

# REVIEW

NOVEMBER  
2020  
njea.org



*an education and advocacy resource*



**18** NEWTON ROBOTICS  
PROGRAM EMBRACES  
CHANGE

**24** LEARNING CHINESE  
AND POLISH IN  
LONG VALLEY

**26** 16 HABITS  
OF MIND

**28** PUMPING  
BREAST MILK  
AT WORK



# Be the next visionary school leader.

- Gain the practical knowledge and strategies needed to become an effective administrator in Rider's school leadership programs.

[RIDER.EDU/SCHOOL-LEADERSHIP](https://www.rider.edu/school-leadership)

On the day that Gloucester Township teacher Angel Santiago was named New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, the staff at Loring Flemming Elementary School, district administration, local dignitaries and NJEA officers held a surprise celebration in his honor. See Page 14 for more about Santiago.



On Oct. 7, the Morris County Retirees Education Association hosted a meeting with NJEA PAC-endorsed candidates Anthony Bucco and Aura Dunn. Bucco and Dunn are running as Republicans in a special election for a state Senate seat and an Assembly seat in LD-25. MCREA President Susan Lowe Beekman presided over the meeting, which was monitored by Linda Marton. Other guests to the meeting included NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty and NJEA staffer Francine Pfeffer.

In just two days in October, Bergen County Education Association members delivered over 1,000 lawn signs showing support for endorsed candidates Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, Cory Booker, Josh Gottheimer, Bill Pascrell, Joan Voss and Ramon Hache.



# FEATURES



18

## 18 | ROBOTICS PROGRAM EMBRACES CHANGE

Every educator has heard the familiar question: when am I ever going to use this? From math to English to art to physics, it can be one of the most frustrating questions. But that question was resoundingly answered for James Hofmann's students as they watched their teacher spring into action when COVID-19 changed the mission of the Newton robotics program.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



24

## 24 | LEARNING CHINESE AND POLISH IN LONG VALLEY

During remote schooling last spring, students in Long Valley became the teachers. Two students, one fluent in Chinese the other in Polish, convinced their classmates to log on half an hour early to learn their languages. With the guidance of their Spanish teacher, they learned how to create engaging lessons and evaluate the progress of their students.

BY JEANNETTE EZETA AND HER STUDENTS

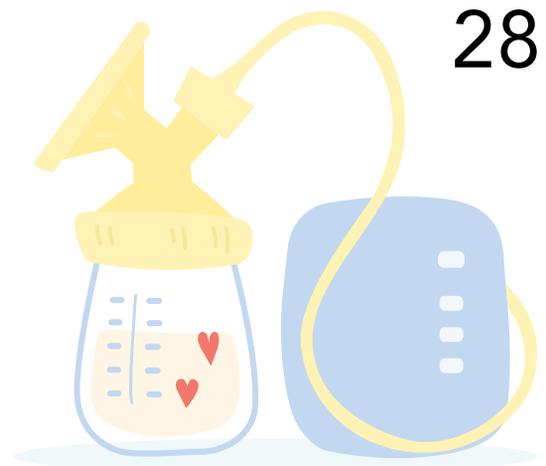


26

## 26 | 16 HABITS OF MIND

Habits of Mind serve as 16 dispositions that can help us cope with life's challenges and serve as a framework to help us confront the challenges of education. Habits of mind for teachers invite 16 dispositions for success during times of challenge.

BY KEITH MASON



28

## 28 | PUMPING BREAST MILK AT WORK

New Jersey's breastfeeding law and the state's law against discrimination protect the rights of employees to pump breast milk at work. Four experts in maternal health explain your rights under the new law and the responsibility of school districts to provide a clean, safe, provisioned environment for pumping at work.

BY LAUREN ZUCKER

# COLUMNS

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 7**  
*Honoring our veterans*

**THE ADVOCATE 8**  
*Know. Lead. Act.*

**THE BULLETIN BOARD 10**  
*Cool stuff to check out*

**THE NJEA REPORT 12**  
*Education in the news*

**HEALTH AND SAFETY 34**  
*Health and Safety in a pandemic*

**SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY 36**  
*Workshops and conferences*

**SPEAK OUT 39**  
*Distance over distant learning*

**MEMBER BENEFITS 41**  
*Get your money's worth*

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 43**  
*The NJEA REAL Movement*

**PRESERVICE MEMBERS 44**  
*EdTPA: Is it really worth it?*

**CLASSROOM CLOSE-UP 45**  
*Run 4 vets*

**RETIRED MEMBERS 46**  
*News and events*

**COMING UP 49**  
*What's next at NJEA*

**FINAL EXAM 50**  
*Learning together from home*



**233**

**The number of school districts in the School Employees' Health Benefits Plan.**

Source: NJEA Research and Economic Services Division

## On the cover



Newton High School student Edward Holder takes an electric car built by the Newton robotics program for a test drive. The program was retooled to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The story begins on Page 18.

**PHOTO BY**  
KATHRYN COULIBALY



# GOOD NEWS

## NJ Reading Scores Are the Nation's Best

No other state in the nation has a statistically higher percent of public school fourth graders scoring at the highest two levels in reading in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. 2019 NAEP Reading: Nation's Report Card. 2019. ([bit.ly/naepnj2019](http://bit.ly/naepnj2019))

# REVIEW

VOLUME 94  
NUMBER 04

Editorial Director Steven Baker  
 Editor Patrick Rumaker  
 Associate Editor Kathryn Coulibaly  
 Art Director Jennifer C. Marsh  
 Graphic Designer Jennifer Larson  
 Advertising Liz Murphy

180 W. State St., P.O. Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211 • 609-599-4561 • NJEA.org

**President: Marie Blistan | Vice President: Sean M. Spiller | Secretary-Treasurer: Steve Beatty**

**EDITORIAL & PUBLISHING OFFICES**

The *New Jersey Education Association Review* (ISSN-0027-6758) is an official publication of the New Jersey Education Association, published monthly 10 times a year, September through June, plus one special *New Jersey Education Association Review* Convention issue, which will be published in September. Send correspondence relating to editorial material, manuscripts, membership or subscriptions to: 180 W. State St., P.O. Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08650 and at additional mailing offices. Email: [NJEAreview@NJEA.org](mailto:NJEAreview@NJEA.org)

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Chairperson: Erin Howe, Gloucester Twp. (on leave); Interim chairperson: Lauren Greenfield, Irvington; Jamie Cameron, Hillsborough; Kathy Cartwright, Mantua Twp.; Nicole Guetzlaff, NJEA Preservice; Hussain Haqq, Trenton; Alphonso Harrell, Atlantic City; Larissa Lentini, W. New York; Andrew Lewis, Old Bridge Twp.; Maryellen McLeod, Jefferson Twp.; Shari Mendelson, Paramus; Holly Pittman, Camden Voc.; Miriam Reichenbach, retired; Tia Reid, Elizabeth; Donald Reilly, Higher Ed; Christine Smith, Ocean County Voc; Sonya Squitieri, Passaic; Steve Tetrault, Holmdel.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Atlantic: Elizabeth Miller; Bergen: Esther Fletcher, Andrew Policastro; Burlington: Andrew Jacobs; Camden: Laurie T. Gibson-Parker; Cape May: Tammi McGarrigle; Cumberland: Aaron P. Honaker; Essex: Petal Robertson; Gloucester: Christine Onorato; Hudson: Ronald F. Greco; Hunterdon: Susan Vala; Mercer: Christine Sampson-Clark; Middlesex: Marilyn Weeks, Lois Yukna; Monmouth: Jo-Anne Montanti; Morris: Kerri Lee Farrell; Ocean: Beverly Figlioli; Passaic: Susan S. Butterfield; Salem: Susan Maniglia; Somerset: Amy Salinger; Sussex: Susan J. Davis; Union: Richard F. D'Avanzo; Warren: Valerie Reynolds; Higher Education: Peter Helff; Retired: Judith C. Perkins; Non-classroom Teacher: Francisco C. Barquin

NEA State Directors: Brenda Brathwaite, James R. Frazier, Anita Kober, Robert LaMorte, Susan McBride, Peter Moran, Deanna Nicosia-Jones, Kimberly Scott-Hayden, Marilyn Weeks; ESP-at-Large: Ashanti Rankin

**ADVERTISING**

Advertising is printed as a service to readers but does not imply endorsement.

**POSTMASTER**

Send address changes to:  
 New Jersey Education Association Review  
 Attn: Membership Processing  
 180 W. State St., P. O. Box 1211  
 Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

**NJEA STAFF**

**Executive Office:** Steven Swetsky, executive director; Kevin Kelleher deputy executive director; Gary Melton, associate director; Matthew DiRado, human resources manager; Aileen O'Driscoll, managing attorney; Kaitlyn Dunphy, associate director, member rights; Bob Antonelli, field representative, educational support professionals; Marguerite Schroeder, field representative, external organizing; Michael Saffran, field representative, leadership training/organizing; Jamie Valente, field representative, membership & organizing development; Eric E. Jones, field representative, organizational development; Michael Rollins, field representative, organizing.

**Business:** Kristen Butler, accounting & finance manager; John Cottone, information systems manager; Karen Kryven, comptroller, accounting & finance; Jose Cancio & Michael Caracci, associate directors, accounting; Damien McKeever, membership processing manager; Richard Roche, Rick Nachbaur, Anthony Leuzzi, Donald Miller, Denise Hamilton, Jorge Salgado, associate directors, information systems.

**Communications:** Steven Baker, director; Nello Ciccone, associate director, video production; Dawn Hiltner, associate director, organizing & coalition building; Patrick Rumaker, editor, *NJEA Review*; Kathryn Coulibaly, associate editor, Diane Barry, associate director, digital communications.; Meredith Barnes, Christy Kanaby & Matt Stagliano, associate directors, public relations; Jennifer Cohn Marsh, associate director, visual communications.

**Government Relations:** Al Beaver, director; Marybeth Beichert, Jerell Blakeley, Michael Flynn, Mike Giglio, Sean Hadley, Anna Hanzes, Francine Pfeffer & vacancy, associate directors.

**Professional Development & Instructional Issues:** Michael Cohan, director; Amanda Adams, Camy Kobylinski, Christine Miles, Michael Ritzius, Janet L. Royal, Gabriel Tanglao, Richard Wilson & Elisabeth Yucis, associate directors.

**Research and Economic Services:** Denise Policastro, director; Beth Schroeder Buonsante, Peter Vala, Martha O. DeBlieu, Bob Bobik, Dan Goldman, Julie Giordano Plotkin, Leigh Davidson, Jim Jameson, Sarah Favinger, Greg Yordy, & Michael Salerno, associate directors.

**UniServ:** Jim Loper, regional director/Central, Reg. 7-12 & 29, (732) 287-6899; Thomas Hardy II, regional director/Northeast, Reg. 15 & 19-25 (973) 321-3221; Mayrose Wegmann, regional director/Northwest, Reg. 13, 17, 27 & 28 (973) 347-0911; Patrick Manahan, regional director/South, Reg. 1-5 (856) 234-0522

**UniServ Regional Offices:**

- REGION 1...Atlantic, Cape May Cos .....609-652-9200... Vince Perna, Myron Plotkin & Stephanie Tarr
- REGION 2...Salem, Gloucester, Cumberland Cos.856-628-8650... Louis Randazzo, John Staab, Anna Waltman & vacancy
- REGION 3...Camden Co. ....856-782-1225... Sharon Allen, Jim Boice, Nancy Holmes & Caroline Tantum
- REGION 5...Burlington Co. ....856-234-2485... Michael Kaminski, Harry Zakarian, & Angel McDermott
- REGION 7...Ocean Co. ....732-349-0280... Coleen Neil, Jennifer Raike & Wendy Sistarenik
- REGION 8...Mercer Co. ....609-896-3422... Alex DeVicaris, Jennifer Larsen & Susan Nardi
- REGION 9...Monmouth Co. ....732-403-8000... Christopher Johnson, Thomas Predale, Lorraine Tesauro & vacancy
- REGION 11/12...Middlesex Co. ....732-287-4700... Thomas Bohnyak, Brian Furry, Nancy Grbelja & Thomas Hayden
- REGION 13.Hunterdon, Somerset Cos. ....908-782-2168... Bill Render, Brian Rock & Fred Skirbst
- REGION 15.Union Co. ....908-709-9440... Dominick Giordano, Maryanne Rodriguez, Ted Tympanick, Allyson Pointier
- REGION 17.Morris Co. ....973-515-0101... Douglas Finkel, Vickie Walsh & John Williams
- REGION 19.Hudson Co.-North .....201-861-1266... Thomas DeSocio & Edward Stevens
- REGION 20.Hudson Co.-South .....201-653-6634... John Dillon & Kevin McHale
- REGION 21.Essex Co., except Newark .....973-762-6866... Luis Delgado, Ryan Edwisch & James McGuire
- REGION 23/25. Bergen Co. ....201-292-8093... Carol Feinstein, Roselouise Holz, George Lambert, Richard Locke, Joe Tondi
- REGION 27.Passaic Co. ....973-694-0154... Ron Bivona, Lori Cintron, Melanie Lemme & Sasha Wolf
- REGION 28.Sussex, Warren Cos. ....973-347-5717... Kim Cowing, Henry John Klein & John Ropars
- REGION 29.Higher Education .....609-689-9580... Marcia Kleinz & Maurice Koffman

**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.



# HONORING OUR VETERANS, UPHOLDING OUR VALUES



From 1990-97, Mantua Township EA member Cheryl Tunstall (l) served in the United States Air Force during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. NJEA President Marie Blistan visited Tunstall at the NJEA Patriots Alliance booth at the 2018 NJEA Convention.

remind me that there are many ways to express our patriotism. We all want the United States to be a beacon of hope, promise and liberty. While some may bristle at criticism of the government, it is a vital tool in “ensuring the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity,” as the framers of the U.S. Constitution wrote.

As you well know, New Jersey’s public schools have been named the best in the nation for the second year in a row by *Education Week*. We have worked hard to achieve that distinction, and we are rightly proud of it. But we also know that we can improve. We will be required to change with the times. We must consider what is best for our individual students, as well as the group as a whole.

In much the same way, we must practice our patriotism by constantly striving to ensure that our democracy works for everyone—the poor as well as the powerful.

Together, we are educating our country’s next generation, and I am very proud of our students who will go on to lead the nation with knowledge, compassion and fairness.

With special thanks, I want to pay tribute to our NJEA members who are also military veterans. Your dedication to our country inspires and encourages all of us!

If you are a military veteran and an NJEA member, I hope you will consider joining NJEA’s Patriots Alliance, which is a coalition of NJEA members who are military retirees, veterans, JROTC instructors, reservists, and NJ National Guard. If you are interested in learning more, please visit [njea.org/patriots](http://njea.org/patriots).

Once again, thank you for all that you do to make our schools, communities, state and country strong. No matter what challenges we face, we are stronger together.

*Marie Blistan*

November is one of the busiest months of the school year with Election Day, the NJEA Convention, American Education Week, and Thanksgiving, but I want to call special attention to Veterans Day and the dedication and sacrifice of the people in our Armed Forces.

I always enjoy hearing about the special activities that our members organize to honor our veterans, but the ones that I have found to be the most moving are when veterans are encouraged to share their stories with our students. Their testimony is powerful, and it leaves an impression not only on our students, but on everyone who hears it.

At a time when our country feels so divided, I think it is more important than ever that we listen to—and learn from—our military veterans.

I am inspired by their perspective on the sacrifices that they and their families have made. Their devotion to our country and the values that we all share, equality and justice, in particular,

## OFFICERS ONLINE

### MARIE BLISTAN

Twitter

@MarieBlistan: @NJEA CD-2 candidate AMY KENNEDY WILL SUPPORT FEDERAL CARES and HEROES funding UNLIKE her opponent who did not! Funding to help our South Jersey families, schools, emergency & front-line workers are the priorities that AMY KENNEDY will pursue and bring to South Jersey!

On Oct. 8, Marie Blistan tweeted her praise for NJEA-endorsed candidate for Congress in Congressional District 2 (CD-2), Amy Kennedy. On Thursday Oct. 8, Kennedy debated her opponent, Congressman Jeff Van Drew, at Stockton University. In the tweet, Blistan recognized Kennedy’s commitment to middle-class, working South Jersey families.

### SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: A huge CONGRATULATIONS to the 2020-2021 New Jersey State Teacher of Year Angel Santiago!!! We are all so proud! #STOY

On Oct. 7, Sean M. Spiller congratulated Angel Santiago, the 2020-21 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year. Unlike years past, the New Jersey Department of Education made the announcement during a Zoom meeting. Spiller included a screen grab of the moment the announcement was made in his Facebook post.

### STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Elections matter! On all levels, we must work to ensure our NJEA endorsed candidates are elected. Every decision that affects public education and public educators is made by, voted on, funded (or not) by someone in some level of public office. Those that earn the endorsement of our members are screened and thoroughly vetted by the members they represent before being voted on by the NJEA’s 120+ member PAC board (made up of all members from around the state). Proud to be out today, canvassing for one of our endorsed candidates (and incumbent), Congressperson Andy Kim in CD-3 along with some great fellow members! In tough times, we still understand the vital importance of fighting for the future we deserve!

On Oct. 12, while canvassing with NJEA members for the NJEA-endorsed candidate for Congressional District 3, Congressman Andy Kim, Steve Beatty shared photos of members helping to get out the vote for Andy Kim. In his post, Beatty reminded NJEA members of the importance of being involved in the political process, especially during an election year.

# KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

## NJDOE ISSUES EDUCATOR EVALUATION GUIDANCE FOR 2020-21

On Sept. 21, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) issued a broadcast announcing the release of its Educator Evaluation Guidance for 2020-21. While there will be no departures from the evaluation regulations as laid out in N.J.A.C. 6A:10, the department's intention in issuing this guidance is to highlight existing flexibilities and aspects of prior guidance that are especially relevant this year.

### Observations

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

Teacher practice, typically measured by in-class observations, will comprise 85% of each educator's annual summative score for the 2020-21 school year, similar to prior years. Because the NJDOE's regulatory definition of "observation" is flexible, the current regulations can be adapted to allow for teachers to be scored in different ways.

Districts that are utilizing fully remote instruction with no in-person component must allow teachers to complete a portfolio of practice in place of a classroom observation. To compile the portfolio, the educator should "gather artifacts of their work... which are aligned to the observation instrument's domains and indicators," which will vary across districts because of the local variability of evaluation practices. The portfolio must include a virtual learning component that is agreed upon by the teacher and their direct supervisor; this component can be an observation of live learning or an asynchronous artifact such as a video recording of a teacher introducing a new concept. The guidance indicates that the portfolio can replace either an unannounced or announced observation, depending on whether a pre-observation conference is held.

Districts where any portion of learning is happening in person may conduct in-person observations of instruction for the purposes of evaluation. The department states, "Traditional in-class observations remain the required method for evaluating in-class, in-person instruction. This includes hybrid models in which teachers are teaching in-class, in-person with students." Districts should "make every effort" to ensure that at least one observation is conducted in person and are encouraged to take advantage of local flexibilities in educator practice instruments; this should enable educators to account for differences in in-person learning brought about by current rules around social distancing.

### Student growth objectives

As in prior years, student growth objectives (SGOs) are required of all educators, and they must have been submitted by Oct. 31. The 2020-21 evaluation rubric weights published by the NJDOE on Aug. 28 state that SGOs comprise 15% of educators' annual summative score. Acknowledging that the process for setting and tracking SGOs will look different this year than it has in years past, the department reminds educators of the following:

- A teaching staff member may revise an SGO; the deadline for doing so is Feb. 15.
- Teachers should take care to craft SGOs that are rigorous yet attainable. The absence of data from prior-year statewide standardized assessments,

and the interruptions to instruction caused by school building closures, may make this task more challenging.

- Multiple points of data should be used to determine a student's "baseline" for SGOs, and they are meant to be collaboratively crafted by the teaching staff member and their designated supervisor. The NJDOE cautions against using a pre-test/post-test model for SGO administration this year.

### Other issues

The Educator Evaluation Guidance document also details training recommendations for administrators, regulatory requirements around evaluation policies and procedures, and Professional Development Plans and Corrective Action Plans. Following is an overview of this portion of the guidance:

- All regulatory requirements set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:10 are in place.
- Districts must train educators on the evaluation rubrics, including the co-observation provision required of all administrators to ensure inter-rater reliability. Training must take into account the "realities of evaluation for the upcoming year" and should be tweaked "to highlight procedures and processes that will be impacted due to potential hybrid scheduling."
- Districts must communicate evaluation policies and procedures to staff by Oct. 1.
- School Improvement Panels (SciPs) are required to convene and should play a significant role in "making decisions regarding procedures." DEACs are no longer required, but districts are urged to reconvene them.
- The planning of Professional Development Plans (PDPs) should take into account "issues related to the impact of COVID-19 school closures." PDPs are living documents that may be revised during the year, and individuals who received a score of NE in 2019-20 will need to document 40 PD hours—encompassing a two-year period—in spring 2021.
- Districts should ensure that individuals on Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) are effectively supported. As is stated in the regulations, SciPs are tasked with ensuring that administrators are implementing CAPs correctly.

The NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues (PDII) Division continues to monitor NJDOE's guidance and advocate for the interests of our members and the students they serve. Members who have questions or concerns about the implementation of this guidance should immediately reach out to their local association rep and local association president.

## STILL NEED TO VOTE?

As of the anticipated date by which this *Review* should have reached your mailbox, Oct. 30, all registered voters in New Jersey should have received and returned a ballot for the Nov. 3, 2020 election.

If you still have your ballot, you must return your ballot before 8 p.m. on Nov. 3. You have four options:

- **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.
- **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. If you have not yet mailed your ballot, you may want to opt for one of the three options above.

### 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 utilize at least 50% of its normal polling location capacity.

**Your polling location may be different from previous years.** 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](https://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 the status of your ballot at [nj.gov/state/elections/vote-track-my-ballot.shtml](https://nj.gov/state/elections/vote-track-my-ballot.shtml).

## NOVEMBER DA TO BE VIRTUAL

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Saturday, Nov. 7 meeting of the NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) will be held virtually through an online meeting platform. The meeting begins at 9 a.m.

See [njea.org/da](https://njea.org/da) for details.

## NJEA PAC ENDORSEMENTS

As reported in the September and October editions of the *NJEA Review*, the following candidates have been endorsed by the NJEA Political Action Committee (PAC) and the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. To endorsement process is described in detail on Page 22 of the October edition of the *NJEA Review*.

### President/Vice President

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris

### U.S. Senate

Cory Booker

### U.S. House of Representatives

CD-1: Donald Norcross

CD-2: Amy Kennedy

CD-3: Andy Kim

CD-4: No endorsement

CD-5: Josh Gottheimer

CD-6: Frank Pallone

CD-7: Tom Malinowski

CD-8: Albio Sires

CD-9: Bill Pascrell

CD-10: Donald Payne Jr.

CD-11: Mikie Sherrill

CD-12: Bonnie Watson Coleman

### New Jersey Legislature

These two candidates were endorsed by NJEA PAC for a special legislative election.

LD-25: Anthony M. Bucco – Senate

LD-25: Aura K. Dunn – Assembly

The **College of Education and Human Services** at **Seton Hall** has been supporting educators for nearly a century.

Now more than ever, New Jersey's schools need inspired leaders. **Take your career further. Earn a graduate degree** in education, school counseling, school psychology or education leadership.



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND  
HUMAN SERVICES

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY



Discover what great minds can do.

[www.shu.edu/education](https://www.shu.edu/education)

# COOL STUFF



## NJAGC OFFERS ART, WRITING AND VIDEO CONTESTS FOR PREK-12 STUDENTS

### Theme: Cultivating Gifted Minds

The New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC) is sponsoring art, writing and video contests around the theme, “Cultivating Gifted Minds.” The contests are open to all New Jersey students in grades PreK-12 from public or private schools as well as those who are home-schooled. Winners will be selected in grade-level groupings. Only one entry per student per contest is permitted.

For the art and writing contests teachers should submit only the best two student creations in each category from each class. Art and writing entries must be submitted electronically no later than Saturday, Dec. 19, 2020. Winners will be notified by Jan. 25, 2021. The entry must specify that the work was created between Sept. 15, 2020, and Dec. 19, 2020.

Video entries may be submitted between Sept. 15, 2020 and Feb. 19, 2021.

Each contest has very specific requirements beyond what is described here. Visit [njagc.org/contests](http://njagc.org/contests) for details.



## NOMINATE SCHOLAR ATHLETES FOR NJEA/NEWS 12 RECOGNITION PROGRAM

NJEA and News 12 New Jersey are seeking high school students who excel both academically and athletically. The NJEA/News 12 Scholar Athlete Recognition Program honors New Jersey high school seniors who are successful not only in the classroom, but on the court or the field.

Thirty students will be selected based on nominations received from high schools around the state. Each week, the Scholar Athlete will be featured in a news segment on News 12 New Jersey. In May or June, the winners, their families, coaches, and teachers will be honored. One student will be selected as 2020-21 Scholar Athlete of the Year and receive a \$5,000 scholarship. Four finalists will receive \$1,000 each.

To nominate a student, go to [njea.org](http://njea.org), slide over to Community and click on Partnerships & Contests. The form must be signed by the principal or guidance counselor, as well as the coach or athletic director. A News 12 sports panel will make the selection. Selections are ongoing; no applications will be accepted after March 3, 2021.

## Full-Tuition Scholarships in Orton-Gillingham Teacher Training

These scholarships for educators – each valued at \$15,500 – are offered at New Jersey’s Children’s Dyslexia Centers. Both the scholarships and centers are funded through the generosity of the Scottish Rite Masons. All classes and practica are offered at these five locations: **Burlington, Northfield, Tenafly, Hasbrouck Heights, and Scotch Plains.**

Attend an Information Session at a Children’s Dyslexia Center near you!

Call **201-692-2816** or email [dyslexia@fdu.edu](mailto:dyslexia@fdu.edu)



*The 12-credit program can be applied toward select master’s degree programs offered by FDU in north and south Jersey at significantly reduced rates for educators.*  
[fdu.edu/dyslexia](http://fdu.edu/dyslexia)

FDU offers New Jersey’s only university program – and one of only 24 nationwide – recognized by the **International Dyslexia Association (IDA)**. It is also New Jersey’s only university program accredited by **IMSLEC** (the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council).

Don’t Miss Our NJEA Convention Presentation on:  
**Multisensory Reading Instruction**  
Thursday, Nov. 5  
10:30 a.m.



# EDUCATION: **MASTERED**

**Virtual Graduate Open House  
11/14 @ 10 a.m.**

**REGISTER: [MONMOUTH.EDU/INFO](https://monmouth.edu/info)**

**Whether you're recently certified or a veteran educator,  
we have a graduate program or endorsement for you!**

#### **Counseling**

- School Counseling
- Student Affairs & College Counseling

#### **Curriculum & Instruction**

- Early Childhood P-3 Education
- English as a Second Language
- Initial Teaching Certification (M.A.T.)
- Literacy
- Master of Education (M.Ed.)

#### **Special Education**

- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Autism
- Autism + Applied Behavior Analysis
- Learning Disabilities Teacher-Consultant
- Special Education with Supervisor Endorsement
- Teacher of Students with Disabilities

#### **Leadership**

- Principal
- Supervisor
- School Administrator
- Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

#### **Speech-Language Pathology**

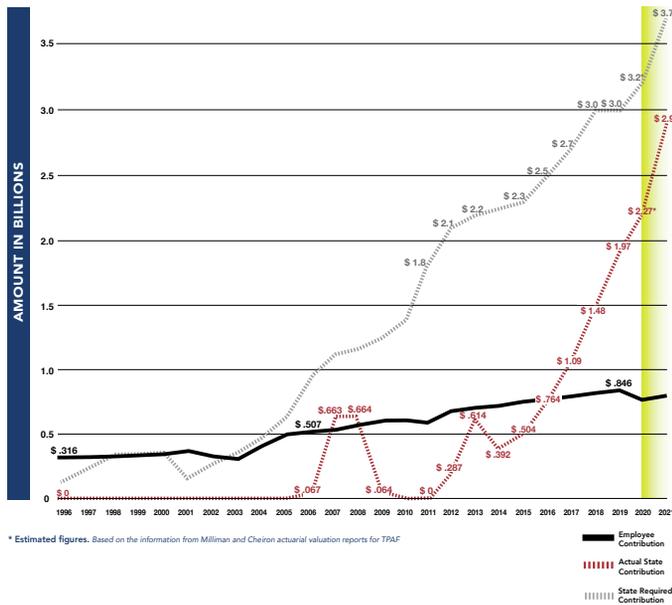
*Many online program options available.*

# NJEA Report

## Who's funding the pension system?

### Who's funding the Pensions? Employee contributions vs. State contributions

#### TEACHERS' PENSION AND ANNUITY FUND



In this graph, the black line shows how much public school employees in the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) have been contributing to the fund since 1996. The gray line shows what the state's required contributions should have been based on the actuarial valuation reports. The red line shows the state's actual contribution to the fund in the same years.

Because public employees in the TPAF have always made their full contribution to the pension system, that line steadily increases over time. In contrast, the state has not been making the full payment although in recent years the contributions have sharply increased.

Under P.L. 2011, Ch.78, the Christie administration committed to increasing the state's payments over a seven-year period. In Year 7, the full payment would be made. For three years, the state adhered to the payment schedule, but in Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the Christie administration failed to include the four-sevenths pension payment. NJEA filed a lawsuit along with other public-employee unions. The New Jersey Supreme Court ultimately ruled in favor of the state, holding that the state's pension payments per Ch.78 violated the debt limitation clause of the New Jersey Constitution.

The Murphy administration has been committed to funding the pension system and has consistently increased the state's contribution to the pension system. The current trajectory for ramping up to the state's full payment is to increase the payment by tenths each year

In the 2020-21 fiscal year, the state budget includes eight-tenths payment. By fiscal year 2023, the state is finally expected to make the full pension contribution—also known as 100% of the Annual Required Contribution (ARC) as determined by the plan's actuaries.

## NJ Supreme Court hears challenge to full-time release president provisions

On Oct. 13, the New Jersey Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Rozenblit v. Lyles*, a case challenging the right of boards of education and local associations to negotiate release time provisions for local association officers. *Rozenblit* involves a taxpayer challenge of a provision in the collectively negotiated agreement between the Jersey City Education Association (JCEA) and the Jersey City Board of Education on release time. Release time provisions are a common practice and have been supported by the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) for decades.

The plaintiffs claim the provision violates the Gifts Clause of the state Constitution, which reads, "No donation of land or appropriation of money shall be made by the state or any county or municipal corporation to or for the use of any society, association or corporation whatever."

In this lawsuit, the trial court, after reviewing the use of release time in the Jersey City School District, concluded that release time is not a gift, but, rather a lawful agreement that serves a public purpose, such as promoting labor peace, facilitating communications between labor and management, and improving educational quality.

Dissatisfied by this outcome, the plaintiffs, funded by the Goldwater Institute, appealed to the New Jersey Appellate Division. There, the court reversed the decision of the trial court and held that provisions for release time in public sector bargaining agreements are unlawful.

On appeal to the New Jersey Supreme Court, JCEA sought a stay from the court while it considered whether to hear the case. Though rarely granted, the Supreme Court granted the stay, which allowed for the continued release time practice

for leaders across the state, both in education and other public-sector unions.

The state's highest court accepted the case. JCEA was joined by several "friends of the court," including the filing of briefs from NJEA, the East Orange Education Association, the National Education Association, the Communication Workers of America, AFL-CIO, AFSCME and PERC. JCEA's position is that the appeals court was wrong in finding that districts have no statutory authority to negotiate release time provisions, under PERC or education laws, and further that the constitutional claim that the release time is a taxpayer "gift" is without merit.

A decision from the state Supreme Court is expected in the coming months.

# Collingswood Book Festival offers educators resources statewide

## Highlights diversity in children's literature

By Wanda Swanson



Keosha Sath's *Just Like You*, is the story of a mother and daughter talking about girls growing up to work in typically male-dominated fields. This photo is from the 2019 Collingswood Book Festival.

Diversity in children's books is one of the best ways to foster respect from an early age. Accordingly, the 18th annual Collingswood Book Festival includes a Diversity Panel that focuses on children's books that highlight race, gender, sexual orientation, and special needs. Also featured at the festival are dozens of children's book authors, a virtual poetry tent, a special appearance by Philadelphia meteorologist Glenn "Hurricane" Schwartz, and a prerecorded Diversity Panel, with a special reading by Drag Queen Harmonica Sunbeam.

To accommodate social distancing efforts, the entire festival is virtual, and most of it will remain available for participation throughout the school year. To attend the festival at any time, visit [collingswoodbookfestival.com](http://collingswoodbookfestival.com).

The goal of the Diversity Panel is to provide parents, caregivers and educators with books and resources that promote love, awareness and acceptance of all people; encourage adults to discuss diversity and the value of people's differences with children through books; and recognize inequities experienced through personal and systemic discrimination.

"The idea of the Diversity Panel is a reflection of the times and the need for these types of discussions right now," according to Lisa Steinhauer, the children's literature co-chair of the Collingswood Book Festival. "The pandemic opened up opportunities to think outside the box and reach out to experts outside of our geographic area."

The panel includes Angela Joy, Frank Murphy, Shenita Agee and Farrah Jenkins. They provide a variety of perspectives to discuss in children's books from the viewpoints of authors, educators, advocates, parents and their lived experiences.

---

*Wanda Swanson is a retired NJEA staff member who served NJEA members as the executive producer of "Classroom Close-up NJ." She can be reached at [wandajoyceswanson@gmail.com](mailto:wandajoyceswanson@gmail.com).*

### DRAG QUEEN STORY HOUR

In addition to the Diversity Panel, the Collingswood Book Festival features Harmonica Sunbeam reading books for children. Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) is just what it sounds like—drag queens reading stories to children in libraries, schools and other community spaces. After the performance, Miss Sunbeam talks about her experiences with DQSH and why she promotes love and support of the LGBTQ community.

Since the inception of DQSH in the New York area, Miss Sunbeam has been featured in the *New York Times* and *Buzzfeed*. She also brings DQSH to children with special needs. Recently she became the North Jersey coordinator and is working to bring DQSH to as many people as possible.

"The goal," according to Miss Sunbeam, "is to develop empathy, learn about gender diversity and tap into their own creativity." She said it can also be life-changing and ultimately lifesaving for LGBTQ kids and teens.

### CHILDREN'S BOOKS, THE POETRY TENT AND MORE

The Diversity Panel and Drag Queen Story Hour are just two parts of the massive Collingswood Book Festival. In the children's section, nearly 30 featured authors read portions of their books. The public can purchase books online through Inkwood, a bookstore in Haddonfield.

The Collingswood Book Festival's 2020 poetry tent, available for viewing at [collingswoodbookfestival.com](http://collingswoodbookfestival.com), includes the Walt Howat Youth Poetry Contest winners and pandemic Haiku hosted by the Nick Virgilio Haiku Association. You will also hear a poetic tribute to poetry tent founder Walt Howat. And Sol Chyld, Reet Starwind, and Anna Evans read their latest works. Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Greg Pardlo, the 2019 NJEA Awards for Excellence winner, also reads his poetry.

For additional information, go to [collingswoodbookfestival.com](http://collingswoodbookfestival.com), and follow the festival on [Facebook.com/collsbook](https://www.facebook.com/collsbook) and Instagram [@collsbookfest](https://www.instagram.com/collsbookfest).



Author Lisa Funari Willever, a former Trenton educator and NJEA member, at the 2019 Collingswood Book Festival.

# Angel Santiago named NJ Teacher of the Year



NJEA officers and previously named state teachers of the year, congratulate 2020-21 NJ Teacher of the Year Angel Santiago. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, 2019-20 Teacher of the Year Kimberly Dickstein Hughes, Santiago, 2003-04 Teacher of the Year Diane Cummins, 2013-14 Teacher of the Year Kathleen Assini, and NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller.

Angel Santiago, an elementary school teacher at Loring Flemming Elementary School in Blackwood, Camden County, has been named the 2020-21 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

Santiago credits his public school educators in Vineland with helping him succeed. In particular, he notes the vision of the late Mark Melamed, a Veterans Memorial Middle School teacher, with inspiring him through a community service initiative: The Gabriel Project. This program raises funds to bring children from developing countries

to the United States for life-saving surgeries. Santiago served as the vice president of The Gabriel Project from 2014 to 2016 and continues to be involved with the charity.

Santiago graduated from Fairleigh Dickinson University. He is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa and Kappa Delta Pi honor societies and he holds a master's degree in education and a bachelor's degree in humanities. Earlier, in 2009, received an Associate of Liberal Arts Degree in Education from Cumberland County College.

Santiago has taught in Camden County for his entire career. He began teaching in Lindenwold Public Schools, and in 2013, he moved to Gloucester Township Public Schools.

In Gloucester Township, Santiago is often asked to provide professional development for his colleagues. For the last two years, Santiago has facilitated Young People of Character (YPOC). YPOC's mission is to bring together fourth- and fifth-grade students from all backgrounds to serve the communities in which they live. YPOC members have written letters to veterans in advance of Veterans Day, cleaned up the school

grounds for Earth Day, and volunteered for the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service among other community service activities.

Santiago lives in Elmer, New Jersey with his wife, also an educator, and their son. He loves music, and his hobbies include singing and playing the guitar. Prior to becoming an educator, Santiago was a musical recording artist.

While the global pandemic may alter or delay some of the perks of being the state teacher of the year, Santiago is entitled to an all-expense paid, six-month sabbatical from January through June 2021 to attend national and state conferences, tour the state visiting classrooms, and work on various initiatives at the New Jersey Department of Education, courtesy of program sponsor ETS. ETS also provides \$3,000 worth of technology equipment.

NJEA will provide Santiago with a rental car, equipped with E-ZPass, to help him travel to speaking engagements and meetings across the state. NJEA also will provide complimentary access to all major NJEA workshops and training opportunities, a \$500 clothing allowance, media training and communications support, and funding for a trip to Washington, D.C. to meet with the other state teachers of the year and the president of the United States.

## HELP PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR LOVED ONES



### ▶ WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOUR PAYCHECK SUDDENLY STOPPED?

From your paycheck to your savings, NJEA wants you to help protect what's important to you.

Enroll in the **only** NJEA-endorsed Disability Insurance and Critical Illness Insurance plans, issued by **The Prudential Insurance Company of America (Prudential)**.



To enroll, call your EIS account executive at 1-800-727-3414, Option 3, or visit [www.educators-insurance.com](http://www.educators-insurance.com).



Group Insurance coverages are issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America, a Prudential Financial Company, Newark, NJ.

Educators Insurance Services, Inc. is not affiliated with Prudential.

©2020 Prudential, the Prudential logo, and the Rock symbol are service marks of Prudential Financial, Inc. and its related entities, registered in many jurisdictions worldwide.

# New Brunswick school brings holiday season to students

By Jennifer Olawski



**Jennifer Olawski, a teacher at Paul Robeson Community School For The Arts in New Brunswick, distributes presents to students through the Reason for the Season program.**

It's a moment you only really ever think you would see in a movie. Tears of disbelief flowing down children's faces, screams of joy, hundreds of hugs and not a dry eye in the room. It's like Christmas morning, but only it isn't quite Christmas yet. As hundreds of children quickly unwrap multiple presents, the room is filled with an incredible energy that seems to make all of your worries disappear.

Reason for the Season began five years ago when I was a health and physical education teacher in Paterson. It was mid-November and like always, our office door was open. The kids really enjoyed popping their heads in to say hello or to grab a snack from our snack drawer. However, this day was very different. A first-grader swung by the office to say hello to the physical education team.

Since it was almost Christmas, I asked if she was excited and ready to celebrate the holiday. Her blank eyes stared back at me with no reaction as she shook her head. I followed up with a question that changed everything. I asked her "Why not?" She shrugged her shoulders as she told me she

doesn't receive Christmas presents even though they do celebrate. My response was filled with empty words as I watched her walk back to her classroom.

The rest of the day, her response stuck with me. I had such a pit in my stomach. Growing up as a child, looking forward to presents on Christmas morning was one of the most exciting parts of the holiday! That evening I realized that she probably wasn't the only child in this situation. Ever since this conversation, each year I raise money to purchase and fill U-Hauls with presents. With the community's assistance, we wrap them for every student in the school.

Last year I was able to raise \$10,000 to ensure all 450 students in Livingston Elementary School in New Brunswick received an educational STEM gift, an art kit, a toy, and winter hats and gloves! Each year, I also invite some of my former Paterson students to assist me in passing out the gifts to my new students. The act of paying it forward really seems to bring them so much joy, and they look forward to helping out each year. This event has been seen on ABC, News 12, Fox, *Good Housekeeping* magazine and many other news outlets.

This year, I am collecting for a total of 800 students in my current school, Paul Robeson Community School for The Arts, which is double the usual goal! Given we are in the middle of a pandemic, the challenge of how to still make it happen this year remains on my mind daily. With all of the challenges we are currently facing in such chaotic times, the one thing that keeps me going is something my current principal, Mrs. Robinson, once said in a faculty meeting: "Trials and tribulations build character." So with this I remain hopeful and excited to ensure all 800 of our students will be gifted with much more than just a present, but with an act of kindness that they will remember forever.

My hope is to inspire other educators and districts to come together to ask our students more questions that will lead us to ideas such as this—ideas to ensure our students understand they are cared for and loved and to instill kindness in their hearts. Showing acts of kindness to our youth not only leaves a lasting impression on them, but can encourage them to pay it forward in some way. I think the world needs more of that. The Go Fund Me page will be open until the first week of December at [Gofundme.com/ReasonfortheSeason2020](http://Gofundme.com/ReasonfortheSeason2020).

*Jennifer Olawski is the 2019-20 Middlesex County Teacher of the Year and a health and physical education teacher at Paul Robeson Community School For The Arts in New Brunswick Public Schools. Olawski can be reached at [olawskij@gmail.com](mailto:olawskij@gmail.com)*

**NJEA Sponsored Member Benefits**

BUYER'S EDGE INC.<sup>SM</sup>

LOW PRICE GUARANTEED!

The Smart Way to Save Money on Major Purchases!



APPLIANCES - TV's



CARS - NEW, USED, LEASED



FURNITURE - MATTRESSES



KITCHEN CABINETS



MORTGAGE & REAL ESTATE



SOLAR ELECTRICITY

<b>Appliances</b>	<b>800-377-3700</b>
<b>Cars*</b>	<b>800-543-8381</b>
<b>Furniture</b>	<b>800-631-0286</b>
<b>Kitchens</b>	<b>800-327-3599</b>
<b>Mortgages</b>	<b>800-971-7721</b>
<b>Pet Insur.</b>	<b>(see website)</b>
<b>Real Estate</b>	<b>(see website)</b>
<b>Solar Elec.</b>	<b>800-558-1920</b>
	<b>*Online 24/7</b>

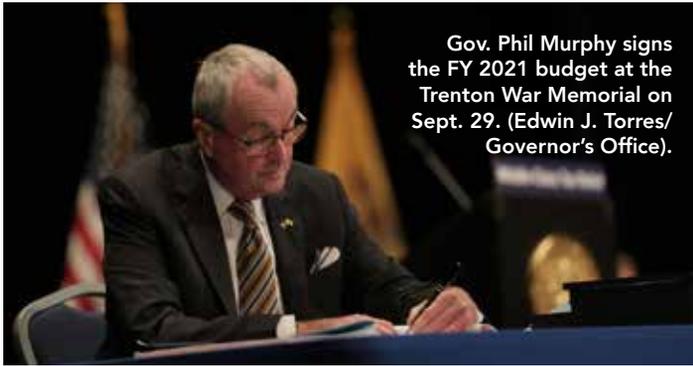
...plus 30 MORE Member Benefits!

www.BuyersEdgeInc.com

Username/Group #3386 Password: NJEA

**Important** Be prepared to give NJEA group #3386

# Gov. Murphy signs FY 2021 state budget



Gov. Phil Murphy signs the FY 2021 budget at the Trenton War Memorial on Sept. 29. (Edwin J. Torres/Governor's Office).

On Sept. 29, Gov. Phil Murphy signed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget for New Jersey. That budget, in the midst of the greatest economic challenge of our lifetime, protects current funding levels for public education, boosts the state's investment in pre-k education, preserves access to critical services for at-risk students, and protects funding for higher education.

This pro-education, pro-working-family budget also makes the largest pension payment in New Jersey history.

## LARGEST PENSION FUNDING PAYMENT EVER

The FY 2021 budget includes a \$4.9 billion state contribution to the pension system—the largest payment ever, representing eight-tenths of the Annual Required Contribution (ARC)—continuing the state's path to meeting its full payment obligation within two years.

The Murphy administration has been committed to funding the pension system and has consistently increased the state's contribution to it. The current

trajectory for ramping up to the state's full payment is to increase the payment by tenths each year. Last year, for example, the Murphy administration made a seven-tenths pension contribution.

By fiscal year 2023, the state is expected to make the full pension contribution—also known as 100% of the ARC—as determined by the pension plan's actuaries.

## \$25 MILLION RESTORED TO HIGHER EDUCATION

As a result of intensive lobbying by NJEA members and staff, the FY 2021 budget restores \$25 million in funding for county colleges that had previously been proposed as a cut. Combined with strong support for county college student financial aid, that restored funding will help stabilize county college finances during a challenging economic time.

As soon as the initial budget proposal was released in August, NJEA began to sound the alarm and made the case that a \$25 million proposed cut to county college aid would hurt students and families and represent a real blow to hard-hit colleges. By forcing that issue to the forefront, NJEA made the choice clear: restore the funding or hurt New Jersey families. Legislative leaders heard that message and made that critical funding a centerpiece of their budget proposal.

## \$15 MILLION RESTORED TO ED SERVICES

Lobbying by NJEA members and staff also resulted in the restoration of \$15 million in funding for the Office of School Based Services. That funding is critical to supporting the health and well-being of thousands of vulnerable students in New Jersey's public schools. For some families, school is the only place they can access critical services such as mental health counseling, substance abuse prevention and other key supports that NJEA members provide.

## REGIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES • FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON UNIVERSITY



## Academic Success for College Students with Learning Disabilities

FDU's award-winning Regional Center is one of the nation's leading programs for students with language-based learning disabilities. Available at FDU's two northern New Jersey campuses, the Regional Center offers students the support they need to thrive throughout their college-level studies — **at no additional tuition or fees.**

- A comprehensive academic support program
- In-depth training in the use of the latest assistive technology
- Individualized academic counseling services

A **Summer Program** is also offered for college-bound high school juniors and seniors.

To learn more about our program and impressive record of student success, contact:

PHONE: **201-692-2087** • WEBSITE: **fdu.edu/LD**



Personal. Global. Transformational.

Visit FDU's ebooth in the Virtual Exhibit Showcase at the NJEA Convention!

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



**NJCTL**



## Science. Math. Computer Science.

Our live teaching materials (for classrooms or Zoom) and our asynchronous online courses deliver the same content remotely or in the classroom...so teachers and students can move flexibly between school and home, no matter how the year develops.

## Three ways NJCTL can support you:

- Free K-12 Teaching Materials
- Online Self-Study Courses
- Online Teacher-Facilitated Courses

Learn more at [njctl.org/teacher-remote](https://njctl.org/teacher-remote)

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.

## NJEXCEL

New Jersey  
EXpedited  
Certification for  
Educational  
Leadership

Register for an  
Info Session at  
[www.njexcel.org](http://www.njexcel.org)

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

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



## Get Started. Get Skilled. Get Certified.

Do you aspire to be a supervisor, principal, or administrator but lack the necessary certification?

Is your master's degree in a field other than educational administration?

Do you really want to take the time and pay the cost for a second master's degree through a college or university?

Here's the good news: You don't have to!

In as little as 12-18 months, you can earn your certification through NJEXCEL, the Foundation for Educational Administration's school leadership certification program.

**All Courses Now Online Until We Can Safely Return**

# NEWTON *FIRST VARSITY* ROBOTICS PROGRAM EMBRACES CHANGE

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

In late February, the *NJEA Review* went to Newton High School in Sussex County to cover a story about a really cool robotics program. The students, teacher, mentors and parents gathered from 6 to 9 p.m. almost every evening to work on a robot that would be entered into Infinite Recharge, an engineering competition. Other students proudly showed off an electric car they had built. They raced the team's Power Racing Series EV down the hallway and talked about the next car they planned to build, all with an eye toward taking first prize.

James Hofmann, Newton High School technology teacher and the founder of the program, proudly guided guests around the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) lab, pointing out interesting machines and encouraging everyone to



share what they were working on: from coding to marketing to building to public relations to sponsor relations.

Hofmann persuaded reluctant mentors to share their experiences volunteering with the program and why they donated so much of their time to building with students in the lab. He ensured every participant got a chance at the spotlight, particularly Harvey Fein, age 85, who proudly watched his protégé, junior Edward Holder, pitch the electric vehicle. They were a real team, and they were full of excitement about their competitions and upcoming presentations.

And then everything changed.

Just a few weeks away from the competition they had been working toward all year, COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic.

Schools moved to remote learning, competitions were postponed or cancelled, and this kind of in-person collaboration was no longer possible.

It was also the moment when STEM and the values Hofmann exhibits in the classroom became one of the most powerful teachable moments Hofmann's students are likely to ever encounter.

#### WHEN AM I EVER GOING TO USE STEM?

Every educator has heard the familiar question: when am I ever going to use this? From math to English to art to physics, it can be one of the most frustrating, and potentially unanswerable, questions. But that question was resoundingly answered for Hofmann's students as they watched their teacher spring into action.

Hofmann is a networker; he is a builder of bridges in both the literal and figurative senses. He connects people and thrives on that connection. He is also someone who believes in the power of science and engineering to improve people's lives.

---

*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).*



Josh Murray is the business team leader for the Newton Robotics Team.



**“ Every educator has heard the familiar question: when am I ever going to use this? ”**

Many families, including Mitesh and Arjun Amin, participate together.

In the early days of the pandemic, as he listened to his son, Justin, a third-year medical resident at University Hospital in Newark, describe the serious lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) and how dangerous and transmissible COVID-19 is, he wondered what he could do.

The answer came thanks to Rohan Sawhney, a Rutgers University medical student who had reached out to Hofmann years earlier to brainstorm ways that technology, including 3-D printers and other engineering gadgets, could be used in hospitals.

Sawhney asked if Hofmann would be willing to help build PPE using 3-D printers. Sawhney sent a design for a plastic shield that had been developed by Prusa Engineers and Hofmann got to work.

With administration approval, he used the 3-D printers at Newton High School’s STEM lab, as well as his own 3-D printer to begin production. It took five hours for the machines to produce a plastic 9-inch by 9-inch face shield that could be disinfected and reused, but many, many more were needed. So Hofmann reached out to his network to ask for assistance building the PPE, fundraising and sourcing materials.

Alex Cable, the CEO of Thorlabs, a frequent and loyal collaborator with Newton’s robotics team, was the first to respond. He volunteered Thorlabs’ 3-D printers, helped locate the necessary plastic material for the clear shields, and committed engineering staff to work on the prototype.

New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP) CEO John Kennedy also helped scour the New Jersey base of manufacturers to find materials.

Gravity Design Works, Inc., in Newton used their Epilog laser engraving machine to cut out finished clear plastic face shields.

Ronco ShopRite quickly offered to cover some costs for the project. Colgate Palmolive, MIRA Plastics, and Picatinny Arsenal were other strong supporters.

Thanks to Shahram Dabiri in the STEM Education office at Picatinny Arsenal, more than 400 New Jersey schools were informed about the project and many area schools stepped up to participate, including Lenape Valley, High Point, Kittatinny, Vernon, Green Hills Middle School, West Caldwell Tech, Sussex County Charter School, and the Clifton High School

Mechanical Mustangs Robotics Team. Byram Township Intermediate School, under the guidance of Hofmann, also participated and a story was published on April 3 on [njea.org](http://njea.org) about them.

But Hofmann didn’t just want to provide this vital PPE, he also knew first responders needed a boost, so every mask is engraved with the words, “Lovingly crafted by many thankful hands in Newton, NJ; USA; Stay safe!”

To date, 5,000 PPE have been produced and donated to hospitals, a feat that demonstrates without a shadow of a doubt that STEM and many, many other subjects that students study in school have vital real-world applications.

**THE REALLY COOL ROBOTICS PROGRAM**

But Hofmann could not have moved as quickly or successfully to help with the PPE shortages if he hadn’t been working tirelessly for years to build the Newton robotics program and develop a strong network.

The Newton *FIRST* Varsity Robotics Team FRC#3142 Aperture began 11 years ago. *FIRST*, the acronym for “For Inspiration and Recognition



The Newton *FIRST* Varsity Robotics Team FRC#3142 Aperture, which began 11 years ago, competes in Infinite Recharge.

of Science and Technology,” is an organization founded in 1989 by Dean Kamen that inspires children and teens to become involved in science and technology. It has programs and opportunities for students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

One of the highlights of the program is competing in Infinite Recharge. According to the *FIRST* website, “Under strict rules and limited time and resources, teams of high school students are challenged to build industrial-size robots to play a difficult field game in alliance with other teams, while also fundraising to meet their goals, designing a team ‘brand,’ and advancing respect and appreciation for STEM within the local community.”

The 2020 theme was Star Wars: Force for Change. Teams were tasked with launching balls at three different heights on the field.

“I run this program two nights a week, almost all year long,” Hofmann said. “Every Tuesday and Thursday nights, students, parents and mentors congregate here. The build is very intensive, usually between six and eight weeks long. During that time, we’re here every night of the week from 6 to 9 and on Saturdays from 10 to 2.”

Hofmann is quick to thank their sponsors and mentors for their contributions. “Picatinny Arsenal is our founding sponsor and their support has been life-changing. We’re also partially funded by Johnson & Johnson. Thorlabs is in our backyard, and they’re a high-tech partner and

we get some of their mentors here helping us with the mill drill and their engineering expertise.”

Part of the Infinite Recharge competition includes outreach to sponsors and partners, and for Hofmann that is a vital part of the program’s success.

“The students help cultivate those sponsors,” Hofmann said. “We encourage them to reach out to their contacts: family, friends, etc. and we provide them with a lot of promotional materials to help them communicate what we are doing and how they can be a part of that.”

For Hofmann, not every student is going to excel at every facet of STEM, but every student plays an important role, and one that can benefit them in their professional lives.

“Everything that we do can be used in some way as a career skill,” Hofmann said. “We have subteams that are building websites, creating coloring books for younger STEM participants, mandating safety protocols, serving as spirit leaders, working on visual arts, writing and producing brochures, and much more.”

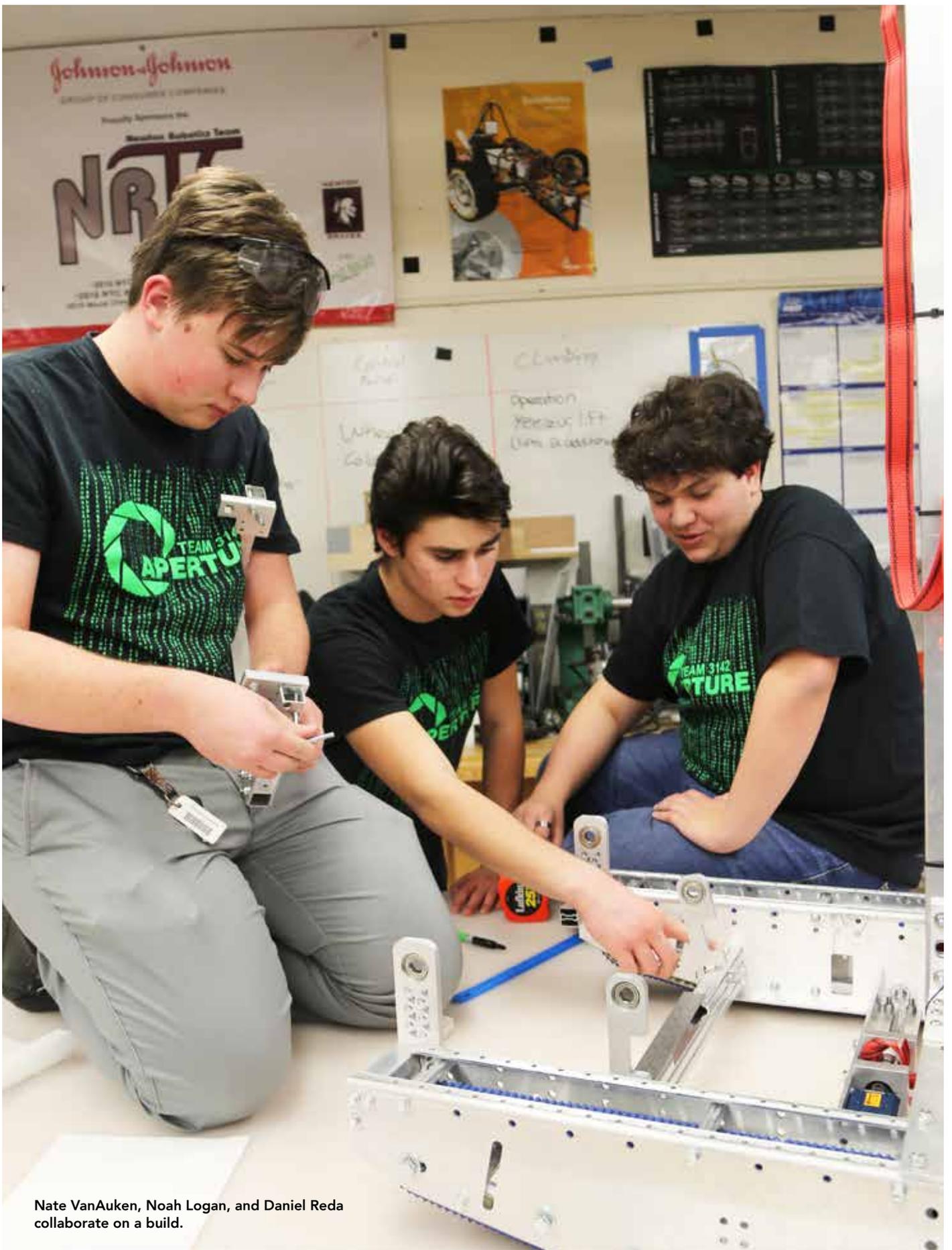
In addition to all this hard work, they’re having a lot of fun.

“The power racing series car is a fun, off-season thing,” Hofmann said. “We built our first car two years ago out of PVC pipe. Out of seven teams, we came out dead last. But this really isn’t a high school thing; it’s an adult thing. And adults cobble together these cars that are electric-powered, and they do their best to have some fun, and they get together and collaborate and build some really interesting vehicles.

“In our second year building the car, we ended up taking second place, in part because of



In late February, the *NJEA Review* traveled to Newton High School to capture video of its robotics program. Visit [njea.org/newtonrobotics](http://njea.org/newtonrobotics) to see the students, teachers, mentors and parents in action.



Nate VanAuken, Noah Logan, and Daniel Reda collaborate on a build.

'moxie points,' which are awarded based on your positivity, your ability to get the crowd motivated and invested in your car."

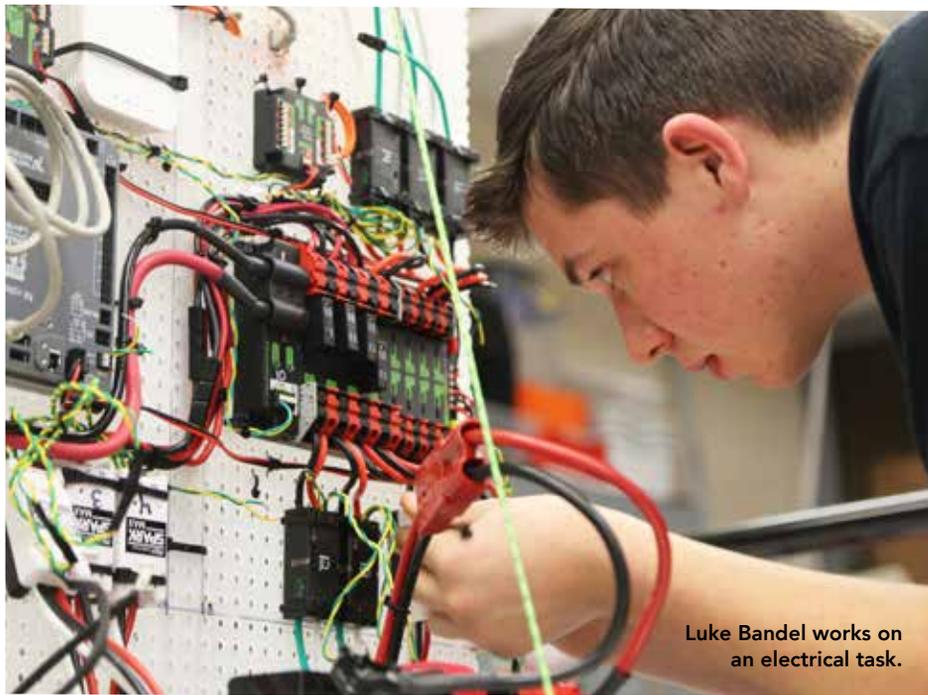
Hofmann credits the adult volunteers who work with the students as a major factor in the program's success.

"We run this program from 6-9 p.m. so that these volunteers can participate and share their expertise with the students. We have whole families get involved. Building things is a great way to connect," Hofmann said.

Hofmann also serves as a trustee for Sussex County Community College and Newton's robotics program is a way for students to get a foundation in some of these engineering skills and potentially stay local for their continuing education.

"So many of our students have made it into well-regarded engineering programs around the country, and that tells me we're doing the right thing," Hofmann said. "My goal is for my students to be leaders in the push for new engineering innovations that makes the world better."

Hofmann is also very active in encouraging more girls to participate in STEM. In January, Hofmann along with his sophomore STEM ambassador, Abigail Nicholas, helped organize an event at which more than 200 Sussex County freshman girls were encouraged to dream big as they participated in a Women in STEM Career Day. The event was hosted by the Newton *FIRST* Varsity Robotics Team and the Technology Student Association (TSA) female leaders. It was



Luke Bandel works on an electrical task.

**“ Every educator has heard the familiar question: when am I ever going to use this? ”**



Gabriel Latimer tries out the electric car.

funded with a \$5,000 grant from Johnson & Johnson. Thorlabs and Picatinny Arsenal shared some key engineering staff for this event.

"We are very fortunate to have a lot of support from the administration and the board of education," Hofmann said. "We have a nice trophy case packed to the maximum thanks to their encouragement and financial support."

#### LOBBYING FOR ROBOTICS EDUCATION

Hofmann is clearly passionate about robotics. He and his students have been working to garner support for legislation such as A-2455, a bill that would create a pilot program for *FIRST* robotics competitions in New Jersey.

Hofmann and his students met with legislators, sent letters, and worked with community partners to gain support for the bill, which Hofmann believes would have a powerful impact in increasing

robotics programs in the state. Many other states already have similar programs. That hard work paid off on Sept. 1 when Gov. Phil Murphy signed the bill into law.

"I continue to believe in the power that these competitions have and the benefits they have for students," Hofmann said. "I continue to work with all our partners to make sure this bill—and these kinds of opportunities for our students—get the attention it deserves. We have seen how valuable innovation and scientific discovery is; we need to keep building."

#### A PROGRAM THAT EMBRACES CHANGE

For months, everyone has been wondering when things will get back to normal, but Hofmann and his students are providing an excellent example of the benefits of embracing the circumstances in which we find ourselves and applying all that we have learned—from networking to building to communications to programming and on and on—to face the challenges at hand. As educators, this is the moment when the answer to the question, "When am I ever going to use this?" is answered with: "Right now!" 🚀

# LONG VALLEY STUDENTS EMBRACE CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH ONLINE LEARNING

BY JEANNETTE EZETA AND HER STUDENTS



## MIDDLE SCHOOLERS TEACH ONE ANOTHER POLISH AND CHINESE

As we all began to transition and adapt to the new remote learning experience, I realized it was key to keep middle school students involved and motivated. During one of my Spanish classes I brought up the idea of giving students of different backgrounds an opportunity to share their language and culture with their classmates. Enthusiastically the students accepted the idea.

With my guidance, the students created a plan that did not interfere with the school schedule. The new learning experience was enriched by the attendance of elementary and high school students. The student-led program would begin an hour prior to the regular school day.

None of this would have been possible if we did not have the support of our administration. The atmosphere at the Long Valley Middle School

gives the opportunity for learning and teaching to transcend the walls of our building. Creativity is an important tool that ignites amazing adventures for teachers and students alike. Our building administrators, Mark Ippolito and Danielle Schweitzer, along with the staff at Long Valley Middle School welcome different cultures and languages while enabling students to gain a more profound understanding of their own cultures.

The students were eager to continue learning and excitedly waited for the new school year to begin. I continue to support a world where a multitude of cultures exists. It is of utmost importance to provide environments that foster appreciation and respect for others, for that is what truly makes us human.

## THERON WANG TEACHES CHINESE

I'm delighted to have an opportunity to teach other students and watch them learn. We went over many different Chinese characters throughout the class, and it blew my mind how fast they learned what I taught. Even though I only taught twice a week for about two months, I learned many things through this extraordinary experience.

I was in Spanish class, learning about family members when my teacher, Señora Ezeta, asked me how to say 'grandma' in Chinese. She asked later that day if I could teach a class, and I agreed. I had absolutely no idea how to teach a lesson, so I just made a basic Google Slide about Pinyin (the Chinese phonetic alphabet) and the numbers one, two, and three.

The second week was better after I received some feedback from my teacher. She recommended that I teach numbers. I made another slide and put numbers 1-10, 100, and 1,000. I taught my

classmates the numbers, but they all struggled with them.

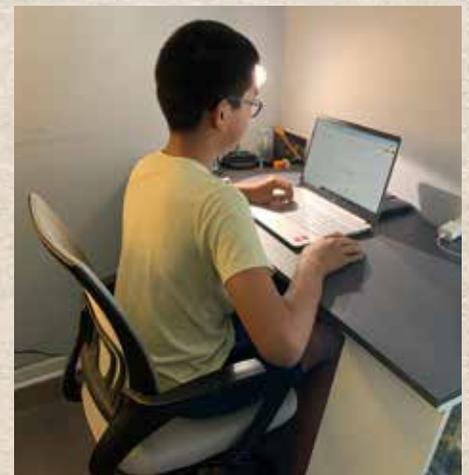
The third class was when it started to improve. I added English pronunciation guides, which helped them a lot. They were able to pronounce all of the different characters by the end of the class, but they still struggled with remembering which characters went with certain words. I tested them with Gimkits, a live quiz learning game, so I could see what they were struggling with. I helped them practice for a few weeks before moving on.

By the end of the month, the students could identify numbers and read them out loud with little to no accent. I asked everyone what they wanted to learn next, since I wanted to make it enjoyable. I had learned Chinese characters by reading articles and learning new characters within the text, which, I have to say was boring and put me off from wanting to learn it. I used Google Slides to teach, since it was effective in my opinion.

We were able to learn about the topic in just two weeks. We couldn't continue through the summer because our school accounts were not active, but we planned to start again when the new school year began.

I have to thank my amazing Spanish teacher Sra. Ezeta, who organized and started this entire class. I also want to give my thanks to the students who stayed in this class, since learning Chinese can be tough and sometimes boring.

Of course, I wouldn't be able to teach Chinese if I hadn't learned it from my parents and Chinese teachers. I hope that someday I can teach more people who are willing to learn so that I can help spread awareness about the rich Chinese culture.



---

*Jeannette Ezeta is a sixth-grade Spanish teacher at Long Valley Middle School in Washington Township, Morris County. She can be reached at [jezeta@wtschools.org](mailto:jezeta@wtschools.org).*

## VICTORIA KRAKOWSKI TEACHES POLISH

From a young age I was exposed to foreign languages. At home, I speak Polish with my parents. I also attend Polish school on Saturdays. During quarantine, I was having Spanish classes.

One day I told Sra. Ezeta that I spoke Polish. That is when it all started. I was so excited that I would be teaching my classmates. I began teaching my teacher and some students Polish. I felt as if I were the teacher of the class. I would make lessons that would be fun and interesting!

I really enjoyed teaching, and I think that at my age it is very easy to master these languages. I love learning other languages, and I think it is very important for us to get this knowledge. I am very happy that my school system gives us an opportunity to learn unfamiliar languages. I adored this participation, and I learned a lot from this!



“ I hope that someday I can teach more people who are willing to learn so that I can help spread awareness about the rich Chinese culture. ”

## STUDENTS RESPOND



**Jack LaBar**

This year I was included in a club that taught Chinese and Polish. At first, I was skeptical about joining because it seemed so different. I have only been exposed to Latin-rooted languages, such as English, Spanish, and French. Polish and Chinese did not seem to be in my wheelhouse. And the fact that I would have to wake up 30 minutes earlier than usual did not make the classes any more appealing. I did it anyway, deciding to give it a shot. The first virtual lesson I went to was a Chinese lesson on numbers. At first, all of the symbols and words were overwhelming, but after a little practice, I started to get the hang of it. With Polish, the same thing happened, but with the days of the week. The words were confusing, but again, with practice, I got better. It was evident that the teachers of both languages put in a lot of time and effort into their lessons. In the end, it all paid off. I have yet to master a lot of each language but like everything else in life, nothing comes easy.

This experience has helped me gain a perspective on the world around me and all of its cultures. The vast difference in languages and cultures is a concept many people still strive to comprehend. People have a mindset that whatever they are used to, is the “right” thing to do. I am very grateful for this opportunity to enrich my understanding of the world and its cultures.

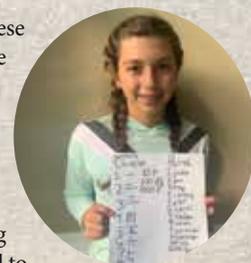


**Lucia Pulido**

It is very important to learn a different language such as Chinese or Polish. Did you know that Chinese is one of the most spoken languages in the world? Chinese is a fun language to learn. It is very different from English—from the way it is written to the way the words are pronounced!

**Elisa Castro**

For weeks, I would wake up and get on a computer to meet for Chinese or Polish lessons before the distance-learning day. I started with little knowledge of either one of the languages. In a couple months, I was able to pronounce words and read some of the characters. During the pandemic, we all had a lot more free time, so it was a great opportunity to learn these languages. I think it is really fun and interesting learning a new language. It's also very helpful and important, especially when visiting a new country. Additionally, I enjoyed learning about numbers and animals in Chinese and Polish, and I look forward to participating in more of these lessons!



**Maya Condron**

Chinese class was a great addition to the online learning experience. It helped make learning at home much more fun and interesting. It gave me something to look forward to every week.

Theron was a great teacher. He did not go too fast or too slow—it was the perfect tempo for learning a new language. He made cool Gimkits to review, informative Google Slides and Docs. It was a great experience.

I can't wait to keep learning Chinese and maybe even move on to learn other languages from students who are either fluent in the language or are learning it themselves. Experiencing foreign languages gives me a glimpse into their cultures and opens new opportunities for everyone involved.

# HABITS OF MIND FOR TEACHERS

## *16 dispositions for success*

BY KEITH MASON, PH.D.

The habits of mind, a series of 16 problem-solving strategies, can assist an individual with life's challenges. Two professors, Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick, have been promoting the habits of mind through books, articles, seminars and online venues.

Educators Karen Tui Boyes and Graham Watts promote expert ways to apply the habits of mind to student learning in their books, *Developing Habits of Mind in Elementary Schools* and *Developing Habits of Mind in Secondary Schools*. The 16 dispositions, developed over the course of numerous years, serve as a support system that can help motivate both students and educators and assist them with self-actualization.

As educators, we can benefit from the 16 habits of mind. The education field can be particularly challenging and stressful. The 16 habits help teachers focus on ways to operate that will help us be successful as individuals and

as educators, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teachers at all levels and of all subjects can benefit from the 16 dispositions. Consider the following questions in terms of habits of mind:

- How can habits of mind help educators deal with self-management?
- How is using habits of mind applicable to student learning within various subjects and for solving life problems?

The following presents the 16 habits of mind with examples of how they can foster success in the lives of teachers. The suggestions are a mere fraction of possibilities that may occur daily in our lives. The habits of mind can clearly be utilized when solving problems, attempting to focus on an important task or creating balance.

Educators can post the general habits of mind in their classrooms, share them on a handout or have a digital version available online. Subject-specific ways of implementation may be found in *Students at the Center: Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind* by Bena Kallick and Allison Zmuda. I have developed guidelines for habits of mind tied to language learning, musicals and music. See those references in the sidebar.

---

*As the Review was going to press with this article, we learned of the tragic death of its author, Dr. Keith Mason, on Oct 1. A lover of world languages and Broadway musicals, Dr. Mason contributed several articles to the NJEA Review over the last 15 years that championed the use of musicals across the curriculum—including in the instruction of languages such as Spanish and Italian, which he taught prior to his retirement from New Providence High School. Dr. Mason was also an educator and researcher at several institutions of higher education. In addition to music and language education, his specialties included curriculum, Romance linguistics and phonetics.*

# APPLYING THE 16 HABITS OF MIND

## 1 **Persisting**

Try new approaches, methods and techniques in your classroom. Retry something that originally did not work and figure out how to improve it. Persevere when you believe in something that will benefit students.

## 2 **Managing impulsivity**

Focus on how to improve your knowledge base in curricula, education and classroom management.

## 3 **Listening with understanding and empathy**

Listen to fellow teachers, students, administrators and parents so that you show that you value what they have to say. Select key ideas from those with whom you speak so that you can improve your classroom practice.

## 4 **Thinking flexibly**

When planning instruction, consider your options on how best to present concepts and use materials and technology when needed.

## 5 **Thinking about thinking (metacognition)**

Keep a journal about your educational experiences with comments outlining what you have learned and insights about the education process.

## 6 **Striving for accuracy**

Check over your lesson plans, materials and all written work that you do as a teacher; self-monitor your classroom instruction and the written materials that you use with students and submit to your administrators and supervisors.

## 7 **Questioning and posing problems**

Decide on how to improve your questioning techniques; make certain to balance lower level and higher level questions especially by including why, how and what-if questions.

## 8 **Applying past knowledge to new situations**

Decide on how to replicate past lessons so they can be used again successfully; decide on past instruction that did not work and devise ways to deliver lessons that are improvements over past delivery.

## 9 **Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision**

During a quiet time, reflect on how your teaching can be clear and precise and ways in which your materials can be improved so that your students learn more effectively. How can you improve your curriculum so that it is clear and precise?

## 10 **Gathering data through all senses**

How can you be engaged using your senses so that you are an effective teacher? How can you engage your students so that you involve multiple senses?

## 11 **Creating, imagining, innovating**

Come up with a new way to deliver a lesson that stretches your abilities. Be creative in projects that you assign to students, giving them your own personal twist.

## 12 **Responding with wonderment and awe**

Research a curricular approach or method that is new to you—such as habits of mind—by observing a colleague or reading an article, chapter or book. What aspects of this new approach or method strike you as opportunities for wonder or awe?

## 13 **Taking responsible risks**

Try a new way to present a subject-area concept or skill. Learn about new methods through professional reading or conversations with colleagues.

## 14 **Finding humor**

Take note of how accepting humor improves your disposition. How do teachers and students learn through mistakes that may be humorous?

## 15 **Thinking interdependently**

Collaborate with fellow colleagues in your own school, at conferences, through blogs or by reading professional literature in print or digital form. In what ways can your teaching improve by being interdependent instead of flying solo?

## 16 **Remaining open to continuous learning**

Position yourself to continue learning about education by reading professional resources, attending a conference or workshop, collaborating with colleagues or writing your own blog or article for fellow teachers. How can you expand your repertoire by reaching out to fellow colleagues?

## Resources

If you wish to take a deeper dive into the habits of mind, these resources, referenced in the article are a great place to start.

Boyes, Karen Tui and Graham Watts. 2009a. *Developing Habits of Mind in Elementary Schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Boyes, Karen Tui and Graham Watts. 2009b. *Developing Habits of Mind in Secondary Schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Costa, Arthur and Bena Kallick. 2008. *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Costa, Arthur and Bena Kallick. 2009. *Habits of Mind Across the Curriculum: Practical and Creative Strategies for Teachers*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Kallick, Bena and Allison Zmuda. 2017. *Students at the Center: Personalized Learning with Habits of Mind*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Mason, Keith. 2017. Musicals Foster Habits of Mind. *Teachers Matter* 34, 56-59.

Mason, Keith. 2019. 16 Habits of Mind: Fostering Successful Language Learning. *Teachers Matter* 43, 30-31.

Mason, Keith. 2020. Music and the 16 Habits of Mind: Persisting and More. *Choral Director*, 17, No. 1, 5.

# PUMPING at work

## What all educators need to know

By Lauren Zucker, PH.D.

*Lauren Zucker, Ph.D., teaches English at Northern Highlands Regional High School in Allendale. She teaches education courses at Fordham University and Drew University, and has served as membership chair for her local association. Her op-ed on the importance of telehealth support for breastfeeding mothers recently appeared in NJSpotlight (see [bit.ly/njspotlightzucker](https://bit.ly/njspotlightzucker)). At [laurenzucker.org](https://laurenzucker.org), she writes about teaching and research. She can be reached at [lauren6@gmail.com](mailto:lauren6@gmail.com).*

*Ellen Maughan, JD, IBCLC, is a retired attorney who has been supporting breastfeeding families in health care settings and the community for 25 years. Ellen currently serves as co-president of the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition ([breastfeedingnj.org](https://breastfeedingnj.org)) and is an adjunct professor at Drexel University. Most recently, Ellen managed the New Jersey Breastfeeding Strategic Plan project in partnership with the NJ Department of Health.*

*Jill Wodnick is a childbirth educator and policy expert who works at Montclair State University on improving maternity care. She has advocated for respectful, equitable maternity care for nearly twenty years. Her previous experience as the director of community doula programs helps her center the voices of women and families from diverse backgrounds in local, state and federal policy proposals. Contact her at [JillWodnick.com](https://JillWodnick.com).*

*Carmen Baker is an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC 2005) who offers loving lactation support to new and expecting families via her North Jersey practice Breastfeeding Momma ([breastfeedingmomma.com](https://breastfeedingmomma.com)). Through her work as manager of the CarePoint Health Hoboken Lactation Program, she supports expecting and newly delivered families, leads staff education, and runs a New Moms Support group.*

*Allyson Murphy, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), offers warm lactation support to expecting parents and new families through her North Jersey practice Lactation Ally ([lactationally.com](https://lactationally.com)). She helps clients meet their feeding goals and runs a postpartum support group that offers care and community. Allyson recently authored a report ([bit.ly/njschoolpumping](https://bit.ly/njschoolpumping)) to help school districts create written policy to support pumping employees.*

As an educator and a new mother, I struggled to envision what pumping breast milk might look like when I returned to work. I thought of friends who told me they pumped while driving to school, or while scarfing down their lunch in a supply closet. I worried that my rotating teaching schedule, further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic, couldn't accommodate the regular breaks I'd need. A private person in some ways, I struggled to imagine how to approach this conversation with my colleagues, my administrators and my students.

For those who have never pumped milk themselves, or witnessed it, it can sound fairly straightforward and mechanical. Attach a machine to the body, turn on the pump, extract the milk. In my lived experience, however, it is a lot more complicated.

At the new parent support groups I attended, working mothers described the challenge of finding the time and space to pump in the middle of a hectic workday. For those who were lucky enough to secure a comfortable pumping location and block off the time they needed, many found themselves yielding less milk during those pumping sessions than what their babies needed in their absence.

The end of my parental leave on the horizon, I reached out to local experts to help me prepare for pumping at work. In these conversations, I learned that many educators may not be aware of their rights to pump at work, and many choose not to do so because of the associated challenges. The article that follows is a product of my efforts to navigate this process as an NJEA member and new mother in the time of COVID-19.

I conducted one-on-one interviews with four New Jersey experts in maternal health to cover the medical, and legal and interpersonal aspects of pumping or expressing milk. I spoke with Jill Wodnick, a maternal health educator and advocate, Ellen Maughan, a retired attorney and Co-President of New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition, Carmen Baker-Clark, an Internationally Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) and manager of the lactation program at the CarePoint Health Hoboken hospital, and Allyson Murphy, an IBCLC whose work with educator clients led her to develop recommendations for school-based lactation policies. Our discussions covered topics such as lactation space considerations, strategies for overcoming common obstacles, and tips for communicating with administrators. In some cases, their responses have been abridged and/or edited for clarity.



## THE BASICS OF PUMPING AT WORK

### Who is entitled by law to pump milk at work?

**Ellen:** Every breastfeeding employee is covered by New Jersey's legal breastfeeding protections, which are stronger than existing federal law. Breastfeeding employees have workplace pumping protections under the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), which was amended in 2018 to include breastfeeding. The LAD covers all New Jersey hourly or salaried employees, with the possible exception of federal employees, who may be covered only by provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

### Where can employees pump milk?

**Ellen:** The law requires that the employer provide a reasonable break time and a private place to pump that's not a bathroom and is in close proximity to the employee's workplace. In the federal law, a private place is considered to be a place that's shielded from view with a door that can be locked from the inside.

The New Jersey breastfeeding law, N.J.S.A. 26:4C-7 ([bit.ly/nj242-26](http://bit.ly/nj242-26)) further defines lactation room as "a sanitary room, other than a restroom, which can be used by a mother to breastfeed her baby or express milk in private, and which includes an electrical outlet, a chair, and nearby access to running water."

**Carmen:** It should not be in the nurse's office, because that pumping mom would be exposed to every possible germ that's in there, and then she'd be bringing it back to the baby.

If a mom is working virtually from home and breastfeeding her baby directly is an option, she should absolutely do that over pumping because the baby will do a better job of emptying the breast, it will take less time, and be less complicated.

**Allyson:** A pumping room would ideally also have a refrigerator that's used only for storing milk. You need to have outlets because pumps need to be plugged in. You need a chair that you can sit comfortably in for 20 minutes, you need a table to be able to put the pump and the bottles on. Soap and paper towels at the sink, and, ideally hot water to be able to wash your hands and your pump parts.

Some people want to be really private, and they don't want anybody else in there with them. So there should be a schedule so that those who are breastfeeding know who's using the room and when. Other people are comfortable with sharing with a coworker, but then you want to think about how you divide that space. Do you have partitions? Do you have two tables that face opposite ways?

Even with a locking door, look for some way to create a visual barrier, such as a folding screen. So if the door gets accidentally opened, you don't have a hallway of students looking in and seeing Miss Smith hooked up to a pump. Everyone's biggest anxiety is having the students walk in on them. I've had some clients whose supervisor or principal let them use their office, probably because they themselves or their partner had nursed in the past.

### How often should working mothers pump milk?

**Ellen:** The law says "reasonable" pumping breaks and that of course depends on the mother's own situation. What is reasonable depends on the age and needs of the baby and how often the mother is pumping. In general, the number of pumping breaks needs to approximate how many times the mother would feed the baby if the baby was with her. Most full-time employees need to pump three times during a work day: a morning pumping, a mid-day pumping, and an afternoon pumping. If the baby is exclusively breastfed and below the age of six months, for example, most mothers need to pump at least every three hours.

**Carmen:** A mom also needs to also take into account her commute time so that will extend the separation from her baby.

**Allyson:** Educators' changing schedules can make pumping difficult. Special schedules, such as half days, assemblies, and emergency drills, also create challenges. Lactation works on supply and demand, and you have to have certain intervals to your pumping. When I have clients whose schools are on rotating schedules—when, for example, sometimes your pump time is at 8 a.m., and sometimes your pump time's at 9:30 a.m.—it's really hard for your body to adjust. Our bodies need a lot more predictability in those time frames.

### What is an appropriate amount of time to go between pumping sessions, and what are the risks of going too long between sessions?

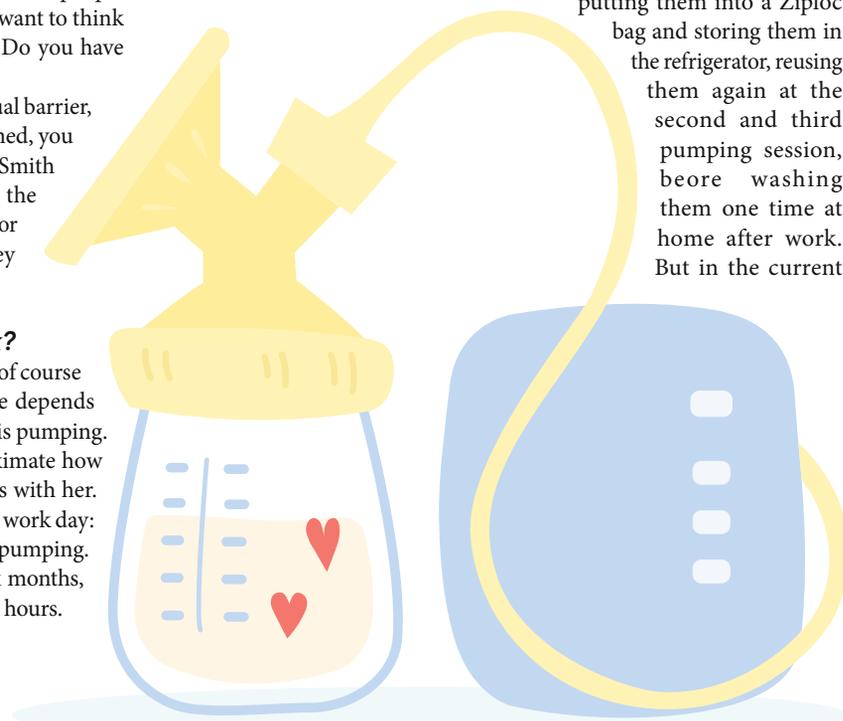
**Carmen:** Going too long between pumping situations can be very painful and uncomfortable. There should be no more than three hours between daytime pumping or between feeding sessions. If you go much longer than that, the body might get into a feeling of over-fullness, that could lead to clogged ducts, and if that clogged duct remains untended to, that can cause mastitis or a breast infection. If the milk isn't really frequently removed, that mom may experience a decrease in milk supply. If a mother is teaching a class, and she has not been able to pump her breast, and the breast becomes quite full and engorged, it becomes very firm and painful and can begin to leak and soak through her clothes.

### What safety and hygiene protocols should be considered for lactation rooms and pumping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Ellen:** In their guidance document on "Care for Breastfeeding Women" ([bit.ly/carebwcdc](http://bit.ly/carebwcdc)) in the context of COVID-19, the CDC refers to these general recommendations for cleaning and disinfecting facilities ([bit.ly/cdcbuilding](http://bit.ly/cdcbuilding)) in many settings, including lactation rooms.

**Carmen:** The space should be cleaned in between uses—particularly the surfaces and the places where parents are setting themselves up for pumping. Wiping down surfaces, thorough hand-washing, and thorough washing of pump parts is another challenge. A lot of moms feel like washing all these parts takes time away from their pumping time. So there's a common practice of pumping and then not the washing parts—just

putting them into a Ziploc bag and storing them in the refrigerator, reusing them again at the second and third pumping session, before washing them one time at home after work. But in the current



environment, that would be tricky. We should be washing in between each pumping session because we don't know what our exposure to viruses might be in this space.

Pumping moms must practice careful hand-washing, more than ever, and take the time to wash their hands for 20 seconds with soapy water. Hand sanitizers don't cut it. And you need hot, soapy water to clean the pump parts, but if there's only warm water, that can work. It's also best to have a window that you can open to let fresh air in with blinds for privacy.

### ***How does milk supply (someone's capacity to produce breast milk) work? And how can stress affect milk production?***

**Carmen:** Breasts make milk based on a response to the baby's needs. So if the baby is feeding 10 to 12 times in a 24-hour period, milk is going to be removed at least every two hours, and the milk will refill as soon as it is removed. If the baby's only feeding five times in a 24-hour period, then the breast is only going to make milk for those five times. If mom pumps milk three times during her work day, then she will make milk for those three times on a regular basis. If the baby needs more milk than what was removed those three times, then she doesn't have enough milk for her baby.

If a pump or a baby takes out all the milk that's in the breast, then every single mammary gland in the breast will refill itself. But if only half the mammary glands are emptied and half are left full, then only the ones that are empty will refill, and the ones that remain full will get the message that "you don't need to make milk here because nobody's emptying this." So that's how supply decreases.

Also, stress can be a factor. If a mom is very stressed, it affects her release of oxytocin. That's the hormone that causes mammary glands to contract and expel the milk forward. A mother who is experiencing stress while trying to pump at work might make less milk because she's not relaxing and allowing the body's hormones to work.

### ***Though the law requires separate break time for pumping, some educators choose to multitask—for example, by grading papers or eating lunch while they pump. What do you think of that practice?***

**Carmen:** Different women feel differently. Some women will pump anywhere comfortably, and some women really need to be in a private, secluded place where she feels like no one's going to invade her privacy. Some teachers, for example, could take care of some grading or some projects on the computer while pumping discreetly. Even though it's supposed to be a break time, she could multitask with one of the more portable pump sets, like the Baby Buddha, or the Zomee, Ameda Mya, or the Minuet. They're very compact, but also very powerful and can connect to your computer through a USB cord.

But many moms cannot multitask while they pump. First of all, a pump is impersonal. You can train your body to let down (release milk) to a pump, but it's always easier when you take the time to think about your baby. Sometimes you need to actually concentrate and think about your baby, look at pictures, or look at videos of your baby to help you have that oxytocin letdown. Second of all, a mother might actually need to use her hands on her breasts while pumping to help speed up the ejection of milk. If she doesn't have a private space, or she feels like her privacy will be invaded suddenly, then she might not be able to let down as much milk as she needs to fully empty her breast. She could spend 20 minutes on a pump and not get much milk at all.

Privacy is very important for some people, and less important for others. But it's not about how they can function. It's about what they deserve. They all deserve the same amount of privacy and considerations.

**Ellen:** For some mothers, multitasking while pumping is not physically possible and can negatively affect their milk output. I recall talking to friends who are lawyers who were pumping and doing their legal work at

***"...my other option was in a closet in an unused storage space...but the amount of dust and mold that was in there was overwhelming. I spent a lot of the time pumping in the car."\****

the same time. With the stress of going back to work and those additional needs, for some mothers, their milk supply really starts to tank, despite their best efforts. Working as a lactation consultant, I could try so many different hacks and tips for mothers, and sometimes that additional hand is really needed. Some mothers have hands-free pumps, but generally they're not the type of pump covered by insurance that most mothers are getting.

**Allyson:** I think that prep periods are for prep. That's your job. That's not your break. I know it's hard to find coverage for teachers, but you should have a break for 20 minutes to pump and not be trying to eat your lunch and plan your lessons and do grading while you're also pumping. I think teachers' days are so tightly packed that to be asked to use your prep periods as your only pumping time doesn't respect that prep periods are necessary for teachers to get their work done. And prep periods are not always at the same time. This is another huge challenge.

Another one that comes up with teachers a lot is duties. I've had lots of clients say, I'm going to ask my principal if I can get out of doing lunch duty so that I have that time to pump and the administrator says no. I also understand it from an administrative standpoint because you need to cover these things, but I think we need to give more flexibility to and give priority to people who have just come back from having a baby. We put so much pressure on people to breastfeed in this country. And we don't do a very good job supporting them.

### ***Why is a woman's right to pump at work important?***

**Ellen:** Breastfeeding is a social justice issue for many families. Without the right to pump at work, mothers who would want to but cannot afford to stay home longer with their baby, are prevented from feeding their babies as all world health authorities recommend.

**Jill:** The indicator of a healthy community is maternal infant health. It gives a snapshot of the tempo of how we are doing as a community, as a culture, as a society. This includes both the social-emotional journey as well as physical assessments. The health and well-being of the infant-parent dyad in pregnancy, giving birth, and in the immediate postnatal period tells a story of where resources are being allocated. In New Jersey, we need to move our state from worst to first in terms of improving maternal infant outcomes. So we can absolutely honor individual health privacy as well as scale up visible resources so all expectant and new families—and that includes partners, fathers, and grandparents will—have less obstacles in resource navigation.

There are incredible outcomes when an infant gets exclusive breast milk. When women are supported to breastfeed, they reduce their risk of breast and ovarian cancer; they reduce their infant's risk of asthma and obesity.

**Carmen:** It's a way for her to stay connected to her baby and make her feel like she's doing something for her baby even when she's at work.

\*Source for all pull-quotes: *Pumping at Work for Teachers: A Guide for State and School District Policies* by Allyson Murphy, 2018. (See [bit.ly/njschoolpumping](http://bit.ly/njschoolpumping))

## You have the right to pump breastmilk at work in New Jersey.

**Your employer must allow reasonable break time to pump your milk if you ask for it.**



Most employees need 15-20 minutes to express breast milk, plus time to wash hands, set up and store their pump, and store the milk. The break time can be unpaid time.

**Your employer must also provide a private place, close to your work area, for you to pump. IT MAY NOT BE A BATHROOM.**



It must have a chair, a shelf or table for holding the pump and a door which can be locked from the inside.



**You may need to take a break to pump at least every 3 hours, especially if your baby is less than six months old.**



**The right to pump at your job lasts as long as you are breastfeeding your child, even beyond 1 year.**

**If your rights have been violated, you can file a complaint with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (NJDCR) at [NJCivilRights.gov](http://NJCivilRights.gov) or call 973-648-2700.**



For more information, visit the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition website: [breastfeedingnj.org/breastfeeding-and-employment/](http://breastfeedingnj.org/breastfeeding-and-employment/)

## PREPARING TO PUMP AT WORK: ADVICE FOR BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS

*How does a working mother figure out how much milk to leave for her baby? Should she begin pumping before her return to work?*

**Carmen:** We determine how much milk to leave based on the baby's age and weight. If you have a 10 lb. baby, the mom is going to need to feed that baby 20-25 ounces in a 24-hour period. So if she's going to be gone for nine hours, that baby will need 3-4 bottles during that time period. To figure out a range of what your baby might need, take the baby's weight and multiply it by two. That's the lower limit of the range. Then add half of the baby's weight to that number, and that's the upper limit. So if you have a 10 lb. baby, multiply the baby's weight by two (10 x 2), and you get 20 ounces, which is the lower end of the range. Add half of 10 lbs. (five) to that number

(20 + 5) and you get 25 ounces, which is the upper end. On average, a 10 lb. baby will consume between 20 to 25 ounces of milk per day.

Ideally, she should begin pumping a month in advance of her return to work. She should always pick the same time of day to pump (e.g., mid-morning), and store that milk by labeling it with the time and date, and freezing it. If she does that for 30 days prior to her return, she should have the first few days' worth of milk that she needs to leave behind for her baby and a backup stash to give her the confidence that she has enough milk, if, for whatever reason, she isn't able to pump as much at work. At minimum, she should have at least a few days' worth of pumped milk—at least 20 to 30 ounces in her freezer.

*How can a mother who is planning for a return to work anticipate her pumping schedule?*

**Carmen:** To anticipate the times she might pump, she can use her baby's feeding records as a reference, but you have to remain flexible. I think many of the moms who succeed are able to block out a specific amount of time during the workday to do the pumping. Let's say a mom has a baby that,

*“It's a shame we have to 'find' a place when we work with so many moms. I've spoken with a lot of teacher moms and a lot just told me they stopped breastfeeding when they came back because it was impossible at work.”\**

It's a very difficult thing to go back to work under any circumstances and leave a baby. There's a separation that the mother's going to mourn. And so there's a lot of stress involving not just the planning of how am I going to continue to pump for my baby, but just the idea that she's going to be missing her baby, missing developmental milestones, missing fun moments and conversations, like when they start babbling or crawling or climbing or walking. Though we have technology to help capture these moments, it's not the same as being there to mother your baby. Maintaining breastfeeding and milk production is a way of staying connected to her baby. Knowing that your baby is receiving your milk might make that mom feel a little bit better about leaving that baby to be taken care of by somebody else.

*Aside from their legal obligations, why should employers support employees who are pumping?*

**Jill:** Supporting the needs of pumping employees is really a short time in the trajectory of someone's career, but the support, the encouragement, the assistance that happens during pregnancy and lactation is really going to change the trajectory of the rest of that career. The needs of a pumping employee truly may be four weeks, or four months, but it's not going to be forever, and it's going to change health outcomes. So we have to understand that this cooperation and the continuity of care is really essential because it's going to impact the health and well-being of that employee and their child.

**Allyson:** This is a slice of time. If I graduate and teach from then until I retire, I'm likely going to teach for 40 years. Many educational support professionals devote their whole working lives to schools. The average person in New Jersey has two babies. You're talking about two years out of a more than 40-year career where I need some accommodations. If we can think about this as community spirit, that we're going to help each other out during this slice of time when you need a little bit more freedom and flexibility. We should also give our administrators support so that they can that they can allow that flexibility for school employees.

\*Source for all pull-quotes: *Pumping at Work for Teachers: A Guide for State and School District Policies* by Allyson Murphy, 2018. (See [bit.ly/njschoolpumping](http://bit.ly/njschoolpumping))

when she's home with them, would nurse every two-and-a-half to three hours in a rather unpredictable way. At work, she's not going to be pumping at the same time that her baby may be feeding. She's going to have to find a happy medium and just put herself on a schedule. Her body will adjust. So ideally, she can space it in a way that's regular and predictable for her. If she's doing a five-day work week, and she always pumps at 10:30 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3:30 p.m., then her body will regulate to that schedule and she'll be able to get enough milk at that time.

**Many working mothers experience a drop in milk supply when they return to work. What can they do to boost their supply?**

**Carmen:** When you're home, go back to just breastfeeding the baby on demand. Follow your baby's feeding cues as opposed to feeding on a schedule, because the baby will most likely feed a lot more frequently, which will bring the milk supply back up to where it needs to be for the baby. Also, prioritize skin-to-skin contact as a way of reconnecting. Babies benefit from that contact and moms do, too. Build it into the routine—for example, get in the tub with your baby. There's a million things that women have to do, and it's amazing what women who are going back to work are expected to do while taking care of children at the same time. But try to prioritize spending some time with the baby and maximizing that time in the morning, evening, and overnight.

**How can mothers most effectively communicate their pumping needs to their employer?**

**Ellen:** Ideally, I would hope when a pregnant educator approaches the school district about taking leave for childbirth, the school's written lactation policy would be made available to them through human resource channels. If not, the mother should see if there's a process for requesting lactation accommodations in place with her employer—whether you go to HR, for example, or you go to your supervisor.

Whenever a mother is approaching their employer, it's always best to have a very positive “can do” sort of attitude. Wherever possible, supply some examples of how other similar businesses or employers have handled the situation. And she should explain, as calmly and positively as possible, what her needs are. The Office of Women's Health has great resources on their website, including “The Business Case for Breastfeeding,” ([bit.ly/owhbusiness](http://bit.ly/owhbusiness)) and information showing how specific industries ([bit.ly/owheducation](http://bit.ly/owheducation)) addressed workplace pumping needs. The educator can say to the employer, “This is the way other school districts are doing it. Here's how they tackled these challenges.”

**Carmen:** I would bring in the law that supports her pumping in the workplace (see [bit.ly/nj242-26](http://bit.ly/nj242-26)). And maybe some information on the benefits of keeping her baby breastfed. Besides being able to continue to provide the best

source of nourishment for her infant, she is also keeping her baby well, so that she doesn't have to miss work to take care of a sick infant.

That's one big huge benefit to mention to supervisors that might encourage them to set her up in a comfortable place to pump.

**Allyson:** It can be awkward if you're a shy person. It can feel like a very personal thing. You're talking about your body, and you're talking about your breasts. One thing that I say to clients all the time, is that you really do need to advocate for yourself. You have to not be afraid to stand up for yourself and to ruffle some feathers. I think that's a lot easier said than done even if you're a

“I pumped in my classroom with the doors locked, but my admin told me in the new school that is being built she is making sure there is a space that teachers will be able to go to use for pumping.”\*

tenured teacher or have due-process rights as an ESP. If you're the newest person in the door and you don't yet have tenure or due-process rights, it can be nerve wracking to demand that you need this time. Also, reach out to colleagues who had a baby in the past five years and talk to them about whether they pumped, and if so, where they pumped.

**What resources do you recommend for mothers who are pumping at work?**

**Carmen:** I recommend staying connected with their lactation consultant and texting them about whatever challenges that may be happening. If she needs to find one in New Jersey, she can look at [ZipMilk.org](http://ZipMilk.org), [ILCA.org](http://ILCA.org), and [IBLCE.org](http://IBLCE.org). A lactation consultant can support a working mother in many different ways. During a visit, we cover topics such as how often she is pumping, how much milk the baby needs, what kind of pump she is using and if it fits properly, how to maximize milk production, how to strategize nighttime parenting to help everyone get more sleep, etc. A lactation consultant can help a breastfeeding mother figure out how much milk her baby is drinking by taking a pre- and post-feeding weight with a very precise scale right before feeding, between sides, and after feeding the baby to calculate how much milk is transferred on each side and over the full feed. During that weighted feed, there's an opportunity to review positioning, practice getting a deep latch, and help the baby drink more effectively to empty the breast and maximize production.

There's many places to find information online, but I always recommend any resources that are research-based. For example, [Kellymom.com](http://Kellymom.com), is a long-standing website that's always offering evidence-based information. There are Facebook groups that offer moms platforms to just talk and be heard by fellow moms who are supportive and caring. But they can be tricky because some of the advice might have benefited the mother offering the support but may not be the right advice for the mother receiving the advice. I always give a word of caution to seek the help of a professional.

There are wonderful support groups for mothers. It's also another great way to staying connected, particularly if a mom gets the opportunity to work virtually, or she's able to take a few minutes of her workday to connect to a support group during her break time and ask questions to the facilitators, or to talk to other moms who might be in similar situations as she is and brainstorm about how to make things better.

**Ellen:** Educators can find legal resources about their breastfeeding and lactation rights on the New Jersey Breastfeeding Coalition (NJBC) website at [breastfeedingnj.org](http://breastfeedingnj.org). La Leche League ([Illi.org](http://Illi.org) and [Illusa.org](http://Illusa.org)) is a great organization for breastfeeding mothers that offers peer-to-peer support through phone-based support and group meetings in both the daytime and evenings.

**Allyson:** There's also a great book called *Work. Pump. Repeat.*, by Jessica Shortall.

\*Source for all pull-quotes: *Pumping at Work for Teachers: A Guide for State and School District Policies* by Allyson Murphy, 2018. (See [bit.ly/njschoolpumping](http://bit.ly/njschoolpumping))





## IMPROVING THE PUMPING EXPERIENCE FOR NEW JERSEY EDUCATORS

### Recent updates have made the New Jersey breastfeeding laws even stronger. What could we do better?

**Ellen:** Make the pumping break time paid for all employees. Neither the federal law or state law requires pumping break time to be paid, though some employers will allow it to be paid. But others, especially for hourly employees, require that they punch out. It can be difficult for many families to afford unpaid break time. If a mother can come in early and make up some of the time and stay late then it can work, but it will lengthen her day and the amount of time that mother is away from her baby, which creates additional challenges.

**Allyson:** I have a lot of clients who are teachers who end up weaning (stopping breastfeeding) earlier than they would really want to, well before that 12 months that they would want to try to continue if it worked for them. But they just don't even attempt to continue nursing because it just feels completely undoable to pump as an educator. I have seen that so many times.

In 2018, I wrote a report (see [bit.ly/njschoolpumping](http://bit.ly/njschoolpumping)) with recommendations to help school districts develop policies to support breastfeeding employees. No one should have to reinvent the wheel every time they come back from maternity leave. You have enough stress about leaving your baby, coming back to school, and being an educator, which is stressful enough as it is. If you're going back now, in the wake of COVID, you should not have to invent your own pumping schedule and plan. It should already be in place in your district. When you tell your supervisor that you're expecting a baby, they should alert HR, and before you come back, they should contact you and help you figure out how to pump.

I think if we had a year of paid maternity leave, this wouldn't be an issue. But we have people go back to work 12 weeks after their babies are born. We recommend nursing for 12 months. The math just doesn't add up. When they do go back, we don't always support them in nursing for those other nine months of that first year.

*“Even then the fear of students walking in made them huddle in a closet.”\**

**Jill:** Even though education is historically a female-dominated profession, there's a missing gap for New Jersey public educators about making maternal-infant health needs more visible. In New Jersey, we need an immediate reimagining of the delivery of maternal health, and that includes eliminating obstacles to information about breastfeeding laws, including the rights of breastfeeding and pumping for public school employees. First, we need to get a baseline assessment of what the experience is at a building, district, and county level for New Jersey public educators to learn the barriers and opportunities for seamless coordination to be compliant with the law.

It doesn't have to be an either/or. We can keep strong teachers and ESP building relationships with their students and engendering transformation and wonder in the classroom and throughout the school, and we can acknowledge the critical and unique needs of maternity care and breastfeeding support in New Jersey.

\*Source for all pull-quotes: *Pumping at Work for Teachers: A Guide for State and School District Policies* by Allyson Murphy, 2018. (See [bit.ly/njschoolpumping](http://bit.ly/njschoolpumping))



### What do I tell my students?

A staff person should never share personal health information with students. From an employment perspective, to do so could set an employee up quite easily for some form of discipline. However, in consultation with your local association representative (AR), carefully review board of education policy to see if it addresses whether breast pumping school district employees may explain to students the reason for their breaks. If such policies exist, work with your AR and your administrator to discuss what you tell your students. Be sure to have any agreement in writing and make sure your local association leadership is included in the agreement.

### What if my rights have been violated?

In 2018, “breastfeeding” was added as a protected class to the Law Against Discrimination (N.J.S.A. 10:5-12) (LAD), which means it is illegal to discriminate against an employee on the basis of their breastfeeding status.

If you are experiencing problems with breastfeeding accommodations at work, you should talk to your union representative with your supervisor to try to work it out. The process is an interactive one and the more questions you ask if the initial request is denied, the more likely you will be accommodated. Your regional NJEA UniServ representative can also support your requests.

But if the employer refuses and continues to deny your right to a private space to pump, an employee may file a complaint with the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (DCR) or in the Law Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey. If someone suspects their workplace breastfeeding rights have been violated, they can contact the New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (NJDCR) at [nj.gov/oag/dcr/localcontact.html](http://nj.gov/oag/dcr/localcontact.html) or the U.S. Department of Labor at [dol.gov/agencies/whd/contact](http://dol.gov/agencies/whd/contact), or seek legal counsel. Also see [nj.gov/oag/dcr/filing.html](http://nj.gov/oag/dcr/filing.html) and DCR's Frequently Asked Questions at [nj.gov/oag/dcr/faq.html](http://nj.gov/oag/dcr/faq.html) for more information.

If the DCR or Superior Court finds the employer to be in violation of the law, remedies may include an order restraining the discriminatory action, back pay, damages for pain and humiliation, and attorney's fees. Punitive damages are available in Superior Court actions. Bear in mind, however, that legal challenges take time.

### Law requires annual DOE implementation report

Recent updates to New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 26:4C-3) require the Department of Education to submit by Aug. 15, 2020, and annually thereafter, a report to the governor and Legislature about “lactation-related policies that have been implemented at schools, universities, and colleges,” including “the manner in which those policies were communicated to students, parents, and guardians.” The first report, required to be posted on the DOE website, has not yet been released.

# ACHIEVING HEALTH AND SAFETY WINS IN A PANDEMIC

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

They're both invisible, usually. One—ventilation—is essential to education unions in this pandemic. The other—how to win changes around the topic—is too.

Across the country, activists are inspecting heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and school buildings. They're asking questions about filters, air changes per hour and maintenance. They are part of conversations, leading to common stands, improved ventilation and increased activism.

"Ever since the pandemic started, there's been more teacher organizing throughout the country than in recent history," says Rebecca Tarlau, the Penn State University assistant professor of education and labor and employment relations. She studies unions that represent teachers and other school employees.

"A lot is happening with rank-and-file teachers who are fed up and trying to figure out how to talk to their colleagues. They're angry, frustrated, agitated and willing to mobilize," she says. "They're responding to the most radical transformation in teachers' working conditions ever in U.S. history." They also are building on lessons from successful 2018-2019 strikes in places like Chicago and Los Angeles, she says.

## INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Ventilation is always on the agenda. It is essential to prevent or reduce the spread of airborne hazards like SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. In "normal" times, problems appear as poor indoor air quality (IAQ), mold, stuffy spaces and sick people. This pandemic adds another hazard and more consequences.

New Jersey education workers have a relatively unique tool to advocate for good ventilation: the state's public sector Indoor Air Quality Standard. Schools must have a program, a designated person to oversee it, and maintenance and repair records.

In "The Road Back: Restart and Recovery Plan for Education," the New Jersey Department of Education used the standard to require school reopening plans ensure that "indoor facilities have adequate ventilation." Many schools do not; systems are outdated, poorly maintained or nonexistent.

Ventilation has been a rallying cry for education workers. Some are in groups like the Badass Teachers Association (BATs), National Educators United and NJ21 United (a group of school employees and parents). Melissa Tomlinson, a special education teacher at Buena Regional School District, is in all three.

"Health and safety came up when we started talking about reopening," Tomlinson says. "There were a lot of national conversations around standards for our return. Groups in almost every state started adopting the same language."

"Locally, we encouraged the use of OPRA (the

Open Public Records Act)," she says. "It's really helpful to get ventilation system information, maintenance logs. That's what pushed a lot of New Jersey schools to start the year remotely because ventilation systems weren't safe."

The Buena Regional Education Association (BREA) got three years of ventilation documents, IAQ policies, and mold remediation reports.

"We also pushed to ensure the filters were upgraded as high as possible for MERV (minimum efficiency reporting value) readings and started checking issues we're still seeing in the buildings," she says. They're also trying to stay on top of pre-pandemic hazards, like mercury in rubberized flooring.

## DEMANDING PROOF, CONDUCTING INSPECTIONS

Millstone Township Education Association (MTEA) members knew there were long-standing ventilation issues in their district. In late July, copresidents Lisa Kennedy and Rose Kuntz worked with UniServ field rep Chris Johnson to request the information required for reopening plans. In mid-August, district officials said everything was good to go but provided little documentation.

Kennedy and others inspected the township's three schools with district officials twice before

---

*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.*



MTEA leaders and members inspected Millstone's three schools with district officials twice before they were to open, finding damaged ventilation systems and improperly installed components.

## What's ventilation?

Effective general ventilation systems move air in and out of buildings. They provide fresh air, mix it with recirculated filtered air, and control temperature and humidity. On its own, air conditioning is not ventilation.

Some schools have a complete heating, cooling and air conditioning (HVAC) system. Others only have ventilators in windows, or windows that open. Other schools or spaces (e.g., janitorial storage areas) may have none. There are no guarantees that what's there is well maintained, repaired or works, or that it hasn't been changed during renovations.

## Resources

**NJEA** – Member Resources on COVID-19 and School Reopening: [njea.org/covid](https://njea.org/covid)

**NJ Work Environment Council** – COVID-19 Resources: [njwec.org/covid-19](https://njwec.org/covid-19)

**NJDOE** – Restart and Recovery Plan: The Road Back: [nj.gov/education/reopening](https://nj.gov/education/reopening)

**NJEA** – Organizing for Better Indoor Air Quality: [njea.org/download/1787](https://njea.org/download/1787). (Note that this is a PDF that may automatically drop into your downloads folder. After entering that link, if nothing appears on your screen, check your downloads folder.)

**New Jersey IAQ** standard and related resources: [bit.ly/peoshiaq](https://bit.ly/peoshiaq)

**New Jersey OPRA**: [state.nj.us/opra](https://state.nj.us/opra)

**NJEA Review** article – “Health and Safety Committees Knowledge + Action = Power”: [njea.org/hscommittees920](https://njea.org/hscommittees920)

“**Ventilation has been a rallying cry for education workers.**”

they were to open, finding damaged ventilation systems and improperly installed components. Both times, filters were not changed as the business administrator said.

“We felt blind-sided,” Kennedy says. “The truth came out when we did the inspections. Six months of empty buildings and they didn’t get the job done.”

After special meetings, the board decided on remote learning for the first week of classes, giving teachers one day to prepare. As independent assessments and repairs got done, they went to a hybrid model and moved staff to ventilated rooms.

“We lost our trust. We need proof now,” Kennedy says. “We’ll do monthly inspections now, to make sure they’re following the plan.” Like BREA, the MTEA followed up with OPRA requests for information they did not get.

### ORGANIZING MEMBERS

The Glen Ridge Education Association (GREA) also organized around ventilation.

There was a heightened awareness about ventilation when reopening discussions started, says GREA President MaryLynn Savio. Using her librarian skills, she read all she could, learned from regional union support meetings, and got help from the New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC).

“NJEA also had a workshop that tied a lot of this together, so I had the questions to ask and terminology to use,” Savio says.

“We became painfully aware the high school (where she works) wouldn’t pass inspection—there was no documentation,” she says. The local organized members, supporting them to take their questions to a critical board meeting. With the local’s advocacy and without adequate ventilation,

the board opted for remote classes until the HVAC system was upgraded and repaired.

“When you have the time and energy, the wherewithal, there’s a lot that can be accomplished if you have dedicated people willing to take that on,” Savio says. “I still feel other things need to be said and raised. In the current environment, people are working so hard, spread so thin, it’s really hard to do.”

Trained health and safety committees help, Savio says. Glen Ridge members were just getting started when schools closed “so people weren’t really competent and confident yet.”

These committees are “an organizing opportunity,” Tomlinson adds. “We have reps in each building who talk to people in their buildings, exchanging information about what’s going on, concerns, what they’re hearing—a back and forth.” 🗣️

# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

## HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR THE NJEA CONVENTION?

With few exceptions, attending the NJEA Convention for the last 76 years has been a matter of arranging transportation. To access to the convention and workshops did not generally require you to register in advance. But because this year the convention is remote, registration for the convention is necessary for proof of attendance. Enrollment in workshops is necessary to receive credit for any workshop you attend.

What remains true for the NJEA Convention, whether online or in person, is that it is a benefit of membership. There is no charge to attend the NJEA Convention.

### How do I register for the NJEA Convention?

To register, go to [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org). Follow the link found there to registration. You will need:

- An email address.
- Your NJEA personal identification number (PIN). You'll find your PIN on your membership card. Your PIN has six characters in a two letter-two number-two letter combination.

### What is my PIN?

You can find your PIN by logging onto [njea.org](http://njea.org) with the email address you have on file with NJEA and your password.

- Go to [njea.org](http://njea.org) and click on "Sign-in" in the upper-right-hand corner.
- Enter your email address and password as directed. Your default password, unless you've changed it, is the last four digits of your Social Security number.
- Once you have successfully logged on, slide over to "My NJEA" and click on "Profile."
- As you scroll down, you'll see your membership card on the right-hand side. Your PIN is under your name.

### What level of access does registration get me?

Registration for the convention grants you access to:

- The REAL Block Party/Welcome Reception
  - Wednesday, Nov. 4: 7-8:45 p.m.
- The Virtual Exhibit Hall
  - Wednesday, Nov. 4: 3-7 p.m.
  - Thursday, Nov. 5: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
  - Friday, Nov. 6: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Keynote address from Ruby Bridges
  - Nov. 6: 3:45-5 p.m.

To attend professional development workshops, you must enroll separately.

### How do I enroll in the professional development workshops?

After you register, you will receive an email taking you to the enrollment process for workshops. To plan ahead, see pages 12-18 of the Convention Program you received with your October Review, which lists all workshop times, subject areas and titles. Be sure to check any spam folders.

Questions? Write to [convention@njea.org](mailto:convention@njea.org).

### How will I get my certificate of attendance?

You must log in to the NJEA Convention on Nov. 5 or Nov. 6. At the end of first day on which you log in, a certificate of attendance will be emailed to you. No certificates of attendance will be sent for attendance on Wednesday afternoon in the Exhibit Hall or at the Justice Social Welcome Reception.

### How can I learn of any changes to the events and workshops at the NJEA Convention?

Visit [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org) for the latest information.

## TALLER EN LA CONVENCION DE NJEA:

### El proceso de licenciatura de maestros en Nueva Jersey

El personal de NJEA con fluidez en inglés y español dirigirá un taller sobre cómo obtener su certificación de enseñanza en Nueva Jersey.

Este taller es para cualquier persona que:

- Era un maestro certificado en su país de origen.
- Tiene 60 créditos de un colegio comunitario u otra universidad en los Estados Unidos.
- Es un profesional de apoyo educativo (ESP) y desea ser profesor.

Las presentadoras lo guiarán a través del proceso y responderán a sus preguntas.

El taller está programado para el 5 de noviembre de 2:30-3:30 p.m., en la Convención de NJEA.

## NJEA CONVENTION WORKSHOP:

### Teaching credential process in New Jersey

NJEA staff fluent in English and Spanish will be leading an NJEA Convention workshop on how to obtain your teaching certification in New Jersey.

This workshop is for anyone who:

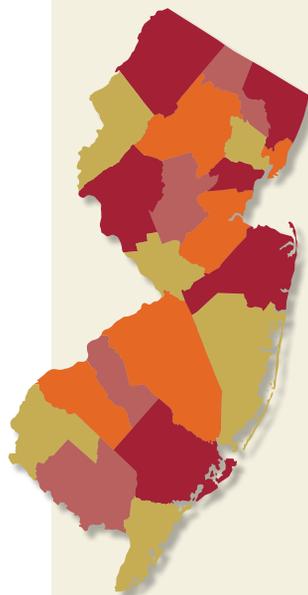
- Was a certified teacher in their country of origin.
- Has 60 credits from a community or other college in the United States.
- Is an educational support professional (ESP) and would like to become a teacher.

Presenters will guide you through the process and answer your questions.

The workshop is scheduled for Nov. 5, 2:30-3:30 p.m. at the NJEA Convention.

## HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE NJEA CONVENTION

NJEA has designed two virtual workshops for its higher education members.



### NJEA Higher Education – Is it Safe?

Nilka Julio, National Education Association (NEA), Center for Organizing

Friday, Nov. 6, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

How to co-create safeR spaces for Black, Brown, and White people. In this session, the goal is to share and learn together, with the guidance of the community norms, as we acknowledge the past and strive for a better future. Physical and virtual spaces can be places where people can come, as they are, to discover, assert, and empower their voices and to encounter and listen deeply to the voices of others. Spaces are safeR when we take responsibility for what we say, feel, and think to the extent that we can and if we cannot-we can admit that. SafeR spaces require ongoing work and, in an instant, a seemingly safe space can turn unsafe. How we handle those moments is what really determines the safety of the space. Are you ready to listen as if you might be wrong? I am!

### NJEA Higher Education – COVID-19: Creating & Maintaining A Safe College Campus

Friday, Nov. 6, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Marcia Kleinz and Maury Koffman, UniServ Field Representatives, NJEA Region 29-Higher Education

This session will present best practices in addition to federal and state standards. Participants will engage in a discussion on community college successes and ongoing challenges implemented in response to COVID-19.

Enrollment for the higher education workshops at the NJEA Convention is required and must be done in advance. Space is limited. For more information, please contact NJEA's Region 29-Higher Education office at 609-689-9580 or Jean DiQuinzio at [jdiquinzio@njea.org](mailto:jdiquinzio@njea.org)

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT [LEARNING.NJEA.ORG](http://LEARNING.NJEA.ORG)

The NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division has developed guidance on a number of issues and has recorded a series of webinars addressing a wide variety of issues being brought forth by our members.

The webinars address a variety of topics, including but not limited to:

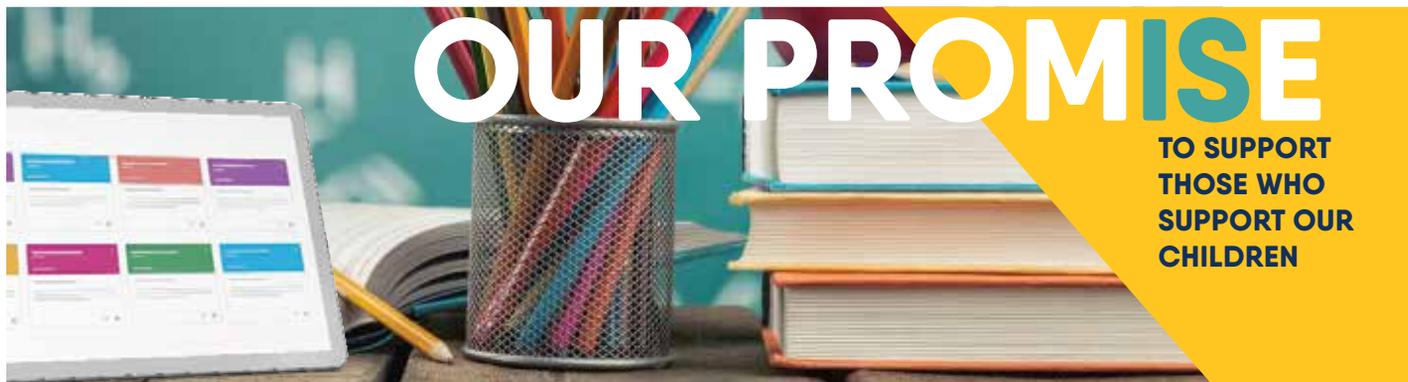
- Conversations on equity and inclusivity
- Professional growth
- Health and safety
- Tools for working remotely
- Information management
- Working safely and maintaining privacy in a remote environment
- Online pedagogy

All topic areas have webinars designed for educational support professionals (ESPs), certificated staff, or both. Live presentations are recorded and stored at [learning.njea.org](http://learning.njea.org) as a professional development resource.

Members seeking to earn a certificate of attendance for participating in a live webinar should log on to [njea.org](http://njea.org) to ensure that their profiles are up-to-date, especially your email address. Certificates will be automatically added to your "My PD Transcript."

Later, when signing into WebEx, provide your full name and email address matching the information in your NJEA profile. Remain for the duration of the event. For certificated staff, be sure to work with your district administrator/supervisor to update your Professional Development Plan (PDP) to include webinar content.

To access the webinars and resources, and for more information, visit [learning.njea.org](http://learning.njea.org).



That's why we've teamed with California Casualty to create the NEA® Auto and Home Insurance Program designed exclusively for you and your fellow NEA members.

It's California Casualty's policy to do more for the people who give more. Starting with you.

Exclusive Member Benefits | Payment Skip Options | \$0 Deductible Waiver |



And... for the opportunity to provide you a no-obligation quote, California Casualty will give you a \$25 Amazon.com Gift Card – when quoted before December 31, 2020.

Gift card offer not available in AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, NC, ND, MS, SC, TN, TX, UT and WV.

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE, NO-OBLIGATION QUOTE.

1.866.268.1754

[WeProtectEducators.com/NEA](http://WeProtectEducators.com/NEA)

NEA® Auto and Home Insurance Program



CA Lic#0041343 ©2020 CCMC Insurance not available in AK, HI, MA, MI, NY, WI. Coverages described are subject to availability and eligibility. NEA, NEA Member Benefits and the NEA Member Benefits logo are registered marks of NEA Member Benefits. Amazon.com is not a sponsor of this promotion. Restrictions apply. See website for complete details.

AH331120

# Commitment to **EDUCATORS.**

Centenary University's graduate programs in Education are designed for educators of all ages and disciplines who are interested in new career options and increased growth potential

*Come Visit us  
at our Virtual  
NJEA booth*

## Degrees and Certifications:

- Ed.D. in Educational Leadership
- M.A. in Educational Leadership
- M.A. in Instructional Leadership
- M.A. in Special Education
- M.Ed. in Educational Practice (Online)
- M.Ed. in Literacy Instruction
- Teacher of Students with Disabilities Certification
- **NEW!** - English as a Second Language (ESL) Certification
- **NEW!** - Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant (LDTC) Certification
- Supervisor Licensure



## **Ed.D. in Educational Leadership Virtual Information Session | 7pm-8pm | Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>**

To register: [CentenaryUniversity.edu/edd](http://CentenaryUniversity.edu/edd)

To learn more, visit  
[CentenaryUniversity.edu/Graduate](http://CentenaryUniversity.edu/Graduate)  
or contact the Graduate Admissions  
Office at [CentUAdmissions@CentenaryUniversity.edu](mailto:CentUAdmissions@CentenaryUniversity.edu)



# DISTANCE OVER DISTANT LEARNING

BY JAMI CENTRELLA

As I joined educators across the country in navigating this world of hybrid instruction and distance learning, I found myself thinking about the very thing that matters most to me in this profession—relationships. In this age of social distancing and keeping in-person interactions to a minimum, it seems that educators have been put into an impossible situation. If we are being asked to keep a physical distance from our students, how do we ensure that we do not become distant from them? While it may seem paradoxical, I think distance learning presents each of us with an opportunity to meet the basic human need for connection through new means and experiences.

Our students, regardless of their age or background, are of a generation that has largely been based on virtual relationships. Between Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, and numerous other social media sites, this current generation of students is constantly looking to the virtual world to make them feel valued in the physical world. Each time their social media app lights up, a sense of longing and desire to feel accepted and needed is fulfilled, and it leaves them constantly searching for the next opportunity to find that fulfillment.

I often wonder if connecting with our students through a virtual learning platform creates that same sense of fulfillment in them. By making meaningful connections with

students in the virtual world, are we indirectly showing them that we also value them in the physical world? Perhaps by allowing ourselves to see technology as a way to redefine, rather than limit, how we build relationships, we are allowing our students to gain a sense of belonging that they may have never before felt in school.

I am not saying that technology can or should replace face-to-face interactions. I am only suggesting that building relationships in the virtual world are just as important as they are in the physical world.

I understand that not all distance learning experiences are virtual, and I will not pretend to have all the answers on how to form the perfect connection with a student during these unprecedented times. However, I do know that regardless of the situation, the message remains the same, relationships—no matter how they are formed—are vital to our students.

Relationships do not start and end with technology. They start and end with us. Our ability to make a difference in the lives of our students has not been eliminated with distance learning, it has just been modified. We must adapt our relationships to the reality of this academic year. Teaching from a distance does not mean we have to be distant. 📧

As Gloucester County Teacher of the Year Jami Centrella contends, it is possible to build meaningful connections with students, even in a virtual context. Remember, however, to carefully review and follow your school district policy on electronic forms of communication with students.

The websites [njeatogether.org](http://njeatogether.org) and [learning.njea.org](http://learning.njea.org) offer resources and stories on remote learning.

The *NJEA Review* has also featured several articles on instruction in a remote format, among them these from the September and October 2020 *Reviews*:

- Relationships: A Key Factor in Online Instruction, by Dr. Tracey Garrett
- Independent Reading to Create Independent Readers, by Morgan Taylor
- Virtual Feedback to Foster Strong Learners, by Ashley Liput

To find these and all other articles that appear in the *Review*, visit [njea.org](http://njea.org), slide over to "About," and click on the images of the *NJEA Review*.

---

*Jami Centrella is the 2020-21 Gloucester County Teacher of the Year. She teaches sixth grade English language arts at Caroline L. Reuter School in the Township of Franklin. She can be reached at [glou.ctoy@gmail.com](mailto:glou.ctoy@gmail.com).*



# Your Weight. Your Way.

*It's time to choose you!*

Whether you have to lose 15 lbs. or 150 lbs.,  
New Jersey Bariatric Center® has the right solution for you.



Erica lost 82 lbs. with  
the Gastric Sleeve.

**NJBariatricCenter.com**

609-630-7060

**Surgical Weight Loss:**

Gastric Bypass  
Sleeve Gastrectomy  
Revision Surgery

**Non-Surgical Weight Loss:**

Obalon Gastric Balloon Pill  
Weight Loss Medications  
Nutritional Counseling

**Attend a FREE weight loss seminar**

NEW JERSEY

**BARIATRIC CENTER®**

Medical & Surgical Weight Loss | General Surgery

Springfield | Hoboken | Somerville | East Brunswick | Hackettstown | Sparta





Member  
Benefits



NJEA can help  
save you money  
during your  
holiday shopping!



### BUYER'S EDGE

Use the NJEA Buyer's Edge service to save money on major purchases like electronics, appliances, furniture, cars and more.

Scroll down to Buyer's Edge at  
**memberbenefits.njea.org**.



### NEA MEMBER BENEFITS

Use NEA Member Benefits for online shopping and earn rewards.

**neamb.com**



### JOIN US FOR HAPPY HOLIDEALS WEEK BETWEEN NOV. 9 AND 13.

Log into **njea.accessdevelopment.com** to find holiday savings and chances to win \$100 gift cards and more!



### FACEBOOK

Follow **@NJEAMemberBenefits** on Facebook for discounts and services that save you money.



Take a  
picture!



Access all this  
and more at

**memberbenefits.njea.org**



# Best Practices and Current Trends in Remote Learning

A 15-hour, 1-credit online course for Pre-K to Grade 12 educators

How can you best reach your students – including those with special needs – in today's remote learning environment? In this timely graduate course, you'll learn best practices, share experiences, and develop specific teaching strategies.

**Begins November 30.**

For five weeks, you'll meet with fellow educators for 2-hour synchronous classes and complete an additional 5 hours of asynchronous course work. Course can be applied to a certificate or an FDU graduate education degree. Cost: \$300

**FOR DETAILS OR TO REGISTER**

EMAIL: [sbrooman@fdu.edu](mailto:sbrooman@fdu.edu) • CALL: 201-692-2554

## FDU AREAS OF GRADUATE STUDY

- BILINGUAL EDUCATION
- EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
- DYSLEXIA
- ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
- HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION (EdD)
- INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
- LEARNING DISABILITIES
- LITERACY/READING
- MATHEMATICAL FOUNDATIONS
- PRESCHOOL, ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY EDUCATION



Personal. Global. Transformational.

PHONE: 201-692-2554 EMAIL: [grad@fdu.edu](mailto:grad@fdu.edu)

[fdu.edu/soe](http://fdu.edu/soe)

Visit FDU's ebooth in the Virtual Exhibit Showcase during the NJEA Convention!

# THE NJEA **REAL** MOVEMENT

## BECOMING A LEADER IN THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

BY GABE TANGLAO

NJEA has been committed to public education for over 160 years. Our collective power has grown in the face of adversity during every decade of our existence—from our first convention in 1853 to the first tenure bill in 1909; from surviving the 1930s Great Depression to the first New Jersey collective bargaining law passed in 1968; from Judith Owens being elected as the first African-American president of the NJEA to paid health benefits for retired educational support professionals (ESPs) in 1992. We are now facing unprecedented attacks on organized labor from corporate-political interests, a revival of white nationalism harming our vulnerable communities and a massive recession caused by a global pandemic.

Within the next 20 years, NJEA can become a leader in the global movement for human rights, civil rights, racial justice and equity. Our organizing strategies and tactics may have changed over time, but one thing has always remained constant: our members are the source of our collective power. The more we engage, the stronger our relationships, the more powerful our unions become for our students in the New Jersey public school system.

Understanding the long arc of history and our potential power to have an impact on transformational change, the murder of George Floyd was the moment that sparked a movement for racial equity, racial affirmation and racial literacy called the NJEA REAL Movement.

As people are rising up in cities across the country and around the world to protest the violence against Black people in America, seeds of consciousness are causing many people to grow beyond the denial of systemic racism.

---

*Gabe Tanglao is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. He is the coordinator of the NJEA REAL Movement and staff contact for the NJEA Technology Committee. He can be reached at [gtanglao@njea.org](mailto:gtanglao@njea.org).*

Racial affirmation is the first step in recognizing that we live in a racist society that privileges and harms people in various ways. The colorblind narrative is now obsolete. Choosing silence, denial or willful ignorance only serves to maintain racial inequity. The REAL Movement invites educators to combat the tactics of complicity in our society by affirming and embracing the beautiful differences of people, perspectives and experiences that diverse communities can bring.

“  
*This is the REAL work of the movement to shift these patterns of historical trauma, change systems that maintain perpetuate racism and build a vision for racial equity in schools.*”

People whose consciousness has been elevated in this moment of heightened awareness about the ongoing violence that targets Black, Indigenous and People of Color now understand that something must be done. However, the ability to reflect, articulate and analyze the insidious ways the race-system operates does require a commitment to unpack, unlearn and relearn a lifetime of experiences in your race-consciousness journey. The power of stories steeped in empathetic listening and critical reflection are the second step in the REAL Movement toward racial literacy. It is vital that we continue to offer professional learning

experiences that challenge people to grow more racially literate.

Interpersonal interactions are usually the most visible manifestations of racism. However, the more complex and dangerous formations of racism are found in the systems, structures, policies and culture of institutions. These formations are found in the prison system, police departments, zero-tolerance policies in schools that disproportionately impact Black and Brown children, Eurocentric curricula that perpetuate cultural violence and domination, or union structures that limit access to resources for Black, Indigenous and People of Color. This is the REAL work of the movement to shift these patterns of historical trauma, change systems that maintain perpetuate racism and build a vision for racial equity in schools. Onward. 🚀

### Opportunities to learn more

**The REAL website at [real.njea.org](http://real.njea.org)** – In addition to a more detailed overview of our purpose and principles, you will also find a master calendar of events that has compiled all equity-related events hosted by NJEA and a growing resources page.

**REAL Equity Learning Lab** — Join this weekly conversation for classroom practitioners, reflecting with colleagues on a range of issues that affect our practice as we strive for more inclusive and liberated classrooms.

**REAL Action Network: Organizers' Lounge** — Join this monthly gathering of like-minded and like-hearted equity advocates and organizers as you share ideas and strategies to build community and power.

# EDTPA: IS IT REALLY WORTH IT?

BY EMMA MURPHY, SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Preservice educators dream of the autonomy of their future classrooms. They spend four years brainstorming classroom set-ups, watching procedures executed by mentor teachers, and participate firsthand in the ups and downs of day-to-day life as an educator. Our observations, assignments and assessments culminate in an experience that not every student can say they had in college—the opportunity to be a full-time intern in a specific program of study, tailored to the individual needs and wants of our future careers.

Each preservice member takes on full course loads to complete their double, sometimes triple, majors, and ultimately spends upwards of \$1,000 out of pocket to pay for PRAXIS exams and various fees associated with being a full-time student teacher on top of regular university tuition.

At the culmination of the New Jersey teacher preparation program is edTPA (formerly known as the Teacher Performance Assessment). Masterminded by Stanford University, but managed and administered by Pearson since 2014, edTPA is the determining factor for teacher licensure in almost 40 states. It is based heavily on the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and the Performance Assessment for California Teachers.

In short, edTPA is a performance-based test for preservice educators, attempting to ensure that all student teachers have research to justify pedagogical strategies and can accurately use data to propel future decisions and reflection on previous lessons.

At first glance edTPA can seem reasonable—we want our teachers to have strong pedagogical practices, use data to drive decisions and reflect on what went well in a lesson. So why does edTPA have such a negative effect on student teachers? EdTPA takes these ideals and raises them to unreasonable levels for future teachers.

Before teaching, preservice members are required to download and read the edTPA handbook. Its 60 pages provide students with 12 rubrics, a checklist, and specific action items for each of the three to four tasks, depending on whether a student is studying elementary or secondary education.

The first task is to complete a context for learning, which briefly describes the school setting for the lesson. The second task requires student teachers to create a set of three to five lessons referred to as a mini-unit. Each lesson plan

must be three to four pages long, including elements such as the academic language/vocabulary used in the lesson, all prior knowledge that students have regarding the theme, topic, or subject area, and research citations that justify why student teachers used certain methods within the lesson.

Student teachers must then film both themselves teaching and students participating and complete a corresponding commentary describing how they achieved certain tasks, such as promoting a positive learning environment, with time stamps to identify where these were evident in the lesson. The final edTPA product is sent to Pearson to be scored by one individual whose subjective judgements can sabotage the career of a promising educator.

The heavy lifting during the planning and post-assessment process is far greater than what any teacher experiences in the day-to-day classroom. As student teachers complete edTPA, they must use statistical analysis to make conclusions about teaching. Lesson plans written specifically for Pearson take hours of careful and intentional wording, not to make the lesson stronger, but to ensure that no deductions occur from one of the 12 rubrics used.

Not only is edTPA an arduous process, but it is yet another cost students must pay out of pocket. In the 2019-20 academic year, college and university students across the state paid \$300

each to create an account with Pearson for edTPA. If students do not pass, they must pay another fee to re-do either a section or the entire assessment. This high-stakes testing environment is exactly what NJEA opposes.

Students who cannot pass edTPA's very high standards are unable to obtain a teaching license, not because they are bad educators, but because they were scored by a Pearson staff member who did not know their students, their classrooms, or their districts. We know what is best for our students—not a random scorer who may live in another state.

EdTPA hurts students economically. Many college or university students in New Jersey are struggling with homelessness, hunger and debt. Adding another cost, in addition to PRAXIS exams, textbooks and tuition, further dissuades students from entering the teaching profession.

It is time to end edTPA in New Jersey. Our future educators are relying on us. 🙏

“  
*Students who cannot pass edTPA's very high standards are unable to obtain a teaching license, not because they are bad educators, but because they were scored by a Pearson staff member who did not know their students, their classrooms, or their districts.*”

## SHOP LOCAL AND SAVE THROUGH NJEA

Check out our Member Discount Program for local retailers who give NJEA members a special discount.

Visit [njea.org/buylocal](https://njea.org/buylocal).





## *Classroom Close-up NJ looks back at* **Run 4 Vets**

Students at Jackson's Christa McAuliffe Middle School organized a Run/Walk for Vets that brings together students, staff, parents, veterans and community businesses to raise money for local veteran causes.

Run 4 Vets is the culmination of the "Honor Our Vets" service learning project. As part of the project, students and staff collect supplies for military support packages that are sent to soldiers overseas.



Over its 25-year run, NJEA's Classroom Close-up NJ has won 16 Emmy® Awards. While it is no longer producing new episodes, it has a treasure trove of content that inspires and educates the public about the great things happening in New Jersey public schools – and it is a valuable resource for educators.

Watch Classroom Close-up on NJTV. The show airs on Sundays at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. Follow @CCUNJ on Twitter and Facebook at facebook.com/crcunj and visit [www.classroomcloseup.org](http://www.classroomcloseup.org).



## COUNTY REAS AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS



Amanda DeFalco



Katelyn Becker



Madison DuBois



Shelynel Alvarez

Throughout the years, many of New Jersey's public high school students have been the beneficiaries of scholarship awards presented by NJREA's county retired associations (CREAs). Below are some of the winners who received scholarships for the 2020-21 school year.

### CUMBERLAND

CCREA awarded four \$750 scholarships. Millville High School graduate **Karleigh McCafferty** will attend Rowan University and Cumberland County Technical Education Center graduates **Shelynel Alvarez** and **Amanda DeFalco** plan to attend Rowan College of South Jersey. Fellow Cumberland County Technical Education Center graduate **Katelyn Becker** will attend Rutgers University in Camden this fall.

### MERCER

Three Mercer County graduates were recipients of the \$1,000 Anna Diehl Scholarship from MCREA this spring. **Caleb Co**, a graduate of West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South, will attend Cornell University; **Sabourin Roberts**, a graduate of the Mercer County Technical Schools Stem Academy, will attend Stevens Institute of Technology; and **Riley Murphy**, a graduate of Hopewell Valley Regional High School, will attend the University of Scranton.

### MORRIS

MCREA awarded twelve \$2,000 scholarships for the 2020-21 school year. All recipients of the scholarships plan to study or are currently majors in the field of education. First-year recipients of this award include **Anna Accumanno** and **Ashleigh Muth**, both of Hanover Park High School, **Caroline Berardo**, Parsippany-Troy Hills High School, **Katie Berger**, Boonton High School, **Arianna Granda**, Morris Knolls Hills High School, **Nicole Katwaty**, Morris County School of Technology, and **McKenzie Lynch**, Mount Olive High School.

Second-year recipients include **Courtney Graf**, Shippensburg University, **Savannah Jenks**, St. Joseph's University, **Anna Lengner**, Kutztown University, **Arianna Lee**, The College of New Jersey, and **Avianna Miller**, Drew University.

### OCEAN

OCREA awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to graduating seniors who plan to study education this fall. **Bryan Carlson** and **Ryan Gerber**, both graduates of Central Regional High School, will attend Nova Southeastern University and Stockton University, respectively, while Toms River South High School graduate **Dylan Nguyen** will attend The College of New Jersey.

### SALEM

SCREA also awarded a future education major. Arthur P. Schalick High School graduate **Madison DuBois** was selected to receive the one-year SCREA Field-Henderson \$1,000 scholarship. Madison plans to attend Rowan University this fall.

### SOME AWARDS DELAYED

Because of COVID-19, many county REA scholarship committees were unable to meet and officially award their scholarships this spring and plan to do so this fall. If you don't see your county listed here, be sure to check out your upcoming CREA newsletters for more information on future selection and award dates.

### WISH TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NJREA SCHOLARSHIP FUND?

Please send your check payable to "NJREA Philanthropic Fund" along with your name, address and phone number to NJREA Philanthropic Fund, c/o Dianne Papadinec, NJREA Treasurer, PO Box 671, Turnersville, NJ 08012-0671.

**PROGRAMS WITH ONLINE OPTIONS**



# DISCOVER YOU

**GRADUATE PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS**  
**ALL EDUCATION PROGRAMS HAVE REDUCED TUITION**

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

**GRADUATE EDUCATION  
 VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION**

**NOVEMBER 17 • 4:00 PM**  
[caldwell.edu/connectvirtually](http://caldwell.edu/connectvirtually)



## 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.*

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA'S** winter meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Dec. 10 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. Holiday music will be the entertainment. The cost is \$34. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

**MORRIS COUNTY REA** 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.

Join **OCEAN COUNTY REA** for its holiday meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Dec. 10 at the Days Hotel in Toms River. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

**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.



110 E Ridgewood Avenue  
 Lower Level  
 Paramus, NJ 07652  
**844-724-6735**

# NEXGEN ORTHOPEDICS

ORTHOPEDIC DOCTOR | SPINE AND JOINT CARE

Focusing on *Health & Wellness* to prevent  
 injury and avoid major surgery

ULTRA MINIMALLY INVASIVE TREATMENT  
 PHYSICAL THERAPY  
 MASSAGE THERAPY

## Treating *Conditions* Such As:

HERNIATED DISC  
 SCIATICA  
 NECK PAIN  
 KNEE PAIN  
 PINCHED NERVE  
 ARTHRITIS

TENDON PAIN  
 BACK PAIN  
 HIP PAIN  
 SHOULDER PAIN  
 ELBOW PAIN  
 SPORTS INJURIES



@nexgenortho   
 @nexgenortho   
 NexGen Orthopedics 

WWW.[nexgenortho.com](http://nexgenortho.com)

**ARE YOU  
 TIRED OF  
 BEING IN  
 CONSTANT  
 PAIN?**

2020, 2019, &  
 2018 Top Doctor in  
 New Jersey Award  
 - The International  
 Association of  
 Orthopaedic  
 Surgeons

**Included with  
 treatment:**  
 Massage  
 Therapy  
 Personal Training  
 IV Vitamin  
 Infusions

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

# NOVEMBER & beyond

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings and events are virtual.

**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**

**1/8**

Friday

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

**1/9**

Saturday

**NJEA Delegate Assembly**

**1/15-16**

Fri. & Sat.

**NJEA Equity Alliance**

## 'TIS THE SEASON

Save 20% on flowers, chocolates, gift baskets and more!

Go to [memberbenefits.njea.org](http://memberbenefits.njea.org).

Questions? Email [bbuonsante@njea.org](mailto:bbuonsante@njea.org).



# SAVE THE DATE

## EQUITY ALLIANCE CONFERENCE NJEA'S PREMIER SOCIAL JUSTICE EVENT

### FRIDAY

**JANUARY 15, 2021**

- Convocation, welcome, keynote
- Opening Session
- Entertainment

### SATURDAY

**JANUARY 16, 2021**

- Workshops
- HCR Celebration and Award Ceremony

### Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human & Civil Rights Celebration AWARDS

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human & Civil Rights Award
- Elizabeth A. Allen Women in Education Award
  - Equality Champion Award
  - Judith Owens Spirit Award



Human & Civil Rights • Women in Education • Urban Education • Exceptional Children  
Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity • Minority Leadership & Recruitment



KEYNOTE SPEAKER:  
**BARUTI KAFELE**

**FRIDAY & SATURDAY JAN 15-16, 2021**

*This conference is 100% virtual. Registration will begin in late November.*

# LEARNING *together from home*

From one year to the next, there's always something new at the NJEA Convention.

But this year is like no other.

With only one exception since 1853, members of what became the New Jersey Education Association, originally known as New Jersey State Teachers' Association (NJSTA), have met annually *somewhere*.

In the living memory of nearly all NJEA members, that somewhere has always been Atlantic City, but in the 19th century, the annual convention had no permanent home. It moved from place to place—often from school to school—around the state. By the end of the 1800s, the convention had already grown too large to be held in smaller communities and alternated between Trenton and Newark.

Since 1905, what we now call the NJEA Convention has met in Atlantic City with only six exceptions. In 1922 and 1923, the association again tried to alternate between cities, meeting in Trenton and Newark respectively. In 1924, it returned to Atlantic City. But with soldiers lodged in Atlantic City during World War II, the convention once again moved: to Trenton in 1942 and New York City in 1943 and 1944. Since 1945, the convention has been nowhere else but Atlantic City.

Only once in the association's nearly 167 years has the convention been cancelled. That was in 2012 in the immediate aftermath of Superstorm Sandy.

NJEA members met for their annual convention through the American Civil War, two world wars, and notably, given today's circumstances, the 1918 Flu Pandemic.

That level of commitment to the profession is a tribute to NJEA members. No matter the

circumstances, members have found a way to meet year in and year out to improve their teaching and career practices and to advocate for public education in New Jersey. It's that level of commitment that has long made New Jersey public school students high achievers.

“

*NJEA members met for their annual convention through the American Civil War, two World Wars, and notably, given today's circumstances, the 1918 Flu Pandemic.*

That commitment continues with the 2020 NJEA Convention, when the convention will be held in a radically different way: Together From Home. The world was very different a century ago during the 1918 Flu Pandemic. Today, we have the tools to meet without putting our students, families and communities back home at risk.

As is true every year, professional learning will be the centerpiece of the NJEA Convention. Most session presenters, who early in the year developed proposals for in-person workshops, quickly pivoted to a virtual format.

There are over 150 professional development sessions covering a broad range of instructional, technological, and affective areas of curricula from pre-kindergarten through higher education. There are also dozens of workshops addressing racial, social and education justice. All of these are listed in the 2020 NJEA Convention Program you received with the October edition of the *NJEA Review*. You'll also find them listed by grade level and subject area at [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org).

The professional learning continues right through Friday afternoon on Nov. 6, when Ruby Bridges will appear as the featured keynote speaker. On Nov. 14, 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges crossed the threshold of William Frantz Elementary School, courageously launching the desegregation of New Orleans's public schools. Today, she is a published author who tours the country promoting social justice, telling her story to adults and children alike.

Educational support professionals (ESP) will also find opportunities to gain new learning in many of the workshops that apply to all members regardless of job category. In the ESP area of Main Street NJEA, ESPs will learn more about new legislation to protect their jobs, discuss key workplace safety and health issues, explore the basics of unionism and more.

Many features of the in-person convention will nonetheless be found at this year's convention, including a massive Virtual Exhibit Hall, the NJEA Equity Alliance, the NJEA REAL Movement, the NEA Members of Color Network, NJEA Member Benefits, the NJEA Patriots Alliance, NJEA Preservice, the NJEA Early Career Network and so much more.

So while for only the second time since 1945, NJEA members will not be gathering in Atlantic City, we will be gathering "Together From Home." This will be a learning experience for all of us—one we will not soon forget. But if we imagine the mindsets of those who attended NJSTA/NJEA Conventions in 1861, in 1917, in 1918, and in 1941, we know that we, in 2020, can emerge from this convention refreshed, motivated and ready to meet the challenges of our time. 

# Academic Success. Ready to Go!

Whether school is in session, virtual, or a combination of the two, New Jersey students are more prepared to learn when the obstacle of hunger is eliminated. That's a constant truth that has remained through these unprecedented times.

As an educator, your support for school nutrition programs has been vital, and the payoff - long-term student success - is the goal we're all striving to achieve.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of children, and for ensuring school meals are part of their academic day. Contact us for support at: [schools@milk4u.org](mailto:schools@milk4u.org)



©2020 ADANE



AMERICAN DAIRY  
ASSOCIATION NORTH  
EAST

[americandairy.com](http://americandairy.com)



PMC-WIRELESS.COM | 732.888.9300



### Video, Analytics & Access Control

Video surveillance, cloud, and access control solutions integrated with AI provide timely, actionable information.

## DETECT ELEVATED SKIN TEMPERATURE WITH THERMAL SECURITY TECHNOLOGY

### KEEP PEOPLE AND YOUR FACILITY SAFE WITH HIGH-THROUGHPUT THERMAL SCREENING TECHNOLOGY

Leftover Alyssa's Law funds can be used to integrate your video management and access control systems with your communications tools via Motorola Solutions security products platform.

### Security & Incident Management Software

Manage, synchronize, and place all incidents into context – saving you time and money while ensuring quality and compliance.



### Broadband Communications

Connect with greater speed and efficiency using WAVE™ push-to-talk (PTT) technology.



### Two-Way Radio Communications

Connect your entire operation with MOTOTRBO™ digital portable radios.



FOR MORE, CALL 732.888.9300 OR EMAIL [INFO@PMC-WIRELESS.COM](mailto:INFO@PMC-WIRELESS.COM)



MOTOROLA, MOTO, MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS, and the Stylized M Logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Motorola Trademark Holdings, LLC and are used under license. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. ©2020 Motorola Solutions, Inc. All rights reserved.

©2020 PMC Associates Wireless Communications. All rights reserved. | Design & Layout M4D, LLC.