections.



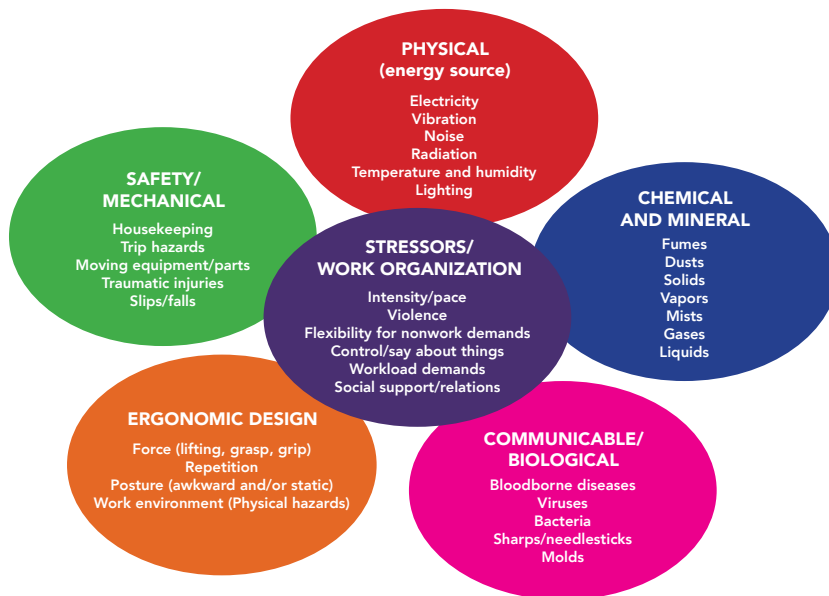
### WHAT CAN COMMITTEES DO?

Use the five steps for healthy and safe workplaces (see graphic).

For example:

1. **Where does it hurt?** Start with members' experiences. Listen, question, follow up, to find out about current and possible health effects. With body maps, members see patterns, learn they're not alone, tell stories.

*Dorothy Wigmore is a long-time health and safety specialist, trained in occupational hygiene, ergonomics, "stress" and education. A Canadian, she has worked also in the U.S. and Mozambique. Her focus is on solving job-related hazards through prevention and worker participation.*



2. What makes it hurt? Always consider the six hazard categories (see graphic). “Safety” is the most visible, but it’s not “health.” Health effects usually are harder to connect to work. Hazards can overlap.

### 3. How do you find symptoms/hazards?

- o Check district illness and injury logs, sometimes called “300 Logs.” Organize body mapping by building, area, or job. Compare and analyze results. Survey members using tools, such as NJEA’s Indoor Air Quality Occupant Survey or StressAssess. Found at <https://stressassess.ca>, this is an app for individuals and online for organizations.
- o Have groups draw and analyze workplace maps for all hazard categories.
- o Review district OHS documents and practices. Compare them to Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) requirements and other recommendations.
- o Check your contract.
- o Investigate when people have health issues or are injured.
- o Use collected information for walk-throughs/inspections, looking at all hazard categories and how “rules” or recommendations are followed. Take notes and photos.
- o Put “results” on maps. Compare them to members’ body and workplace hazard maps.

### 4. What fixes the hazards? Apply principles: prevention/elimination first, followed by informed substitution. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is the last resort if there is no other way to remove or reduce the hazard. PEOSH rules are starting points. Develop short-, medium-

and long-term solutions.

### 5. How do you get the “fixes” you need?

- o Brainstorm strategies for each solution.
- o Figure out what the problem costs (e.g., indirect costs to individuals, families, school/district, community).
- o Who benefits? How?
- o Use the contract. What changes are needed?
- o Involve members, leaders and UniServ reps in brainstorming solutions and strategies. Enlist parents, students, the media, etc.
- o Determine if and how to use PEOSH.

“You can’t just present problems,” Dudley says. “You’re more likely to be taken seriously if you have solutions. And more members come to the committee then.”

## Resources

Labour Occupational Health Clinics  
Academic Research Collaboration (LOARC)  
*Health and Safety representation:  
Writing the Workers Back In*  
[bit.ly/loarcworkersguide](http://bit.ly/loarcworkersguide)

NJEA, *Health and safety manual, other  
OHS materials*  
[njea.org/issues/health-safety/health-safety-publications](http://njea.org/issues/health-safety/health-safety-publications)

PEOSH  
[bit.ly/peosh](http://bit.ly/peosh)

Wigmorising  
“Seeing the Workplace with New Eyes”  
[wigmorising.ca/seeing-jobs-with-new-eyes](http://wigmorising.ca/seeing-jobs-with-new-eyes)

New Jersey Work Environment Council  
[njwec.org](http://njwec.org)

Healthy Schools Now coalition  
[njwec.org/take-action/campaigns/healthy-schools-now](http://njwec.org/take-action/campaigns/healthy-schools-now)

## Lesson learned by HSCs

- It’s more than meetings.
- Educate yourselves and others, without becoming “experts.”
- Document and research.
- Listen to members and keep them informed
- Mobilize your influence (organize).
- Build trust and solutions.
- Address authority, being assertive and persistent.
- Use official documents.
- Use the law strategically and creatively.

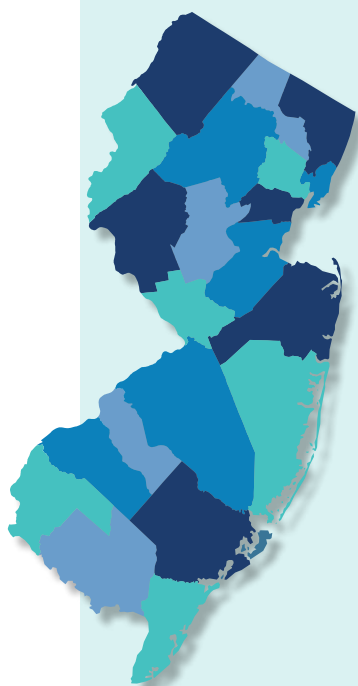
## PEOSH’s specific standards

- Indoor air quality
- Sanitation
- Hazard communication (right-to-know)
- Bloodborne pathogens
- Lead
- Asbestos
- Electrical lockout
- Confined space entry

## Employers must have written programs about:

- Hazard communication
- Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)
- Integrated pesticide management (IPM)
- Fire and evacuation
- Emergency response
- School safety and security
- Confined space entry

# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY



## COVID: INEQUALITY AND SAFETY IN OUR SCHOOLS

**Healthy Schools Now Virtual Conference**  
**Saturday, Oct. 24 10 a.m.-noon**

In the time of COVID-19, school safety and health is a top priority. The pandemic put a spotlight on the inequality in our education system, something which has had an impact on students for decades. We will discuss school funding and facilities, the importance of having school health and safety committees, and Right to Know requirements. In addition, we will look at COVID-19 school plans and how proper ventilation, cleaning and disinfecting are necessary to keep the virus at bay.

Join us as our panelists discuss important topics including:

- School Health and Safety Committees and Your Right to Know
- COVID-19 School Plans: Ventilation, Cleaning and Disinfecting
- Inequality in Education: School Funding, Impacts of COVID, and School Facilities

To register, and for more information, visit [bit.ly/31voY14](http://bit.ly/31voY14). (Bit.ly links are case sensitive.)

## IN-SCHOOL VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS FROM NJSBF

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) is constantly working to provide comprehensive and diverse resources for New Jersey educators that meet the moment and address current classroom concerns. You may be familiar with the foundation's trainings held at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick, and more recently, its virtual webinars. NJSBF is excited to announce the release of its newest service—in-school virtual workshops.

This service is for educators who are interested in bringing the foundation's workshops and webinars directly into their schools. The link below points to descriptions of the webinars and workshops available through this program. If you are interested fill out the application form available through the link.

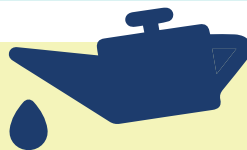
NJSBF is providing a **limited** number of free workshops. Program choices are not guaranteed and are subject to facilitator availability.

To be the first to know about NJSBF's new programs, sign up to receive their emails at <http://bit.ly/njsbfsignup>

Questions? Email Tabitha Rodriguez at [trodriguez@njsbf.org](mailto:trodriguez@njsbf.org).



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Hussain and Anjanae Haqq with their family. From left: Hussain, Qawiyya, Ayana, Anjanae, Naabiah, and Aliyya.

Being the parent of three intelligent, confident, strong young ladies, we have been very blessed to score on the lower end of the Adverse Childhood Experiences study (ACEs). ACEs measures the traumatic childhood experiences that have been shown to have long-lasting effects on a child's development and on their future generations.

For example, a student who experiences the pain of their parents' divorce may carry with them a sense of unworthiness, abandonment, anger, and confusion well into adulthood. That student is more likely to experience a challenging time loving a mate and raising children.

Students with high ACEs scores are more likely to experience health problems such as asthma, diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Unfortunately, many female students of color across our country don't have the luxury of having a low ACEs score because of the environment they were born into, or community conditions and societal norms in which they were raised. Often, this is compounded with implicit and explicit biases and microaggressions from, believe it or not, educators.

On Friday, May 22, NEA Aspiring Educators held a movie night via Zoom featuring the documentary, "PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools" by Dr. Monique W. Morris. This riveting documentary exposes how female students of color are treated in a system of education that marginalizes them by pushing them into compromising situations unlike any other ethnicity of female students.

Morris tells the stories of four young African-American students from second grade through high school. The first student's experience brought me to tears. As a Climate and Culture Specialist, I have witnessed students being sent into hallways as a form of punishment. The second-grader in the documentary was sent out of the classroom

# WATCH "PUSHOUT: THE CRIMINALIZATION OF BLACK GIRLS IN SCHOOLS"

BY HUSSAIN HAQQ

and ignored. Frustrated, she walked out of the school and over a busy overpass while thinking of taking her life. Luckily, she changed her mind.

She walked to a Walmart only to be put out there. She walked to a restaurant where staff called the police. They dismissed her because she was Black. Can you imagine if this were your seven-year-old child? I began crying for this student, because I could see my three school-aged children in her.

Last year, my oldest daughter called me on my cellphone to let me know she was pursued by the security officers for no reason. I can still hear her voice trembling. Even as I type these words now as chills overcome my body. Even now it's difficult for me to tell her story, but I will tell you this... she did NOTHING wrong. I immediately left my work and traveled 40 minutes to her school to resolve the issue, which ended up being the adults' need to "flex" power over a student of color. Not just any student, my daughter.

My daughter has been an honor roll student for the four years she spent at her school. Her GPA is 4.5. She is an actress and has held the lead role in many of her school's productions. She is a leader on the field as a soccer player.

My daughter is many things, but a trouble-maker or criminal she is not! But a cafeteria worker and security guard unjustifiably treated her as the latter. It was this personal experience that came rushing back to me as I watched this second-grade student's story being told.

As a person of color, and being in the position I am in, it is challenging to have conversations on fairness, compassion, self-reflection, and "discipline with dignity" with staff members. It touches home for me as a father, and I have to maintain self-control when calling out staff members' implicit biases when they surface in school.

"PUSHOUT" is an excellent conversation starter. I believe the natural progression of the conversation has to lead to reflection on our own implicit and explicit biases and the impact of those biases in educating our youth, particularly female students of color. 🏡

## Watch and read more

### PUSHOUT: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools

If you are interested in viewing the documentary, watching the trailer, and reading more about the young ladies featured, visit [pushoutfilm.com](http://pushoutfilm.com).

### CDC-Kaiser Permanente Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study

[bit.ly/acescdc](http://bit.ly/acescdc)

### National Public Radio

"Take the ACE Quiz—And Learn What It Does and Doesn't Mean"

[bit.ly/quizzes](http://bit.ly/quizzes)

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*Hussain Haqq is Climate and Culture Specialist with Trenton Public Schools. He is an association representative for the Trenton Education Association and represents Mercer County on the NJEA Editorial Committee.*



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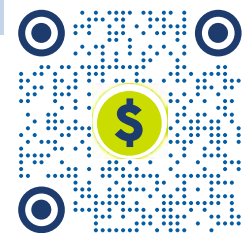
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# TEACHER LEADERS EVOLVING WITH THE TIMES

BY RICHARD WILSON

When the Teacher Leader Endorsement was created by NJEA-backed legislation in 2015, there was the question of what kinds of “jobs” would be connected to this new endorsement. It was a question that the Teacher Leader Advisory Board would struggle with as it worked to make its recommendations for regulations to the New Jersey commissioner of education. The board recommended in its report in June 2017 that there not be a list of teacher leader responsibilities maintained by the New Jersey Department of Education; but rather this be left as a local decision. They opined in their report that teacher leadership is so contextual, and the field is changing so rapidly, that any centrally planned list would be quickly obsolete.

Observing the first class of the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy is evidence that the decision of the advisory board was a wise one. No one could have predicted how much our personal and professional lives would change while living in a pandemic, and the work of teacher leaders has shifted as well.

## TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN A PANDEMIC

“Help!” was the plea to those teacher leaders on any number of issues. Sometimes the call for help was explicit, other times, teacher leaders have been able to discern the needs of their colleagues, students, and communities through conversations, emails, Zoom meetings, social media posts, and other forms of virtual communication.

An initial need for many teachers was the question of how to reinterpret their in-person teaching techniques into equally effective practices in a virtual environment. Dawn Rivas from River Dell Regional School District created a video for

her colleagues with tips on creating a successful online learning environment. The video was also used in orientation sessions for new teachers prior to the start of the school year.

Justin Saxon, of the Northern Valley Regional School District, was working to build leadership capacity among his colleagues. Established teacher leaders and administrators worked together to identify teachers and paraprofessionals with

with the superintendent, she developed a team of teachers and paraprofessionals to serve on the Summer 2020 Connection and Engagement Initiative. The team created activities for students in and out of the ESY program. They reached out to parents and families to encourage them to participate, providing an opportunity for the staff to support students and their families throughout the summer.

Christine Candarella in Bloomfield shifted her responsibilities as a Master Teacher into the virtual world, ensuring that new teacher roundtables and provisional teacher meetings continued. This enabled provisional teachers to move on to earn their standard teaching certificate. She also worked with the local association's Pride Committee chair and the township's Youth and Family Services program to support the local food bank.

NJEA Teacher Leader faculty also provided support in their districts. Dawn Howlen from Trenton and Lizandaa Alburg in Paterson both made regular wellness calls to their colleagues. Lending an empathic ear, they listened to members who were suddenly unsure of the direction they needed to take and reassured them despite the isolation the pandemic created.

Teacher leaders, both formally and informally, have demonstrated the wisdom of the Teacher Leader Advisory Board leaving their roles open-ended. This flexibility has empowered teacher leaders to step forward to support their colleagues, their students, their schools and their districts in a wide variety of ways in the midst of the pandemic. Through the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy, they can reflect deeply on their work in this challenging time and build greater leadership skills to influence public education everywhere—all while leading from the classroom, however that is defined in a remote or in-person environment. 📍

“  
**Teacher leadership  
is so contextual,  
and the field  
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rapidly, that any  
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quickly obsolete.**

skills to support a virtual learning environment. They provided space for them to develop their leadership skills. This systemic approach ensured support for teachers as they negotiated this new environment.

Nicole Jacinto in Union Township found that identifying students who were struggling was a challenge for her middle school team. The difficulties of communicating in a virtual environment compounded the issue. Jacinto created a grade-wide feedback system in Google Docs where teachers could easily communicate about struggling students and the strategies they were using to help them. This facilitated a coordinated effort to reach the students who needed the most assistance.

Christine Hewitt, who works in the Burlington County Special Services School District, saw a decline in the number of students enrolled in the extended school year (ESY) program. Working

*Richard Wilson is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. He is the coordinator of the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy. He can be reached at [TeacherLeader@njea.org](mailto:TeacherLeader@njea.org).*

# NJEA PRESERVICE AT THE NJEA CONVENTION

BY BRIAN REILLY, NJEA RELATIONS CHAIR FOR NJEA PRESERVICE, SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

The Thursday and Friday in November following Election Day are two days all educators, past, present and future, have circled on their calendars. During these two days, the NJEA Convention is usually held in Atlantic City. However, this year it is being held virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Last year was my first year going to the convention, and it blew me away. There are so many great opportunities to learn from experts in their respective fields for all content areas. Whether you are a preservice, full-time, or a retired member, the convention offers something for everyone.

With the pandemic throwing a wrench into the normal convention plans, all convention events will be done virtually. One of the biggest question marks was whether the keynote speaker would stay the same despite the convention being virtual, but luckily the 2020 keynote speaker, Ruby Bridges, will still be delivering her speech.

“

*Last year was my first year going to the convention, and it blew me away.*

Ruby Bridges is known for her work as an American civil rights activist. On Nov. 14, 1960, at the age of six, Bridges became the first African American child to attend the all-white public William Frantz Elementary School. She and her mother were escorted by federal marshals to the school as a mob of parents protested her arrival, keeping their children out of the school. For that year, she was the only student in her class. Her speech is one you will not want to miss.

There are also plenty of workshops offered throughout the two days for everyone in attendance. And there are two workshops specially designed for NJEA Preservice members:

- Friday, Nov. 6, 9-10 am.: Tips and Tricks to Landing a Job in NJ Schools
- Friday, Nov. 6, 10:30-11:30 a.m.: Podcasts in Practice: Using Technology in Preservice Residency Programs

In addition, NJEA Preservice will have a presence in the Virtual Exhibit Hall at the NJEA Convention where you can learn about all of the ways that membership in the association benefits you.

NJEA Preservice members are also included in Early Career Network events. It's a great way to become acquainted with other preservice members as well as members just beginning their careers. Just like the rest of the convention, the Early Career Network Center will be presented virtually this year. However, do not be discouraged. The network's events this year

are sure to accomplish the same goal as in any year: connecting members throughout the state.

I highly encourage preservice members to attend Early Career Network events. In fact, it was the network that had an impact on my own preservice experience. At a network event I learned about the leadership positions available in NJEA Preservice. I applied for open positions and eventually became an ambassador for NJEA Preservice. This led me toward my current position as NJEA Relations chair for NJEA Preservice.

The 2020 NJEA Convention will be like none other. Even though the convention will be virtual this year, all members will still have the chance to learn, network, and engage socially with other members. Further updates and questions regarding the 2020 NJEA virtual convention can be found at [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org) and in the NJEA Convention Program that was mailed with this edition of the *NJEA Review*. 📧

## DOES YOUR SCHOOL HOST STUDENT TEACHERS AND PRACTICUM STUDENTS?

Students who are preparing to become teachers are the future of our profession and NJEA leadership. That's why it's vital that you encourage preservice educators in your school to join NJEA Preservice.

A part of NJEA, preservice organization offers important professional development opportunities. NJEA Preservice members host their own student-gear conference and attend the NJEA Convention along with NJEA members.

NJEA Preservice members go on to become local association leaders after graduation and lead the profession on their respective campuses. To sign up for membership, visit [njea.org/preservice](http://njea.org/preservice). 📧





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High school graduate **DeAisha Johnson** is NJREA's 2020 Isabelle Hickman four-year scholarship recipient.

A resident of Sicklerville,

DeAisha is attending Princeton University this fall to pursue a computer science degree. DeAisha has a strong interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and she shared her passion with young learners within her community. Using Legos, robots, and slime, she encouraged young learners to have fun with science. DeAisha has been recognized locally for her robotics team and has presented at Lockheed Martin, an aerospace company, as well as received a full scholarship to attend the FIRST Robotics Championship in Detroit. DeAisha was also nominated for the U.S. Presidential Scholar Program, which recognizes students in career and technical education fields.



### ELIZABETH ALLEN SCHOLARSHIP

**Angelica Chin** of North Hunterdon High School is the recipient of the Elizabeth A. Allen four-year scholarship. Angelica

is attending the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology for computer programming this fall. During her high school career, Angelica founded a chess club that inspired females to take interest in the male-dominated game. Angelica is one of the top-10 ranked female chess players in the nation. Her goal is to work toward gender equality. Chess is not Angelica's only passion. She also has mastered the piano and oboe, plays tennis and belongs to the National Honor Societies for French, English, science and social studies. Through these clubs, Angelica has organized and participated in many community service projects, such as fundraisers, blood drives, writing letters to senior citizens and peer tutoring.



### FRED AUG SCHOLARSHIP

The Fred E. Aug two-year community college scholarship was awarded to **Joseph Favato**. Joseph graduated from Point

Pleasant Beach High School and is attending Ocean County College this fall to pursue a degree in nursing. Joseph's was steered to this career path because of positive childhood experiences with the medical field. He has a passion for helping others. Joseph has actively worked with younger children with disabilities to play help they play soccer and become better runners. Joseph keeps busy with the marching band, jazz band and other musical

clubs, as well as soccer, baseball and wrestling. Joseph has been active in community service, participating in events such as food donations, toy drives and beach sweeps. His latest pursuit is the Point Pleasant Beach First Aid Squad, where he works as part of a team to strive for a common goal.



### WALTER R. KRICHLING, JR. TRADE/VOCATIONAL PROGRAM SCHOLARSHIP

Montclair High School graduate **Brian Hatchett**

is the first recipient of the Walter R. Krichling Jr. scholarship. Brian is pursuing a degree from Lincoln Tech to become an automotive technician. His dream is to open his own auto repair shop and expand his business across the nation. Brian's first job involved working as a cashier, exercising his excellent math skills, before moving on to other side jobs, which helped him understand the value of team work, time management, effective communication skills and patience. Although he began to work hard at a young age, it has made him more grateful and strengthened his work ethic. Brian also helps his community by serving food to the homeless every Saturday, fulfilling his mission to help others.

## NJREA ELECTIONS UNDERGO ADJUSTMENTS

There's no doubt our world is in a state of flux, and we are forced to change our definition of the "new normal" daily. Consequently, NJREA elections will be undergoing some adjustments as well. Cancellations of meetings, state and county REA luncheons and our annual NJREA Convention have caused the NJREA Elections Committee to review the nomination and endorsement procedures.

The NJREA election policy states that anyone running for an NJREA officer position must have 15 signatures on his/her petition. The same holds true if a member is planning to run for either NJREA representative or NJREA alternate to the

NJEA Delegate Assembly. The election of retiree delegates to the NEA Retired Conference (NEA-R) and the NEA Representative Assembly (NEA-RA) also has specific requirements.

In the wake of the pandemic and social distancing requirements, both the NJEA and NJREA elections committees are in the process of making recommendations to their respective governing bodies about how petitions and endorsements will occur for the 2021-23 elected positions. Once finalized, the details will be posted on both the NJEA and NJREA websites. However, note that NJREA's adopted policies on

candidates' photograph requirements and the length of candidates' statements for publication in the March *NJREA Newsletter* will not change. Paper ballots still will be mailed in the spring and must be returned by dates yet to be determined.

Members are urged to visit [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea) frequently, as well as to be on the lookout for more elections information in the upcoming issues of the *NJREA Newsletter*.

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## Around the counties

*Because of COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, all meeting/events subject to change. For questions, call your county REA. For trip details, check the county newsletter.*

**BERGEN COUNTY REA'S** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 13 at Seasons in Washington Township. To attend, call Camille Coppa at 201-343-3056.

**MERCER COUNTY REA'S** fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 21 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. NJEA staff will be the guest speakers. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Susan Karolkiewicz at 609-223-2570.

**MORRIS COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its holiday meeting/ luncheon on Wednesday, Dec. 9 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The cost is \$35. To attend, call John Beekman at 973-514-1080.

**WARREN COUNTY REA'S** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 2 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. For more information, visit [wcrea-njea.org](http://wcrea-njea.org). To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995.



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for more information go to **NJEA.org**

# OCTOBER & beyond

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings and events are virtual.

**10/13**

Tuesday

**Voter  
Registration  
Deadline**

**10/14**

Wednesday

**NJEA  
Executive  
Committee  
meeting**

**10/24**

Saturday

**Jim George  
Collective  
Bargaining  
Summit**

**11/3**

Tuesday

**Election Day**

**11/4**

Wednesday

**NJEA Executive  
Committee and  
County Presidents'  
Council meetings**

**11/5-6**

Thurs & Fri

**NJEA  
Convention**

**11/7**

Saturday

**Delegate  
Assembly  
meeting**

**11/9**

Monday

**Stress and Time  
Management for  
Future Leaders  
[njea.org/preservice](http://njea.org/preservice)**

**11/18**

Wednesday

**Degrees Not Debt  
Webinar  
[njea.org/dnd](http://njea.org/dnd)**

**12/9**

Wednesday

**NJEA Executive  
Committee  
meeting**



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PS Form 3526-R, July 2014, Page 1 of 4 (See instructions page 4) PSN: 7500-08-000-9005 PRIVACY NOTICE: See our privacy policy at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)

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a. Requested and Paid Electronic Copies	0 0
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I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).

# WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ELECTION OF 2020?

It's an axiom of politics that elections have consequences. That axiom is usually recited when the consequences are negative. But the election of Gov. Phil Murphy has had positive consequences for educators, students and New Jersey's public schools.

In her State of Our Union speech at the Sept. 12 Delegate Assembly (DA) meeting, NJEA President Marie Blistan listed the association's accomplishments over the past year. These included the enactment of Ch. 78 relief, due-process rights and protection against privatization for educational support professionals (ESPs), massively increased pension funding, successful membership campaigns supported by the Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act, and gubernatorial executive orders in the wake of the pandemic that protected ESP members' incomes and cancelled statewide standardized testing, among many other examples.

"This is a tribute to the work that NJEA members did to get a governor elected who respects public education and school employees," Blistan concluded.

The governor demonstrated that respect by attending a portion of that DA meeting to address delegates one day after signing the anti-privatization bill. The governor has regularly been accessible to members, attending several NJEA Conventions and other association conferences.

As she introduced the governor, Blistan remarked, "He listens to the voices of educators on education policy issues. He promised to change the hostile negative rhetoric about public schools and about the work that we do. And both as a candidate and as a governor he has lived up to what he promised."

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF 2016

Compare that to the consequences of the election of Donald Trump in 2016. Under Trump, public education and public educators are not respected or valued. Nothing demonstrates that more clearly than his appointment of Betsy DeVos as secretary of education. Sen. Kamala Harris knew that DeVos was the wrong choice. In her first speech as a new senator on the floor of the Senate, Harris voiced her opposition to DeVos.

DeVos not only lacked any experience in public education but had a history of antipathy toward it. She famously derided public education saying, "It's a monopoly, a dead end." In Michigan, she and her family used their extensive financial resources to dismantle any oversight of for-profit charter schools.

The hostility of Trump and DeVos toward public education is so great that even during a crisis, Trump and DeVos proposed cutting billions of dollars from public schools, while pushing voucher schemes that subsidized private schools. Rather than provide relief, Trump and DeVos are demanding that students and educators return to classrooms that are unsafe, threatening to punish schools that wait until it is safe to reopen by withholding funds.

## CHANGING THE CONSEQUENCES IN 2020

The election of 2016 had negative consequences, but the election of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris in the election of 2020 can turn things around.

On his first day in office, Biden will replace Betsy DeVos with a secretary of education who has experience in public schools and respects what we do. Biden's spouse, Dr. Jill Biden, will be a first lady with a deep understanding of what we

do: a public school educator, she is a long-time member of the National Education Association.

Biden and Harris understand the importance of public education to economic recovery, but they know that a lasting recovery cannot take hold unless we listen to doctors and scientists on when to reopen school buildings. And Biden and Harris will listen to educators and parents on how best to support our students during these tough times.

During the last economic crisis that our country faced, Biden led the recovery effort under President Barack Obama, helping to save jobs for 450,000 educators while re-building the U.S. economy.

Biden and Harris respect educators and are committed to ensuring they have a seat at the decision-making table and providing the support they need and have earned. They know that a return on America's success starts with an investment in public education, supporting universal pre-k for all, tripling the Title I investments for students with disabilities, providing nutritious meals to students at risk of going hungry, and tuition-free community college.

NJEA members remember what it was like to go from one election that led to a governor hostile to educators to an election of a governor who respects them. At the inauguration on Jan. 20, 2021, all American educators may finally go from a president hostile to them to a president who respects them.

By 2022, perhaps NEA President Becky Pringle will be able to echo Blistan's words saying, "Joe Biden listens to the voices of educators on education policy issues. He promised to change the hostile negative rhetoric about public schools and about the work that we do. And both as a candidate and as a president he has lived up to what he promised." 🇺🇸



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