

REVIEW

JANUARY
2021

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an education and advocacy resource



Angel Santiago

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OF THE YEAR
ANGEL SANTIAGO

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SUPPORTING STUDENTS
THROUGH THE ARTS

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CLASSROOMS
DRINKING COFFEE

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GREAT TEACHERS
MAKE GREAT
TEACHERS

NJEA ESP VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

FREE TO MEMBERS

Be Part of the Buzz!

February 6, 2021 – 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Preregistration required by Jan. 22.

For more details and to register and make your workshop selections, visit njea.org/esp.

Honoring Educational Support Professionals (ESP) across NJ!

Trenton & You: Perfect Together?

(Offered a.m. only)

This workshop is an introduction to the basics of government, why politics matter to your job, and strategies to organize for action.

Game of Thrones: The Political Players & How Politics Works

(Offered p.m. only)

This seminar will discuss what really happens behind the scenes in lobbying, government, and politics, and how it all ties together. **(Note:** Some background knowledge on the political process is helpful.)

Google Drive for ESP Members

Google Drive is your home base for organization, collaboration, and communication. In this session, we will explore the essential features and integration of Google Drive to support teachers and students.

Health & Safety in the COVID Era for Maintenance & Custodians

This workshop will cover health and safety for both custodial and maintenance staffs. It will cover Right to Know legislation and what custodians need to know. It will also cover what maintenance staff need to know about the Indoor Air Quality Act. In addition, the workshop will cover their roles in the reopening and pandemic response plans.

Introduction to the Professional Growth Continuum

Participants will learn about the ESP Professional Growth Continuum (PGC), including the different parts of the PGC and how it was developed. Through hearing about specific initiatives locals have designed and taking a deep look at the standards, participants will begin to reflect on how the PGC can help them grow. Participants will learn how the PGC can be used as a tool for self-development, organizational development within the local association and as a tool in the fight against privatization.

Legal Issues

This seminar will examine the impact of the law on employment; analyze the proper forum for dealing with disputes; and review association roles, responsibilities, and liabilities in its duty of fair representation. Learn the responsibilities and rights of school employees with regard to bullying – student to student, student to staff, and staff to student. An in-depth review of pertinent provisions of school and labor laws, and administrative and legal decisions affecting ESP members will also be provided.

MOC ESP Roundtable – Elevating Your Voice, Maximizing Your Influence

This interactive, engaging workshop is designed to explore individual and collective strategies to ensure the power and sustained presence of education support professionals in our school communities.

Preparing for Negotiations – Collective Bargaining

Learn the bargaining process from beginning to end, emphasizing mediation and fact-finding, negotiation strategies, and benefit costs.

Salary Guide Development for ESP

Ever wonder how your salary guide works? Want to know how they are created? This hands-on workshop will take you through salary guide development for BOTH hourly rates and annual salaries. We will build a salary guide together, analyze YOUR salary guide and discuss best practices for settlements! Bring your pencils, calculators, and contract and get ready for some fun!

Special Ed for ESP Members

ESPs are key members of the school team supporting students with disabilities. This session will provide support professionals with an overview of current special education rules and issues. Topics will include laws and regulations, the impact of ESSA '15, student discipline, dyslexia, autism, confidentiality, professional development and more.

Using Your Buying Power

This session is all about stretching your hard-earned dollars and learning how simple strategies can improve your personal finances. You will meet some of our closest business partners who help members maximize their income. We will also discuss how you can become a Member Benefits coordinator in your local and help others use the buying power of our 200,000-strong union to save hundreds to thousands of dollars each year. Plus, attendees will have a chance to win gift cards and other prizes from our Member Benefits partners!

What Have You Done for Me Lately – Negotiations

As an ESP member have you ever read your contract and wanted to ask, "What have you done for me lately?" In this session we will analyze your past contracts to see what has been negotiated for you and design a path forward to help you get what you need!

What would you do?

(Limited to 50 participants)

Part 1 (a.m. only)/Part 2 (p.m. only)

This workshop is a hands-on, scenario-based exercise in advocacy. Learn about internal and external organizing, communication strategies, and interpersonal relations through real-life experiences, including representing a member in a conflict and defending colleagues in a public forum. You will be placed in situations that will sharpen your decision-making and advocacy skills. You will acquire strategies to improve your ability to advocate for yourself, your local and your profession. The morning and afternoon sessions each will focus on different scenarios, so anyone who wishes to register for both sessions is welcome.

Workers' Rights & COVID-19 Procedures for Transportation Personnel

This workshop will cover worker rights vs. COVID rights, hazard communication laws, cleaning and disinfecting, ventilation, and social distancing.

Preparing for Your Evaluation

(Offered a.m. only)

Learn what ESP evaluation should include, how to utilize your evaluation for career development, and how to protect your rights in the evaluation process.

Understanding Your Union & Its Importance to You

(Offered p.m. only)
Explore what your dues dollars pay for, what you are entitled to as a union member, and what your responsibilities are as a member.

X's & O's for Local Leaders

This workshop is designed for local executive committee members who want to establish an effective structure for representing members and building a strong local association. Topics will include overviews of effective meetings, member representation, grievance processing, and school law. Bring a copy of your constitution and contract.

You & IAIU:

What Every Public-School Employee Should Know About Institutional Abuse Investigations in the Workplace

This workshop will provide an overview of who, what, where, when, and why institutional abuse reporting and investigations are important. Join us to get to know your rights – and how to protect children.

You & Your Pension

Learn about your PERS pension benefits. Discuss options, retirement dates, life insurance, purchase of prior service, Social Security, taxation of retirement benefits, and health insurance after retirement. Procedures for retirement and completion of forms will also be discussed.

njea
esp
Educational Support Professionals

The **Lenape District Support Staff Association** (Burlington) held a Pride-funded trunk or treat event in October with the Evesham Township Police Department. From left: Jackie Robel, Tina Fallon, Chico Gonzalez, Ray Balsamo, Marijean Andl, Tom McGoldrick, Janice Curry, and Brian Margerum.



The **Cumberland County Council of Educational Associations** used an NJEA Pride grant to create a "Virtual Family Craft Night" for 100 families. The supplies needed to make four winter crafts along with access to a fun instructional video for each craft were distributed to the families.



The four NJEA-affiliated local associations at **Atlantic Cape Community College** sponsored a holiday meal distribution to students in need in conjunction with the Student Government Association. Even the college president participated. Food was distributed on all three campuses.



As reported in the December *NJEA Review*, the **Clinton Township Education Association** (Hunterdon) received the NJEA Jim George Collective Bargaining Award. Here the CTEA and the Clinton Township BOE bargaining teams snapped a photo to mark the evening they came to a memorandum of agreement. Bargaining concluded well before the pandemic made in-person meetings unsafe.

FEATURES



26 | MEET ANGEL SANTIAGO

Angel Santiago is the 2020-21 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year. His journey to becoming a teacher began with his sixth-grade teacher Mark Melamed, but there were a few stops along the way: lead singer in a rock 'n' roll band and housing inspector, among others.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



32 | SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH THE ARTS

In times of uncertainty, the arts provide students with a therapeutic means of expressing their fears, anxiety and grief. A University of Colorado study that examined aerosol rates produced by wind instrumentalists, vocalists, and actors found best practices for reducing infection risk when arts are scheduled for student participation.

BY DAWN HILTNER AND PHILIP PALLITTO



34 | TEACHERS IN CLASSROOMS DRINKING COFFEE

Leah Jerome, the 2019-20 Bergen County Teacher of the Year, pondered what she could do in her role to amplify the voices of educators in Bergen County and honor what they were doing in their classrooms. Inspired by Jerry Seinfeld's "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee," Jerome launched Mission 76. With some funding from Dunkin' she conducted coffee-soaked conversations in each of Bergen County's 76 school districts.

BY ANGEL BOOSE



38 | GREAT TEACHERS MAKE GREAT TEACHERS

There is no question that this year has been the most challenging of our careers. From an overnight shutdown last spring to the uncertainty of opening schools in virtual and hybrid modes this fall, our work as educators has forced us into uncharted waters. In these times, providing guidance to a future educator as a cooperating teacher can help you better face the challenges this school year brings.

BY KRISTEN HAWLEY TURNER, EILEEN HEDDY AND LEYONE ROYSTER

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*NJEA's governing bodies,
committees and staff.*

31,560

Number of students in New Jersey schools who, as of Dec. 2, 2020, lack either a computer or internet access, or both. Down from 59,603 on Oct. 21.

Source: "Digital Divide and 2020 NJDOE Technology Data Collections" New Jersey Department of Education (bit.ly/39ZQ8BY)

31,560

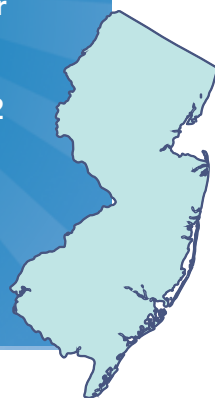


GOOD NEWS

New Jersey is Number 1 world language enrollment:

New Jersey far outperforms all other states in the percentage of students enrolled in a foreign language class, with over half of all New Jersey K-12 students enrolled.

Source: American Councils for International Education. The National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report. 2017. (bit.ly/39XJ7lm) and Raychaudhuri, Disha. "Why N.J. students dominate the U.S. in learning foreign languages," NJ.com. Sept. 5, 2018. (bit.ly/2JQBqT5)



On the cover

Angel Santiago, a fifth-grade teacher at Loring Flemming Elementary School in Gloucester Township, Camden County, is the 2020-21 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year. In this Review, read about what inspired him to become a teacher. See pages 26-31.



PHOTO BY
Kathryn Coulibaly

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REVIEW

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REGION 19.Hudson Co.-North201-861-1266... Thomas DeSocio & Edward Stevens
REGION 20.Hudson Co.-South201-653-6634... John Dillon & Kevin McHale
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THIS IS YOUR UNION; LET'S KEEP IT STRONG



NJEA President Marie Blistan addresses the members at the 2017 NJEA Convention. That was the year Blistan unveiled the NJEA convention theme to be used for the length of her term. Standing Together: Social Justice = Education Justice = Student Success.

Every year in the January issue of the *NJEA Review*, we print the NJEA Organizational Directory to give you details about the structure and function of your statewide education union.

As you know, NJEA is the state's strongest and most influential public education union. We don't wield that power arbitrarily; we use our influence to ensure that students receive an excellent public education, and that educators—regardless of job description—are treated with dignity, respect and enjoy quality salaries, pensions, and benefits.

Our strength and our ability to advocate for our students and our members is built upon you. Because of your excellence in educating and caring for New Jersey's students and because of your advocacy for yourselves and your colleagues, we are able to maintain and improve the learning and working conditions for everyone in our schools.

We cannot do it without you; in fact, there is no union without you.

The 2020-21 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, Angel Santiago, who served as a junior representative in his local association, put it well when he said that "Educators need to have a strong voice in their union or else their voices will be lost. Newer employees, in particular, need to be involved in their associations because they experience issues that others may not, and they are the foundation for the future success of the union."

There are many ways to become more involved in your union at the local, county, and statewide levels. If you are interested in learning more, contact your local president, talk to people you know who are already involved, and sign up for an advocacy training, such as one of the three upcoming Winter Leadership conferences.

As we begin a new year, let's resolve to continue to provide an outstanding education to our students and to advocating for ourselves and our colleagues, and let's find new ways to ensure our continued success.

Marie Blistan

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Twitter

@MarieBlistan: Senator Booker hosts a meet & greet with Rev. Raphael Warnock for US Senate in Georgia! He has worked for years with Stacey Abrams. Rev. Warnock stands for social & racial justice for all! Let's help GOTV for leaders leading with vision!

On Nov. 30, Marie Blistan tweeted during a meet and greet, hosted by New Jersey's Sen. Corey Booker, for NJEA members and Rev. Raphael Warnock. Warnock is running for the U.S. Senate in Georgia, and, if he and candidate Jon Ossoff win their runoff elections, the balance of power in the Senate would shift to the Democratic Party. Because this potential shift could allow President-elect Joe Biden to enact his pro-public education agenda, many NJEA members are working virtually to get Warnock elected.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: Great job New Jersey Education Association President Marie Blistan in bringing together diverse educational leaders and stakeholders to discuss the Learning Policy Institute's report on reinventing school in the time of COVID-19 and beyond. Looking forward to what we can all do to support our students, educators, and communities as we transition to the new normal.

On Dec. 8, Sean M. Spiller honored NJEA President Marie Blistan for bringing together a broad collation of stakeholders to discuss what schools will look like in the post-COVID-19 world. The group, convened by Blistan, discussed the Learning Policy Institute's latest report on the reimaging schools.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Celebrating all of our ESP brothers and sisters on this (and every) day! Educators all—we're in it together making our schools #1 for so many reasons. Glad and proud to have the strongest legal protections in the nation for our ESPs! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

On Nov 18., Steve Beatty celebrated National Educational Support Professionals Day by reminding his Facebook followers that every person who works in a school building contributes to New Jersey's best-in-nation public schools. He also acknowledged the new legal protections extended to ESPs in New Jersey as a result of the two-year-long campaign for Job Justice.

KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

NEA RA DELEGATES HEAD TO DENVER



Carmen Porter at the 2020 virtual RA.

Pending clearance to travel to large gatherings

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

The decision whether to hold an in-person or virtual NEA RA may be made soon after press time. If NEA

decides to hold the NEA RA virtually, it will be posted at njea.org and in the February *NJEA Review*.

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

Delegates will also elect members to the NEA Executive Committee. If any vacancies occur in NEA officer or other Executive Committee positions, these may also be filled at the NEA RA.

Delegates must be elected

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

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

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

In addition to local association delegates, NJEA members will elect state delegates and successor state delegates this spring. Candidates nominate themselves for these positions online. Candidates are placed on the ballot according to the county where they are employed or their unit of representation (e.g., higher education).

To complete the online self-nomination form, go to njea.org/NJEAelections.

Ensuring ethnic-minority representation

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

in its delegation.

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

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

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

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

For complete rules and procedures, and to self-nominate for state delegate and minority-concerns positions, visit njea.org/NJEAelections.

2021 NEA ESP NATIONAL CONFERENCE

In addition to the NJEA Educational Support Professionals Conference (See Page 2), the 2021 NEA Education Support Professional (ESP) National Conference will take place virtually on March 19-21, followed by the NEA ESP of the Year award celebration on Friday, March 26.

This year's conference will offer up to 30 live and 15 on-demand professional learning opportunities over the course of three days. In addition, participants will have multiple opportunities to network and share best practices and strategies with their peers.

The conference is offered to NEA members only. Registration will open in February and will be free of charge. Registration will be capped at 2,000 participants and will be confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Information about the NEA ESP Conference can be found at nea.org/espconference.

CAWP OFFERS PUBLIC OFFICE ELECTION TRAINING

Are you a woman who wants to run for public office? Do you know a woman who wants to run for public office?

Every year Ready to Run, sponsored by the Center for American Women in Politics (CAWP) at Rutgers University, sponsors spring campaign training for women who are interested in running for office. Although Ready to Run will not be able to offer its training in-person, there will be some virtual trainings this spring.

Contact Carolyn Thompson at cthompson@njea.org if you are interested in learning about these trainings and other opportunities NJEA can offer for women who want to run for public office.

NJEA NOMINATION PROCEDURES AND ELECTION RULES

For county and unit affiliates and NEA RA

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

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

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

For all election-related rules, visit njea.org/NJEAelections.

NJEA ELECTIONS CALENDAR 2021

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

Jan. 15 – Official Membership Count

- Initial membership file sent to election vendor (Intelliscan)
- Copy sent to Elections Committee staff contact: Determination of governance positions to be filled (Exec./DA/DAA)
- Deadline for notifying NJEA of a change in unit of representation
- Petitions for governance positions available (Exec./DA/DAA)

Jan. 20 – Election Committee Mandatory Meeting

- Rules, procedures, and calendar reviewed and finalized
- Announcement of membership numbers, governance and RA positions by county/unit
- Review of nominating committee requirements, filing dates, electronic nomination process
- Jan. 22 – inclement weather back-up

Feb. 1 to Feb. 28 – As established by NEA

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

Feb. 25 – Deadline for county and unit nominating committees to convene

Feb. 28

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

Feb 28 – Petition Deadline for nominations of county and unit elections, NJEA Governance positions, and constitutional amendments (5 p.m.)

- Deadline to make new nominations, in the event of a vacancy
- Deadline for candidates to withdraw their names from nomination (must notify NJEA Headquarters by 5 p.m.)

March 5

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

April 1 to April 15 – Balloting

- Ballots due by noon April 15, 2021, at the address supplied with the ballots.

April 29 – Election Committee mandatory meeting to validate election results

- Election dispute hearings on challenge of actions related to the elections

May 1 – 2021-22 election cycle begins

All dates are subject to change.

Note:

- Failure of a candidate to properly validate their nomination online will result in disqualification.
- Local NEA RA election results MUST be received at NJEA HQ no later than Monday, April 12, 2021.
- In accordance with NJEA Bylaws, the Elections Committee may change the balloting period.
- In the event the balloting period is changed, the new balloting period will be published in the March issue of the *NJEA Review* and posted njea.org.

CURRICULUM WRITERS: WE NEED YOU



In 2002, New Jersey passed the Amistad Law. The purpose of the law was to ensure that the contributions of African Americans and the descendants of the African Diaspora were infused into the social studies curricula of our schools.

NJEA is looking to fulfill the law by forming a curriculum writing team to develop a course of study that will aid in helping educators to implement integrated meaningful lessons.

If you have experience in writing curricula and or have

been teaching the Amistad Curriculum, please respond at njea.org/amistadwriting to receive more information and an application.

The team will meet in the summer of 2021, and participants will be compensated for their work.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENT CONTINUES DURING PANDEMIC

While families social distance, many children are at risk for child abuse. The New Jersey Department of Children and Families (NJDCF) reminds educators that everyone in New Jersey is a mandated reporter. Call 1-877-652-2873 to report suspected abuse or neglect.

During this uncertain time, NJDCF asks that the entire school team continue to be vigilant. NJDCF suggests that you check on the families you know may be struggling, give students a safe word to use if they're afraid, and try to get "eyes on" every child at least once a week.

IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP RECORD ACCURATE?

Did you receive this edition of the *NJEA Review* in your own mailbox, or did your parents hand it to you after it arrived at their house? If you are not receiving emails from NJEA, the email address in your membership record may need to be updated.

In addition to the *Review*, all members receive NJEA elections ballots at the address on record, so it's important to make sure your ballot will go to the correct address.

Fortunately, you can update your membership record from your own computer.

To update your membership information:

- Log onto njea.org using the PIN found on your membership card and your password. Your default password, unless you've changed it, is the last four digits of your Social Security number.
- If you can't find your PIN, but you do receive emails from NJEA, use that email address in place of your PIN.
- Once you have successfully logged on, slide over to "My NJEA" and click on "Profile."
- From there, replace any inaccurate information.
- Note that NJEA recently updated the sex and gender categories. You may wish to review these to reflect how you identify yourself.
- When you're done, scroll to the bottom and click "Submit New Info."

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.

Degrees and Certifications:

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- 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 (LDTTC) Certification
- Supervisor Licensure



SPRING SEMESTER STARTS JANUARY 18th, 2021

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(609) 860-1200
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



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- Spring 2021 classes are fully remote with flexible delivery options
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- REMOTE INSTRUCTION FOR TEACHERS
- LEARNING DISABILITIES
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COOL STUFF

LOOKING FOR CIVICS CONTENT?

NJSBF has got you covered from the First Amendment to the 27th

If you're looking for civics materials to enhance your curriculum, the New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) has you covered with its free publications and blog posts. The NJSBF has launched a new civics publication titled "The Bill of Rights Up Close," which takes a deep dive into the Bill of Rights. This 28-page newsletter contains 13 articles that explain each of the 10 amendments, with four articles devoted to the First Amendment alone.

The NJSBF launched "Beyond the Bill of Rights" in fall 2019. The 24-page newsletter focuses on the 17 amendments added to the U.S. Constitution after the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791. The newsletter also contains a bonus article on the Constitutional Convention and whether the U.S. Constitution needs a re-write.

PDFs of "The Bill of Rights Up Close" and "Beyond the Bill of Rights," as well as many other civics topics, are available for download. Visit njsbf.org/publications, scroll down to "Civics Publications" and expand that section.

Print versions of the publications are available as well. Look for "Publication Order Form" at the website in the previous paragraph.

2020 NJEA CONVENTION CHARITY OFFERS OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR STUDENTS



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
IN NEW JERSEY

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey was the designated statewide charity for the 2020 NJEA Convention. On the next two pages you'll find detailed information about the mission,

impact, and services of Boys & Girls Clubs. There are clubs throughout the state of New Jersey, many that already have established relationships with county and local associations in their areas.

Below are the names, phone numbers and websites for clubs in all areas of the state.

ATLANTIC CITY

Chelsea Club, Drexel Club and Teen Center
609-347-2697
acbgc.org

CAMDEN

Marjorie & Lewis Katz East Camden Club
856-963-6490
begreatcamden.org

CLIFTON

Clifton Club
973-773-0966
bgcclifton.org

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

VINELAND
Carl Arthur Recreation Center Club
856-896-0244
Youth for Change Teen Center
856-696-4190
bgccumberland.org

COLTS NECK

Earle Navy Youth Center
732-866-2148

GARFIELD

Garfield Club
973-478-7662
bgcgarfield.org/programs

GLOUCESTER COUNTY

Glassboro Club
856-881-6084, ext. 2
Paulsboro Club
856-881-6084, ext. 3
gcbgc.org

HAWTHORNE

Hawthorne Club
973-427-7777
bgchawthorne.org

HUDSON COUNTY

Hoboken - Edward A. Dalton Club
201-963-6443
Jersey City Club
201-333-4100
www.bgchc.org

JOINT BASE MDL

Dix Youth Programs
609-562-5061
Lakehurst Youth Programs
732-323-4043
McGuire Youth Programs
609-754-5437

LOWER BERGEN COUNTY

Hackensack Club
201-880-7244
Lodi Club
973-473-7410
LEAP Program - 21st CCLC
Thomas Jefferson Middle School
bgclbergen.org

MERCER COUNTY

Trenton - Centre Street Club
609-392-3191
Lawrence Club
609-695-6060
bgcm Mercer.org

MONMOUTH COUNTY

Asbury Park Club
732-775-7862
Red Bank Club
732-530-0065
bgcmonmouth.org

NEWARK

Newark Club
BGC 973-242-1200
bgcn.org

SALVATION ARMY IRONBOUND

973.344.2698
newjersey.salvationarmy.org/NewJersey/newarkboysandgirlsclub

NORTHWEST NEW JERSEY

Pequannock Club
973-633-9007
Wayne Club
973-956-0033
bgcnwnj.org

PATERSON AND PASSAIC

Passaic Club
973-777-7235
Paterson Club
973-279-3055
bgcppnj.org

Picatinny Arsenal Youth Services
973-724-7183

UNION COUNTY

Elizabeth Club
908-351-3344
Plainfield Club
908-822-8672
Union Club
908-687-2697
bgcuc.org

WEST ORANGE COMMUNITY HOUSE

973-736-1282
bgcwo.org



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
IN NEW JERSEY

Our Mission

Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

2020 NEW JERSEY IMPACT REPORT



The Club Experience

Boys & Girls Clubs fill the gap between school and home. We provide welcoming, positive environments in which kids and teens have fun, participate in life-changing programs and experiences, and build supportive relationships with peers and caring adults.



The Need in Our State

Every day 267,945 kids in New Jersey leave school with nowhere to go¹. They risk being unsupervised, unguided and unsafe.

Our Reach



1,568
Adult Staff



74
Boys & Girls Club Sites
in New Jersey



4,723
Volunteers

Location of Club Facilities

58% Urban

31% Suburban

1% Rural

Annual number of Meals/
Snacks Served at no cost

786,111 Meals

816,094 Snacks

71,017 = **32,817** + **38,200**

Youth Served Annually

Registered Members

Youth Served Through
Community Outreach

Member Demographics

76%

Ages 12
and Younger

23%

Teens
(13-19)

56%

Male

44%

Female

32%

Live in
Single-Parent
Households

54%

Qualify for Free
or Reduced-
Price School
Lunch

COVID 19 Pandemic Response

Serve meals & distribute family meal kits

Provide full day educational support during remote learning

Provide afterschool programming (in-person & virtual)

"Ever since stepping into the Club eight years ago, my life has been positively impacted through continuous mentorship & support. The Club is like a tree that flourishes with opportunity, and I am profoundly grateful to represent an organization that gives back to the community endlessly."



Tatiana C.

2020 New Jersey Youth of the Year

Club Locations

Asbury Park
Atlantic City
Camden
Clifton
Elizabeth
Garfield
Glassboro
Hackensack
Hawthorne
Hoboken
Jersey City
Lawrenceville
Lodi
Newark

North Haledon
Passaic
Paterson
Paulsboro
Pequannock
Plainfield
Red Bank
Trenton
Union
Vineland
Wayne
West Orange
Woodbury

Military Youth Centers

Earle Naval
Fort Dix
Lakehurst

Picatinny Arsenal
McGuire Air Force

Every dollar invested in the Boys & Girls Clubs returns \$9.60 in current and future earnings and cost-savings to their communities.

Our Agenda for America's Youth

At Boys & Girls Clubs of America we believe who you are, where you're from, or the circumstances that surround you shouldn't determine your access to experiences or opportunities. Our Agenda for America's Youth focuses on solutions and policies that will have the greatest impact on the youth of this country, and the fight to strengthen them. America's youth need a voice and with your help, we will close the opportunity gap for all youth in America.

Out-Of-School Time



Every young person should have access to a high-quality out-of-school time experience.

The Need

Nationally, 11.3 million school-age children are home without adult supervision after school.

What We Do

Clubs across the country provide over 4 million young people with a safe place, caring adult mentors, fun and friendship, and high-impact youth development programs on a daily basis during critical non-school hours.

Our Impact

54% of Club Alumni said the club literally "saved my life".

Safer Childhoods



Every young person has a right to a safe, positive environment in which to learn and grow.

The Need

Nationally, 49% of youth grades 4–12 reported being bullied at least once during the past month.

What We Do

Boys & Girls Clubs are committed to supporting communities and local Clubs ensure the safety of all youth especially during out-of-school time when statistics show youth violence escalates in communities between the hours of 3-7 p.m.

Our Impact

Older Club Teens are **41%** less likely to get into a physical fight than their peers.

Health & Wellness



Every young person should be equipped to make healthy decisions resulting in positive social, emotional, and physical well-being.

The Need

Nationally, 33% of high school students report currently using alcohol and 22% using marijuana in the past 30 days.

What We Do

Our programs help youth engage in positive behaviors that nurture their well-being. Club members learn how to manage stress, demonstrate good teamwork, eat well, and keep physically fit.

Our Impact

Club 12th graders are **26%** more likely to abstain from alcohol than their peers nationally.

Education, Career Readiness & Leadership Development



Every young person deserves to be well prepared for life and career.

The Need

10% of young people in New Jersey fail to graduate from high school on time.²

What We Do

Clubs equip youth with the soft and hard skills they need to succeed in the workforce and create access to partnerships for real-life experiences to explore career options.

Our Impact

97% of Club teens expect to graduate on time and **86%** expect to attend college.

Equity & Inclusion



Every young person has the right to safe, positive and inclusive environments where everyone can reach their full potential.

The Need

Nationally, nearly 1 in 5 children live in poverty and 50% live in low-income families.

What We Do

Clubs champion opportunities for the unique challenges and circumstances in communities, while respecting and celebrating their strengths and cultures.

Our Impact

83% of Club members believe they can make a difference in their community.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
IN NEW JERSEY

For more information, please visit

www.bgcnj.org

¹ America After 3PM, Afterschool Alliance, <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>

² America After 3PM, Afterschool Alliance, <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>

³ America After 3PM, Afterschool Alliance, <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>

⁴ America After 3PM, Afterschool Alliance, <http://afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM/>

OUR PROMISE

TO SUPPORT
THOSE WHO
SUPPORT OUR
CHILDREN

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.

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with Auto
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Through NJCTL's innovative
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info@njctl.org

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTECTIONS DURING COVID-19

BY KAITLYN DUNPHY, ESQ.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, NJEA and its local associations have been advocating tirelessly to protect the health and safety of their members. Part of this advocacy has included seeking health and safety protections for members who are required to report to their worksite, and importantly, ways to enforce those protections in the event that they are not followed. As a result of those efforts and the similar efforts of organizations protecting workers' rights, Gov. Phil Murphy issued Executive Order 192 (EO 192) on Oct. 28, which became effective on Nov. 5.

The executive order requires employers to follow a litany of health and safety provisions, including a lot of state and federal guidance, that was, prior to this order, seen as advisory rather than mandatory. EO 192 makes clear that when there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the workplace, the employer must immediately isolate and send the individual home, clean and disinfect the worksite in accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, and promptly notify all employees of any known exposure, consistent with the confidentiality requirements of state and federal disability laws protecting medical privacy.

Additionally, EO 192 requires employers to provide sanitization materials at no cost to employees. This includes hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol and sanitizing wipes that are approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for use against the SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. They must

also provide time and access to adequate hand-washing facilities for employees throughout the workday. An employer who directs employees to wear gloves must also provide them.

EO 192 mandates employers to ensure that all high-touch areas, including employee equipment, are routinely cleaned and disinfected in accordance with New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) and CDC guidelines. Prior to each shift, employers are to conduct daily health checks, which can be in the form of temperature screenings, visual symptom checking, self-assessment checklists and/or health questionnaires done consistent with the requirements of state and federal law. Face coverings on the worksite are required by this and previous executive orders, with limited exceptions such as for medical reasons.

The most significant part of EO 192 is that it provides for an intake procedure to process and investigate complaints that employers are not following the health and safety regulations. The process is coordinated by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), the DOH, and Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH).

If you believe your employer is not following the requirements of EO 192, please reach out to your UniServ field representative for assistance. Public sector workers are directed to file complaints with DOLWD when the issue is safety related or to the DOH for health issues. If you are unsure which agency to submit the complaint to, submit complaints with both agencies and note that you are doing so when filing. Links to the forms are provided below. Signed complaints can be submitted by email, mail, or fax at the contact information provided in the sidebar.

Reporting for health complaints

Department of Health

Use this form:

nj.gov/health/forms/occ-57.pdf

Forward signed complaints/questions to:

New Jersey Department of Health
PEOSH

PO Box 369

Trenton, NJ 08625-0369

Phone: 609-984-1863

Fax: 609-984-2779

Email: peosh@doh.nj.gov

Reporting for safety complaints

Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Use this form: nj.gov/labor/forms_pdfs/lse/peoshcomp.pdf

Use this form for retaliation complaints: nj.gov/labor/forms_pdfs/lse/peoshdisc.pdf

Forward signed complaints/questions to:

New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Office of Public Employees Safety

PO Box 386

Trenton, NJ 08625-0381

Phone: 609-292-7036

Fax: 609-292-3749

Email: peosha@dol.nj.gov

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

NJEA Report

Princeton Fire Department offers public safety remote learning package

State encourages educators everywhere to take a look

The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety (DFS) encourages educators statewide to support a public safety initiative for educators that is being conducted in remote learning districts in Princeton Borough in Mercer County. The program informs educators about fire safety, cyber safety, mental health and child abuse.

The initiative came as a result of Princeton Fire Marshal Peggy Brookes' personal experience during a virtual Zoom learning session involving her son where she could hear the beeping sound of a low battery on a smoke detector. As a firefighter and fire marshal, Brookes' immediately contacted the teacher through the Zoom chat. The teacher heard the sound as well and was able to reach out to the family to solve the problem of the beeping smoke detector.

The teacher later contacted Brookes to ask what else she should look for since educators have a different view into their students' homes. As a result, the Remote Learning Safety Package for Educators was created. You can find a link to the package at the online version of this story at njea.org/remotesafety.

In addition to safety information about smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms, and cooking, the Remote Learning Safety Package also includes the following helpful tips:

- Cyber Safety – Secure hardware and implement password safety.
- Mental Health – Watch for drastic changes in behavior, changes in a child's appearance or withdrawn behaviors, which can be indications of abuse or mental health concerns.

- Child Abuse - Look out for any form of abuse (i.e. domestic violence, child abuse, bruises, cuts, marks or disclosures). Any of these signs are a cause for immediate concern and should be reported to 1-877-NJABUSE (652-2873). If you are not sure that the concern rises to the level of a report, the hotline is available to you 24/7 to simply ask the question.

In addition to the packet, the state recommends reviewing the following information, with links to each found at bit.ly/njdfsprinceton:

- #BridgeTheGap graphic for Educators and Healthcare Worker.
- #BridgeTheGap graphic for Educators, Social Workers, School Nurses and Guidance Counselors.
- QR Code to embed in lesson plans, Zoom Backgrounds, etc. that links to a hotlines graphic for teens and youth to reach out for help.
- Children's Mental Health One-Sheet.
- Teen Mental Health Graphic.
- Mental Health Tips for the Minority Community.
- GBTQIA Youth Mental Health Resources.
- Managing Stress and Anxiety in Youth.

Legal cases challenge pre-Janus agency fees

Since the U.S. Supreme Court's 2018 decision in *Janus v. AFSCME*, public-sector unions, including NJEA and other NEA affiliates, have faced several legal challenges seeking the return of agency fees paid prior to the *Janus* decision. Agency fees were collected from employees in a bargaining unit who chose not to join the association. Those fees covered the costs of collective bargaining, contract enforcement and other services from which the nonunion employees benefited even though they did not join the union. The *Janus* decision prohibited public-sector unions from collecting these fees.

So far, unions have been successful across the board in defending against these claims, relying on a good faith defense—that in collecting agency fees, they relied on the state of the law at the time, which permitted the collection of such fees at the time they were collected.

Though many applications to hear this issue have been filed with the Supreme Court of the United States, none have been granted by the court at the time of this writing. Most recently, in October 2020, the court declined to take the case of *Reisman v. Associated Faculties of University of Maine*, which

addressed the constitutionality of the exclusive representation principle.

There are a series of related cases that address whether agency fee payers are entitled to a refund of unions dues they paid before the Supreme Court decided *Janus v. AFSCME*. The court is considering whether it will grant applications to hear these appeals.

There are two related cases in New Jersey, *Smith v. NJEA et al.* and *Fischer v. Township of Ocean EA et al.*, in which the court found that the union dues authorizations signed by the plaintiffs in that case were valid and enforceable contracts. The court also found that NJEA and the local affiliates named as defendants in the case collected representation fees from fee payers in good-faith reliance on the law in effect at the time and declined to award plaintiffs return of their agency fees collected prior to the *Janus* decision.

Those cases are on appeal to the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. A decision is expected in the coming months.

Penns Grove-Carneys Point members take a stand for student safety



A PGCPRESE member alerts the community to concerns over COVID-19 issues in the schools.

On Nov. 25, the Penns Grove-Carneys Point Regional School Employees Association (PGCPRESE) stood up for student, educator and community safety by rallying outside of Penns Grove Middle School. The educators wore masks and personal protective equipment (PPE), practiced social distancing, and held signs that read, "Our school is not safe." The members wanted the community to be aware of the school district's many problems that put students, staff, families and the community at risk.

While there has been a wide array of problems in school districts across the state this fall, those issues facing the members of the PGCPRESE are

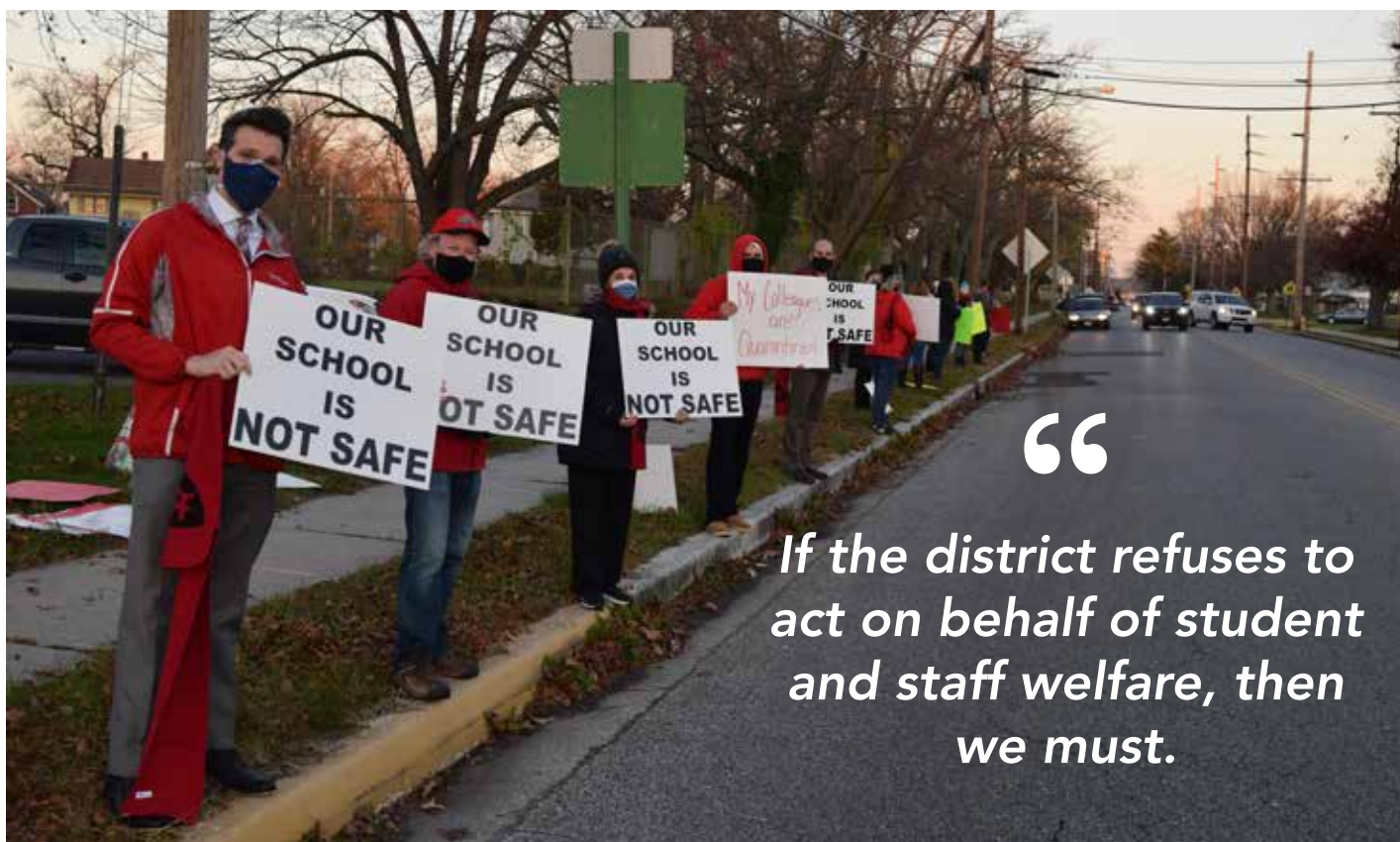
particularly egregious, including:

- The district has let positive COVID-19 cases in the school go unreported to close contacts.
- The staff members have been threatened with discipline if they share that they have tested positive for the novel coronavirus.
- The staff has been denied the ability to work from home when needed, which has led to instances of more than 60 students in virtual classes and the lack of important student services.

"Your presence here is so important because it means you will no longer stand by as we watch our school district engage in dangerous behaviors," said PGCPRESE President Amy Tighe. "Our students, our community, and we deserve better. There can be no greater priority to a school district than student and staff safety. Sadly, our district has failed us and, even worse, they've failed our students."

The PGCPRESE called for the Penns Grove-Carney's Point Regional School District to shift to an all-remote learning environment until the number of cases in the community decreases, and the district addresses its many misguided policies.

"Here in Penns Grove-Carney Point, it's time to change course," concluded Tighe. "We must do our part to prevent more unnecessary spread of this insidious virus. If the district refuses to act on behalf of student and staff welfare, then we must. We will keep fighting for the safety of the students who attend our schools even when the school district won't. We're taking a stand for student safety, and we will do whatever it takes."



“

If the district refuses to act on behalf of student and staff welfare, then we must.

Bring your innovative ideas to life with an **NJEA HIPP GRANT**
HELP YOUR STUDENTS ACHIEVE GREATNESS!



*Grants of \$500 to \$10,000
are available from the NJEA
Frederick L. Hipp Foundation
for Excellence in Education.*



Visit njea.org/Hipp for a grant application and tips for applying.

APPLICATION DEADLINE IS MARCH 1, 2021.

NJDOE adopts temporary rule modification for edTPA

On Nov. 30, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) adopted a temporary rule modification affecting certification requirements for completion of performance assessments. The flexibility applies to New Jersey certification candidates who have or will have met all other requirements before the flexibility expires. The rule modification will expire at the end of the semester in which the public health emergency ends.

Full details about the rule modification may be found by visiting bit.ly/edtparulenj1130.

Before the rule modification, candidates for a Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing (CEAS) and candidates for Standard Certification who hold a Certificate of Eligibility (CE), were required to complete and pass edTPA, the state-approved performance assessment. The Nov. 30 rule modification provides for flexibility for some candidates to meet performance assessment requirements using alternative measures as detailed below.

- Candidates applying for a CEAS who are able to complete the edTPA in the usual manner with national scoring shall be required to do so. If a candidate is enrolled in a state-approved educator preparation program as of Sept. 1, 2020, and the program provider determines, on a case-by-case basis, that a teacher candidate is unable to complete the edTPA but has met all other requirements for the CEAS, the provider may submit to the NJDOE for approval an alternative measure to demonstrate readiness to teach.
- CE provisional teachers applying for a standard certificate who are able to complete the edTPA in the usual manner with national scoring shall be required to do so. If a candidate is enrolled in a state-approved educator preparation program as of Sept. 1, 2020, and the program

provider determines, on a case-by-case basis, that a teacher candidate is unable to complete the edTPA but has met all other requirements for the standard certificate, the provider may submit to the NJDOE for approval an alternative measure to demonstrate readiness to teach.

- Certificate of Eligibility through Reciprocity (CE-R) teachers applying for a standard certificate who meet all other standard certification requirements shall be exempt from the performance assessment requirement during the COVID-19 public health emergency and must demonstrate readiness to teach via teacher evaluations completed pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-8.6.

Candidates who are unable to complete the edTPA in the usual manner should contact their educator preparation program to discuss alternative options.

Candidates who wish to withdraw their edTPA registration, should carefully check Pearson's withdrawal and refund policies found by visiting edtpa.com, clicking on "Candidates," and selecting "Candidate Policies."

This rule modification also allows state-approved teacher leader preparation programs to alternatively assess candidates for the teacher leader endorsement in lieu of a commissioner-approved teacher leader performance assessment.

NJDOE CONTACT INFORMATION

For certification questions, contact licensing.requests@doe.nj.gov.

For performance assessment questions and preparation program questions, contact rpr@doe.nj.gov.

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How to *write* for the NJEA Review

WHAT CAN I SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION?

Feature article

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

Letter to the editor

Respond to content that has appeared in the *Review* by submitting a letter to the editor that is about 250 words or less. A letter/email must be received by the 10th of the month in order for it to appear in the subsequent issue (e.g., Sept. 10 for the October *Review*).

Quick tip

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

Speak out

This occasional column lets members opine about a hot topic in education. If you have strong feelings about a current issue that would be of interest to other members, speak out in an essay of 650 words or less.

I Am NJEA

Are you involved in a local, county or state association activity such as a workshop, a rally, a meeting, a protest or other event? Consider snapping a few photos to be considered for this page, which consists primarily of photos and captions of members engaged in association activities. Make sure your local president is informed if you are sending photos from local association events and activities.

Proud moments

Has your local association used Pride funds to promote our great public schools? Send a brief description and your best photo to ProudMoments@njea.org.

Toolbox

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

HOW DO I SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION?

Submitting content

Email submissions to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to include your name and contact information, the name of your district and what you do there, the name of your local association, as well as the name and contact information of your local association president. Submissions for the Proud Moments page can be sent to proudmoments@njea.org.

The review process

You will receive an email acknowledging receipt of your submission, but the review process can take several weeks. Please be patient; the editor will get back to you and let you know if we will use your submission. You may be asked to revise the piece but will be given specific suggestions on what needs to be changed.

If your submission is not accepted for publication in the *Review*, don't be discouraged! While your article may not be right for the *Review*, it may be appropriate for another publication. All submissions, even letters to the editor, may be edited for length, style and content.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH ASSET-BASED THINKING IN EDUCATION

BY JACYNTH JOHNSON

When you think of impoverished communities, wealth is not a term that readily comes to mind. Overpopulation, struggle, violence, and lack of resources are just a few words that rise to the top of a mental list. But what if I told you that these impoverished, indigenous and minority communities possess great wealth that cannot be quantified by society's standards nor stripped away by power, position or prestige?

Have you ever watched the news and wondered how communities are able to rebuild and find hope after tragedy? Have you ever encountered a person humbled by life's circumstances but walked away from the conversation filled with great insight and joy? Or read an article about a young child who has triumphed over their obstacles and now uses their story and influence to help other youth?

Wealth is the common thread.

Wealth can be defined as the accumulation of assets and those who are wealthy focus on investing.

Wealth can be passed down from generation to generation and creates resilience, innovation, pride and strategy for Black, Indigenous and People of Color and their communities.

Community cultural wealth gives language to the richness of a legacy passed down through shared stories, letters, books, traditions, songs, and art.

We are wealthy people: People worthy of respect, recognition, life and honor. Recognizing your own capital is a vital step in being able to recognize wealth in others and in your students.

Jacynth Johnson is a part-time NJEA professional development consultant and an NJEA REAL Movement member. Johnson is a middle school supervisor in Montgomery Township School District. She can be reached at jajohnson@njea.org.



Through the REAL Movement sessions at our Summer Leadership Conference, the NJEA Convention, and our Inclusion Learning Labs, we have started to explore and unpack the community cultural wealth (CCW) framework in ways that make visible the boundless cultural wealth that we bring to the table.

The REAL learning journey is not a discussion about bias. The purpose is not shame or blame. It is an intentional movement-building endeavor that aims to shift our collective thinking within the CCW framework and asset-based thinking to lift up the value and cultural capital that Black, Indigenous and People of Color bring to professional spaces that ultimately influence how we view the cultural wealth that our students of color bring into our schools.

Do you want to learn more? Sign up for email updates on the latest events at real.njea.org and keep an eye out for the launch of our CCW Conversation Series in 2021 on learning.njea.org.



On July 25, Jacynth Johnson, along with the A.W.A.R.E Team of Plainfield and North Plainfield, took to the streets of Plainfield to march against racism that arises in our community and schools. Plainfield Mayor Adrian O. Mapp was the keynote speaker and marched with the community.

POWER LITERACY FOR EDUCATORS

Talk it and walk it

BY FATIMAH HAYES

As a social studies teacher for 19 years in the Pennsauken Public School District and as former president of the Pennsauken Education Association, I've always had a love/hate relationship with power. Some may find it hard to believe that. But even while standing in the most powerful position of my local association, and being the first Black woman to do so, I was reluctant to embrace my own power. I often questioned the power that came with the position.

My trepidation came from witnessing the rampant abuse of power displayed day in and day out, from the White House to the schoolhouse. In fact, if I truly reflect upon it, for the majority of my life I saw power used to manipulate, oppress, deny folk access, and ultimately strip people of their humanity.

In school settings this abuse of power shows up in many different ways. You can see it in the decisions made in the recruitment, hiring and retention of teachers of color, upholding discipline policies and practices that are oppressive, the intentional segregation of student populations, the widening of economic and academic disparities during remote learning, and ultimately in forcing teachers and staff into school buildings that are unsafe during a pandemic. Because I have witnessed the ways in which power can harm, it was something that I shied away from.

SOUL SEARCHING

In 2019, I was asked to co-facilitate a workshop called "Power to the People of the Global Majority" with my union comrade, Gabriel Tanglao, during the NEA Minority and Women's Leadership Training Conference. This work made me look at the multifaceted dimensions of power; my own power as well as collective power. The famous author, Alice Walker, says, "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Had I given up my power because I refused to accept it as my birthright? How do I stand before

a group of educators and tell them how powerful they are when I have yet to recognize the power within me? I had some soul-searching to do.

I started with what I knew to be true; the very words of affirmation that I utter to my students on almost a daily basis. My constant reminders to them that they alone are enough and that they bring myriad talents and gifts into our classroom. I had recognize the community and cultural wealth that I bring to this work. These gems are often diminished and marginalized in our society, but I know they keep me uplifted.

I looked at my family and our strong ties to unionism. I tapped into the genius of the ancestors who laid the blueprint for the work that I was embarking upon. I revisited the organizing genius of Fannie Lou Hamer and Ella Baker.

I discovered the contemporary works of Dr. Bettina Love and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad. When I looked up from those books I found myself in spaces surrounded by powerful educators, unionists and community organizers who reminded me of my greatness and the power that I possess.

DISMANTLING UNJUST SYSTEMS OF POWER

During this discovery of my own power, I continually faced the challenge of how to disrupt and dismantle the perversions of power that were all around me. I had to examine how when we are so often confronted with individuals, systems, and institutions that abuse power, we think there's nothing we can do, that the challenge is too great, and that the retribution will be long lasting.

I know that this type of thinking is shortsighted. In these moments, we've forgotten how much power we yield as a collective. Appeasement and compliance in the face of the oppressor is never the answer; history has shown us that. Mahatma Gandhi explains this perfectly: "Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment."

The absence of love in the power dynamic is what made me fearful of power. With that clarity and understanding I now knew the kind of leader I was and wanted to be in and outside of the classroom.

It's beautiful the way the universe works. A simple invitation sparked an awareness and a realization of my power. Being in community with NJEA members all across this state reminded me of the collective power that WE possess. In that invitation I gained a sense of my own power and I haven't looked back.

Fatimah Hayes is a history teacher at Pennsauken High School. She is a former president of the Pennsauken Education Association and currently serves PEA as the coordinator of the Families and Schools Together Work for Children (FAST) program. Hayes is chair of the NJEA Women in Education Committee and a UniServ consultant in the Region 3 office. She can be reached at fhayes@njea.org.

Fatimah Hayes speaking at the 2020 NJEA Equity Alliance Conference.



There is power in stories, power in language, power in joy and power in teaching. NJEA has committed to building a movement for racial equity, affirmation and literacy called the REAL Movement. Any successful movement for justice is centered on the collective power of the people.

As we focus our energy on the well-being and growth of our students and communities, it is clear that we must also build our capacity for understanding our individual and collective power in ways that allow us to reshape the systems, structures, policies, practices and school culture to be more inclusive, equitable and liberatory.

This is why we invite you to join one of our power conversations at the upcoming events:

- REAL Inclusion Learning Lab Sessions at the Equity Alliance Conference
◦ Register – njea.org/eac
- REAL Movement-Building Session at any Winter Leadership Conference
◦ Register - njea.org/wlc2021
- REAL Organizer's Lounge (a.k.a. "O.L. School") Power Series in March
◦ Registration to be announced at real.njea.org



MEET ANGEL SANTIAGO

New Jersey's Rock 'N' Roll State Teacher of the Year

By Kathryn Coulibaly

On the first day of his teaching career eight years ago, and every first day of school since, Angel Santiago greets his fifth-grade students in a classroom decorated with posters of musical legends: Quincy Jones, Aretha Franklin, Clive Davis, Nikki Minaj, and the band Days Like These.

If you haven't heard of Days Like These, then you clearly missed the late '90s, early 2000s music scene in the southern New Jersey and greater Philadelphia area. Days Like These was Santiago's band; he was the lead singer. He and his bandmates signed a recording contract, put out two albums, and toured for years before deciding to move on to other interests.

For a lot of people, that moving on part is difficult. Who wouldn't give their chance at a rock 'n' roll career everything they had? But for Santiago, another calling beckoned him, one that had been instilled in him as a sixth grader growing up in Vineland by a very influential teacher, Mark Melamed.

"I always wanted to be a teacher," Santiago remembers. "I had great teachers throughout my entire public school career. I came up through the Vineland Public School system, and I had teachers such as Mark Melamed who founded the Gabriel Project in Vineland. He guided me, without my even knowing, into a career that was kind of made for me."

Melamed's Gabriel Project was featured on NJEA's "Classroom Close-up NJ" in 1996. He founded the program when he visited Tanzania and met a child, Gabriel, who needed heart surgery but was unable to access it in his

home country. Melamed formed partnerships with Deborah Heart and Lung Center and worked with his students to raise funds to provide Gabriel with the surgery. After months of fundraising, Melamed learned that Gabriel had passed away. In his honor, Melamed and his students decided to continue their fundraising in order to give another child a chance at life. They went on to help 17 children and their families access vital health services, including travel expenses.

"Mark Melamed changed my life," Santiago says. "He became a member of my family. The sense of volunteerism he instilled in me and my classmates has never left me. He made me think that I could be more than just a kid in Vineland, or a kid in New Jersey; that I was a force for the world and I was meant to be part of the world community."

YOUNG PEOPLE OF CHARACTER

In 2013, Mark Melamed passed away from pancreatic cancer after a long battle. It was devastating, but Santiago and Melamed's brother, Ken, worked hard to keep the Gabriel Project going. Ultimately, there were just too many obstacles for them to overcome, but Santiago took the spirit of the Gabriel Project into his work with the students of Gloucester Township's Loring Flemming Elementary School in Camden County. Santiago created a program called Young People of Character (YPOC).

"YPOC is my ode to Mark Melamed," Santiago says. "The pillars of YPOC are love of self, love of community, love of school and love of family. These were the traits that Mark instilled in his students."

YPOC is primarily a service club for Loring Flemming's students. They do a variety of activities, including writing letters to veterans, but the largest

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

“

He made me think that I could be more than just a kid in Vineland, or a kid in New Jersey; that I was a force for the world and I was meant to be part of the world community.



Santiago credits Vineland teacher, Mark Melamed (center), with inspiring him to become a teacher. From left: Brad Harrison, Melamed, and Santiago.

On the day of his announcement as NJ State Teacher of the Year, Santiago posed with NJEA President Marie Blistan, 2019-20 NJSTOY Kimberly Dickstein Hughes, 2003-04 NJSTOY Diane Cummins, 2014-15 NJSTOY Kathy Assini, and NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller.





Santiago and his wife, Kourtney, a special education teacher in Bridgeton, are the proud parents of son Cruze, 3.

“I wonder what opportunities or conversations I missed out on because I didn’t have a teacher who looked like me.”

service project of the year is held on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January.

“The Gloucester Township community does a great job of lifting up our children and doing a lot to support them socially and academically,” Santiago says. “The Dr. King Day of Service is a communitywide event. We wear our green YPOC shirts so everyone knows who we are and what we’re about. All of the schools in Gloucester Township participate. In the past, we have made more than a thousand peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the homeless in our community. These kinds of activities really bind us together. The only way a community can be successful is to work together and to do things to better the community as a unit.”

REACHING STUDENTS AT A CRITICAL AGE

Santiago sees fifth and sixth grades as pivotal years in his students’ lives. He remembers that he was in sixth grade when he met Melamed.

“Students at that age are still extremely curious about the world, facts, and history, but they are also very conscious about what people think of them, so it can be interesting to navigate academic and social obstacles with them. We’re trying to help them achieve academic success while maintaining a positive self-image.”

The challenges of remote learning have made it difficult to provide the kind of emotional support for his students that Santiago knows they need.

“I try to keep the schedule the same as much as possible,” Santiago says. “I want to give them a sense of normalcy as much as possible.”

But having your teacher named the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year is not actually normal.

“There’s definitely added pressure now with being the Teacher of the Year and teaching on Zoom,” Santiago laughs. “I am hyper-aware of what I’m saying and doing. I don’t want my students’ parents to wonder why I’m the teacher of the year!”

DIVERSIFYING THE TEACHER WORKFORCE

As the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year, Santiago is committed to working on projects with education stakeholders to diversify the teacher workforce in New Jersey.

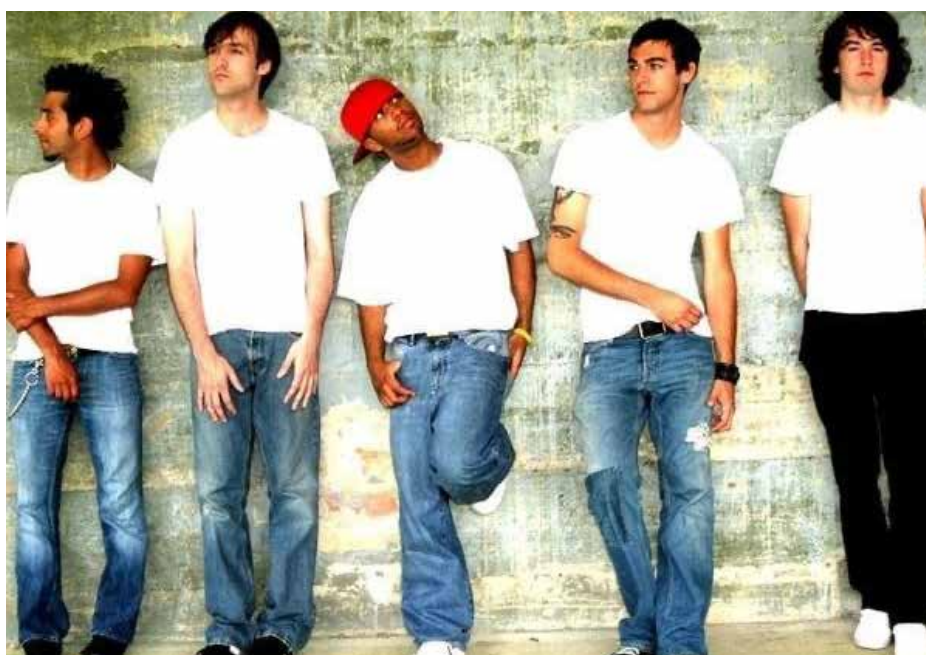
“The events of the past year have changed me,” Santiago says. “Looking back, I realize that the first Black male teacher I had was Mr. Street in sixth grade. I never had a Latin male teacher, although I did have Latin female teachers. It didn’t affect me at the time, but now, looking back, I wonder what opportunities or conversations I missed out on because I didn’t have a teacher who looked like me.”

Santiago is already working with the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) to learn as much as he can about education policy. He has found that remote meetings have actually enabled him to participate in many more meetings and engage with a wider swathe of people than he would have been able to in person.

“Every day after school, I’m in an NJEA meeting, a DOE meeting,” Santiago says. “I’m also being mentored by the past teachers of the year. I’ve gotten to meet a lot of people who have great ideas. I want people to know that I’m here to make a difference. We have the goal of diversifying the teacher



Hear more from Santiago in this NJEA Review exclusive video at njea.org/STOYAngelSantiago.



Days Like These band members. From left: Angel Santiago, Rusty Langley, Ron Segers, Brad Harrison, and Derrick Miller (Christopher Applegate & Mark Hooven are not pictured).



Santiago and his mother, Lillian Rivera, at his graduation from Farleigh Dickinson University in 2012.

workforce and making education an attractive career for people of color, but we need to take practical steps. We're looking at the obstacles now and trying to identify ways to remove them. I believe the alternate route to teaching program and our excellent community college system will be instrumental in addressing this issue."

Santiago is a proud graduate of Cumberland County College.

"I spent years after leaving my band in professional jobs," Santiago says. "I was a housing inspector for a few years so I could afford to go to college to be a teacher. I made good money as a housing inspector, but I always knew I wanted to be a teacher."

Santiago attended Cumberland County College while working full time in order to transition to a career in education. He was leaning toward becoming a high school history teacher but he was influenced by Dr. Donna Bender, the head of the education department at the college. She urged him to look into elementary education. She thought he would be a good fit for the job with his energy and personality, and she recognized that his students would benefit from having a male role model in the classroom.

"There are a lot of children who are growing up without a male role model," Santiago says. "Having a male teacher in the elementary grades can have a huge impact on them, especially if it's someone who looks like them."

A CAREER IN GLOUCESTER TOWNSHIP

Santiago went on to graduate from Farleigh Dickinson University. He worked full time while juggling school and student teaching. In 2012, he got his first position in Lindenwold and moved to Gloucester Township in 2013, where he hopes to remain.

"Gloucester Township is like family to me," Santiago says. "I know how much my colleagues love and appreciate me just based on the baby shower they threw for my wife, Kourtney, and I when we were preparing to welcome our son, Cruze. And in the fall, despite COVID, they organized to safely celebrate me being named the New Jersey state teacher of the year with a car parade that included our local law enforcement and other community members. For me, it's an honor and a privilege to teach at Loring Flemming."

Santiago's wife, Kourtney is a special education teacher in Bridgeton, and their son Cruze is already saying he wants to be a teacher like his parents, even though he is only three.

His entire family is proud of him for being named the district teacher of the year, Camden County Teacher of the Year, and now New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

"Growing up, my mother always had high expectations for what I could achieve," Santiago says. "But I don't think it really hit her what this meant until the event at school. When she saw the car parade and heard the speeches, I think it really hit home for her."

Santiago and some of his colleagues at Loring Flemming Elementary School in Gloucester Township.



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.

"Being named the New Jersey State Teacher of the Year is an honor and a privilege, especially in New Jersey," Santiago says. "We are the best state in the nation for education, which is awe-inspiring. It's awesome to share this experience with my wife, who is my biggest cheerleader. But it doesn't stop here. Next year, I'm going back to the classroom with the same mentality. This is an honor, but it's not the pinnacle. I don't ever want to become obsolete. I stay up with pop culture and I do all the Tik Tok dances to stay up to date with my kids."

Santiago also provides them with a much-needed musical education. Those posters in his classroom? On the first day of school, they only recognize Nikki Minaj, but well before the end of the year, they are well-versed in the musical giants in their classroom, including Angel Santiago. 🎵



Student members of Young People of Character (YPOC), a service club initiated by Santiago, make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the homeless in Gloucester Township and surrounding communities

SUPPORTING STUDENTS' EMOTIONAL NEEDS THROUGH

the Arts

By Dawn Hiltner and Phillip Pallitto

As school districts grapple with the challenges of modified school schedules because of the coronavirus pandemic, arts education is too often falling by the wayside.

Some school districts are assigning arts educators to assist with general education instruction or to serve as hall monitors. While many arts educators are happy to help their students and colleagues, they are not necessarily certified to teach content outside their arts subject areas. The time arts educators are assigned outside the scope of their certificates could impinge on seniority rights and teacher tenure, placing them in an untenable situation, particularly if they are not trained in content-specific programs and expectations.

One of the strengths of New Jersey's schools, and the reason they consistently rank among the best in the country, is our state's commitment to robust, inclusive curricula. Through the

pandemic, some districts have eliminated or minimized arts education to meet social distancing requirements or because they believe music and arts classes are unsafe or cannot be taught virtually.

Eliminating or minimizing arts education is not only problematic from an educational and mental health point of view, it can also cause the school district to become out of compliance with student learning standards. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards provide broad guidance on what curricula should cover and what students should learn in the core areas—including visual and performing arts. Those standards have not been waived and are still required even if a school day is abbreviated or lessons are conducted virtually.

In times of uncertainty, the arts provide students with a therapeutic means of expressing their fears, anxiety and grief. The psychological benefits of arts education are essential for students' social-emotional well-being. For many students, the arts are what excite them about school, what motivates them to attend, and what allows them to explore the world around them.

The arts also play a vital role in social-emotional learning (SEL). SEL helps students learn self-awareness, social awareness, and decision-making skills. The arts provide a more authentic outlet for students to express themselves and explore their emotions in a constructive, emotional way. Arts classes, either in-person or online, can provide a safe space for our students

to express their fears and anxiety around this pandemic without judgment.

ADVOCATING FOR ARTS EDUCATION

So how do arts educators best advocate for themselves and their students in this uncertain environment? The most direct recommendation is home-grown advocacy for the arts with the support of content-area teaching colleagues. Arts education is just as valuable to content area and special education teachers. By working together, we can integrate the arts into the curriculum and give our students a more robust experience.

Teaching arts related to and alongside the content areas during scheduled classes can also help alleviate the pressure on classroom teachers who are feeling overwhelmed by the demands of virtual instruction.

For a unit on the Holocaust, for example, my students read *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas*, and *Night* by Ellie Wiesel. We watched "The Sound of Music," which integrated the arts and enabled us to ease into a discussion of the ways non-Jewish children were affected by the Holocaust. The students wrote poetry to express how they were feeling and created artwork to represent the different points of view children experienced during the Holocaust.

Additionally, the biggest celebration of students' cultures is through arts. Culturally responsive teaching is important for our students' growth, and an excellent tool to build respect and rapport with students. Too often they are not

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Phillip Pallitto is the 2019-20 Atlantic County Teacher of the Year. An arts integration specialist and middle school English language arts teacher in Somers Point, Pallitto has directed nearly 30 school plays and musicals in the district. He can be reached at philsaddress@msn.com.

exposed to the arts. We look at all the district initiatives and curricula and embrace and infuse culturally responsive pedagogy, as researched, for example, by Zaretta Hammond, author of *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*.

School districts that are short on space or time could arrange for arts educators to teach their content areas across multigrade classes, if that can be accomplished safely under current restrictions. The district could also use open areas such as outdoor spaces, cafeterias, or gymnasiums so that arts teachers could continue to conduct music or arts classes in rooms without walls.

Online arts instruction gives teachers the opportunity to engage students in a multitude of ways. Arts education can explore themes that run through visual arts, music, and literature. Students can collaborate online to produce virtual concerts, theatrical productions, and art shows.

RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUMENTAL AND VOCAL MUSIC

For those districts with in-person or hybrid plans, it's also important to use scientific findings when planning instrumental and vocal music classes. While there have been a few news stories questioning the safety of playing wind instruments and singing, information from a

major study out of the University of Colorado addresses these issues.

The study examined aerosol rates produced by wind instrumentalists, vocalists, and even actors, and best practices for reducing infection risk. By following some simple mitigation strategies both instrumental and vocal music may be scheduled for students' participation.

The key points include:

- **Masks** – Teachers and students (including vocalists and actors) should wear properly fitting masks at all times. The bells of instruments should also be fitted with masks. Instrumentalists should have masks with a small opening to accommodate the mouth piece.
- **Social Distancing** – Students maintain social distance based on CDC guidelines (6 feet).
- **Proper Hygiene** – Proper hand-washing, cleaning of instruments and facilities should be followed.
- **Time** – Indoor rehearsals should not exceed 30 minutes with 15 minutes between the use of the same room (for proper air exchange).

- **Ventilation** – Rooms should be properly ventilated to have an air change rate of 3 or greater for indoor rehearsals. Outdoor rehearsal is encouraged when possible.

To follow the study, visit bit.ly/artsedcovid.

As New Jersey's public schools continue another school year under the pandemic, the safety of our students and staff must be paramount. That being said, students still deserve a comprehensive, high quality school experience that includes arts education. In times of stress and uncertainty, students need a safe, constructive outlet for expression and social emotional health. Arts education is the answer. 🎨



TEACHERS IN CLASSROOMS DRINKING coffee

BY ANGEL BOOSE



Educators around the state honored as county teachers of the year serve as spokespersons and ambassadors for the profession. Leah Jerome, the 2019-20 Bergen County Teacher of the Year, pondered what she could do in her role to amplify the voices of the teachers in Bergen County and honor what they were doing in their classrooms.

Jerome knows firsthand how precious time is to a teacher. She didn't want to ask them to give of their time and share their expertise without offering them something. Jerry Seinfeld's "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee" came to mind.

"What better way to engage in conversations with teachers than over a cup of coffee?" Jerome thought.

As a history teacher, Jerome learned that some of the world's greatest revolutions had been born out of conversations started in coffeehouses. The English coffeehouses and French salons were the birthplace of Enlightenment thinking. She knew intellectual thought and discourse brew over a cup of coffee. Unlike other adult beverages that distort the thought process, coffee sharpens it and facilitates dialogue when shared between two

people. In that spirit, her project Teachers in Classrooms Drinking Coffee was created.

MISSION 76

As the Bergen County Teacher of the Year, Jerome felt she should know what was going on in Bergen County's schools. Now it was time to figure out the logistics. How could she execute meeting with teachers in each of the county's 76 districts? She was determined to make it happen, calling it Mission 76.

Jerome did the math, realizing how expensive it might be to purchase a cup of coffee for herself and each of the teachers she would interview. She thought, "\$3 per person, 76 districts... this could get costly!" She contacted Dunkin' for assistance and they gave a generous donation to sponsor her project. She is grateful, she said, to the company for their support of public education.

Choosing which teachers to select for the project was a bit of a puzzle for Jerome. She chose teachers she knew personally and some noted in newspapers or other publications and websites. Some teachers reached out to her expressing interest once they learned about the project from other participants.

Jerome worked with her former principal at Pascack Valley High School, Thomas DeMaio, who was an integral part of helping her recruit teachers and refining the project.

Angel Boose is a third-grade teacher at the Benjamin Banneker Academy in the East Orange School District. She is the vice president of the East Orange Education Association and an NJEA Communications Consultant. Boose represents Essex County on the NJEA Women in Education Committee.



2019-20 Bergen County Teacher of the Year Leah Jerome launched Mission 76 to interview a teacher in every one of the county's 76 school districts. (Photo by Kelly Kultys, Fordham University)

Prior to the pandemic, 2019-20 Bergen County Teacher of the Year Leah Jerome interviewed Roselle Park teacher Tara Mizzoni. Interviews after the pandemic were conducted virtually. (Photo by Kelly Kultys, Fordham University)



“As a history teacher, Jerome learned that some of the world’s greatest revolutions had been born out of conversations started in coffeehouses.”

“I was excited about us coming up with an idea that would highlight Bergen County,” said DeMaio. He knew the project would also be a great opportunity for Jerome to showcase how dynamic she is and to share what she does with other teachers around the county.

In order to complete the 76 interviews, Jerome met with teachers around the county before school, during preparation periods or lunch times, and after school, always bringing them their choice of brew. During each interview Jerome was enlightened, learning about the wonderful things teachers were doing.

One of the interviews was with Kristen Lindstrom of Pascack Valley High School, the school where Jerome currently teaches. Lindstrom conducted a beekeeping project that Jerome believed deserved recognition. If it were not for her coffee project, she wouldn’t have known about it.

Tara Skiba, an English teacher at Hackensack High School learned about the project through Twitter.

“I saw someone else post about the project,” Skiba said. “I thought it was so cool, and I emailed Leah to take part in it.”

In her interview, Skiba spoke about a new course she designed called “Exploring Sports Literature,” which is offered to seniors as a part of their English requirement. Students get a lot of literary choice in something called a book tasting. Skiba also spoke about teaching a Career in Education course for future educators. She was so inspired by Jerome’s project that

she used it in her classroom, for the remainder of the school year as a tool. Skiba stressed, “What she’s doing is not only inspiring teachers, she’s also inspiring future generations of teachers as well.”

“I’ve known Leah Jerome professionally for some time and have always had tremendous respect for her as a teacher” said Dayna Orlak, social studies teacher/coordinator of gifted programs at Waldwick High School.

Jerome asked Orlak to take part in the project because of her work with TeachRock, created by an organization called the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation, started by Steven Van Zandt. Orlak travels around the world teaching curriculum so that nonmusic teachers can learn to incorporate music into their classrooms. Since working with TeachRock she has traveled with Van Zandt and his band throughout Europe, visiting 16 cities in 10 different countries. It’s been a great networking opportunity for her and she encourages other teachers to learn more about it at teachrock.org.

Daniel Willever, social studies teacher and Mock Trial/History Club adviser at Ramsey High School said Jerome reached out to him after seeing that he won the Milken Educator Award. He was a recipient in 2019. The Milken Educator Awards is an educator recognition program in the United States that provides unrestricted grants of \$25,000 to teachers who demonstrate excellence and show tremendous promise in the profession.

Willever agreed to an interview with Jerome because they both wanted to elevate and celebrate good teachers. It was a bonus that they immediately

connected because of their common role as social studies teachers and fed off each other's energy.

"Leah is someone with such positive energy about teaching and social studies, that it was easy to engage in a conversation about teaching practices and promoting quality history education," said Willever.

PANDEMIC MOVES MISSION 76 TO A VIRTUAL SPACE

Although the original plan for conducting her project was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Jerome was able to accomplish Mission 76. The existence of virtual meeting spaces allowed her to interview one teacher in each of Bergen County's 76 school districts. Jerome may not have been able to physically meet with each teacher, but she was still able to enjoy a cup of coffee and conversation with them in the virtual meeting space.

Everyone who worked with Jerome to complete the project noted how dynamic and caring she is.

"Leah genuinely cares for kids," DeMaio said. "Kids sense those things. She is one of those teachers whom kids are drawn to. The way she teaches instills humanity, and the kids are enamored with it."

Jerome's caring nature extended into her interviews.

"Leah asked thoughtful questions and was really invested in all of the interviews," Skiba said. "She was everyone's cheerleader."

Although Orlak is older than Jerome, she shared that she looks up to her. "Her project was so brilliant because it highlights things teachers are doing that do not get press. There are so many amazing educators around Bergen County who aren't recognized," said Orlak. "She chose people who had interesting things to share and say."


Jerome realizes teachers aren't in the business of celebrating themselves and don't realize how the things they do can greatly benefit other teachers,

when shared. She wants educators to think about sharing what they are doing as a means of helping one another.

A LARGER STORY

A modest Jerome says her efforts reflect a larger story—a great group of educators who thought to support teachers and amplify their voices. She thanks her cohort, the 20 other educators who were also county teachers of the year.

"They were very inspiring and supportive," said Jerome. "We worked together and supported each other all year."

Teachers in Classrooms Drinking Coffee was Jerome's tribute to the teachers of Bergen County and a gift to educators everywhere. To see the interviews and learn about more of the amazing things going on in Bergen County schools, visit Jerome's website teachersinclassroomsdrinkingcoffee.weebly.com. 

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Jerome realizes teachers aren't in the business of celebrating themselves and don't realize how the things they do can greatly benefit other teachers.



GREAT TEACHERS MAKE GREAT TEACHERS

We need you to help us prepare great future educators

By Kristen Hawley Turner, Eileen Heddy and Leyone Royster



2018-19 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year
Jennifer Skomial introduces the teaching profession to
potential future educators. This is her class in 2018.



At the 2019 NJEA Preservice Conference: Kaylynn Millien (l) and Jocelyn Tapia.

We need you.

As representatives of teacher preparation programs across the Garden State, we write this article with a simple message: we cannot educate the next generation of teachers without you.

There is no question that this year has been the most challenging of our careers. From an overnight shutdown last spring to the uncertainty of opening schools in virtual and hybrid modes this fall, our work as educators has forced us into uncharted waters.

Do any of these things sound familiar?

- You were forced to suddenly teach remotely without enough time and training for implementation.
- You worried about students who disappeared.
- You struggled to reach learners.
- You were frustrated by technologies that were new, different or limiting.
- You had to teach students online and in the classroom at the same time.
- You were exhausted, emotionally and physically, before you and your students could even find your footing in the new school year.
- Your colleague—or colleagues—next door or down the hall retired or resigned.

2020 has brought us new challenges. Yet, there are things that remain the same. We must do all we can to educate the children of New Jersey, and to do that, we must prepare the next generation of teachers who can step into vacant roles and become great teachers.

We need you to help us prepare these future teachers.

As you think back on your own student teaching experience, you likely remember your cooperating teacher, who opened their classroom to you, shared their expertise, and served as a supportive mentor. Student teaching has changed a lot in New Jersey in the last five years. Teacher candidates complete early field experiences, yearlong internships, and prepare edTPA portfolios on their paths to certification.

What hasn't changed is the need for cooperating teachers to open their classrooms, share their expertise, and serve as mentors—just as yours did for you.

We know that right now it is difficult to think about adding one more thing to your plate. We hope to convince you that it's worth it with our top five reasons to be a cooperating teacher.

TOP FIVE REASONS TO BE A COOPERATING TEACHER

#1: You get extra hands in the classroom.

When schools suddenly pivoted to online learning in mid-March, many teachers were stressed and uncertain about how they would continue to meet the needs of their students. Some teachers had an advantage: a teacher candidate who partnered with them in planning lessons, locating resources and working with students.

For many of these teachers, the teacher candidates played a critical role during that very challenging time. As the semester ended in May, some of these teachers found themselves wondering how they would handle remote learning on their own.

"I am actually full of tears thinking about what e-learning will be like without Cori," wrote Carlotta Marini from Paul Robeson Community School in New Brunswick. "She has been extremely vital in my e-learning."

This school year, teacher candidates continue to work alongside in-service teachers to meet the many challenges that the pandemic presents.

Kristen Hawley Turner, Ph.D., is the director of Teacher Education at Drew University. Eileen Heddy, M.A., is the director of Support for Teacher Education Programs at The College of New Jersey. Leyone Royster, Ed.D., is the director of Teacher Preparation Placement and Student Support Services at Georgian Court University. They wrote this article on behalf of the New Jersey Field Directors Forum, an organization of field directors for teacher placement programs in the state. If you would like to reach out to the forum directly, email Margaret Renn, president of the NJ Field Directors Forum, at rennm@wpunj.edu.

How Can Interns Support Teachers and Students?

Teaching

- Lead individual or small group instruction
- Run study sessions
- Facilitate discussions
- Oversee virtual learners and/or in-person learners in hybrid setting
- Run a "center" or station



Assessment & Feedback

- Monitor student work
- Provide feedback to students
- Conduct reading or writing assessments
- Create formative and summative assessments
- Review data and recommend instruction



Digital Integration

- Troubleshoot tech issues
- Run video for CT to record lessons
- Monitor chat/comments
- Suggest/learn/research new technologies



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Provide support for individuals
- Create modifications
- Follow-up with individuals/parents regarding remote learning
- Locate or screen materials with anti-racist lens
- Create phone-only supports for students without access
- Develop or research SEL activities



Parent/Guardian Support

- Follow-up
- Investigate absences
- Create a resource page
- Send messages about instruction, units, or what's happening
- Create or live-stream an after-school club to keep students engaged



Administrative

- Manage class calendar
- Organization, class setup, bulletin boards
- Attendance



Content Development

- Develop journal topics
- Create interactive presentations
- Curate list of resources for students/parents/teachers
- Create surveys
- Create screencasts
- Create enrichment activities
- Create mini-lessons or length lessons



#2: Teacher candidates provide tech support and resources.

One of the areas in which teacher candidates have proven most valuable is managing technology. Through their coursework and experience, teacher candidates often learn new apps and programs that can be used to facilitate learning.

Working together, in-service and preservice teachers find ways to creatively use tools such as SeeSaw, Flipgrid and Screencast-O-Matic.

"Megan has been amazing during this time of distance learning," Heidi Rooney, a fourth-grade teacher at Sunnybrae Elementary School in Hamilton wrote. "She continued to teach and provide lessons through Screencast-O-Matic, which the students absolutely loved. I even had some of the parents email me to say how much the students were engaged... I don't know what I'm going to do when she is finished with her student teaching experience."

Taking some of the pressure off their cooperating teachers to act as tech wizards is a benefit student teachers bring to the classroom.

#3: You have more resources for family and student outreach.

Maintaining relationships with students and families provides another opportunity for interns to demonstrate their skills, commitment and professionalism. Teacher candidates are able to offer students individualized support and create opportunities for engaging and communicating with families.

When students fell behind in their remote learning last spring, Kelly, an intern in North Jersey, emailed, called, and texted them to help get them back on track. Offering this kind of support allowed her cooperating teacher to reach more students.

Similarly, Ashlee Ennis from Grant School in Trenton said of her student teacher, "Parents and family members have reached out to thank Maureen personally for her hard work and the love she shows toward the students. I am so thankful and grateful for all of her hard work and dedication during such a trying time."

#4: Your students will benefit.

With or without a pandemic, there are significant benefits to mentoring a teacher candidate. Studies have demonstrated that P-12 students of mentor teachers show increased achievement in math and ELA scores for the years after the teacher hosted an intern (Goldhaber et al., 2020). Student teachers inspire mentor teachers to analyze and reflect upon their own teaching in order to offer critical and reflective feedback.

Studies also conclude that working with a teacher candidate can increase a teacher's motivation, increase a teacher's reflectiveness and encourage them to utilize new pedagogical approaches and tools (Altan & Saglamel, 2015; Fisher et al., 2004).

#5: Giving back feels good.

Your own cooperating teacher helped to start you on your path, and today you are the one who has something to give. Teacher interns are looking for mentors to help them develop into long haulers.

Research by Struyve et al., (2016) finds that social connectedness is a key indicator for remaining in the profession, and that social connectedness begins with you. Interns need a teacher mentor who has been there before and is willing and committed to showing them the highs and lows of teaching.

Sharing your perspective with novice teachers completes a circle started when you were in their shoes. You support an individual, and at the same time, you support the profession as a whole. You also leave a legacy, as your influence on the teacher candidate's practice will last their entire career, affecting hundreds of future students. In turn, you feel connected to a larger community—and it feels good to give back in this way.

WE NEED YOU!

Who would have thought that teaching would be so challenging and yet somewhat exciting in the year 2020 during a global pandemic?



At the 2019 NJEA Preservice Conference (l-r): Karina Canales, Brenda Paez and Taylor Donato.

In teacher preparation programs, we are always in need of cooperating teachers. The state requires that candidates have early field experiences, as well as full-year internships, and we agree that practice in the field is essential for preparing great teachers.

Now, more than ever, we need you to volunteer. Without your expertise, we cannot train high-quality teachers. If we do not succeed, our schools will be faced with additional challenges because of a teacher shortage.

Please consider hosting a clinical field experience. Discuss with your administrator your district's process for signing up to become a cooperating teacher for the spring semester. Together, we can prepare great teachers to be ready for next year and beyond.

Teacher candidates are ready to begin clinical work (student teaching) in late January or early February. Please share your interest with your school administrator no later than Jan. 29. 📍

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

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

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NJEA COMMITTEES

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

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Staff contact: Aileen O'Driscoll

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BUDGET

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

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

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

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CONSTITUTION REVIEW

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

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

CONVENTION

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

Chair: Susan Davis, Sussex

Staff contact: Janet Royal

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

DELEGATE ASSEMBLY RULES

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

Chair: Paterek, Morris

Staff contact: Martha DeBlieu

Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Monmouth: Gail Maher; NJREA: Joseph Santo; Ocean: Paulette Fox; Passaic: Lori Lalama

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award Committee considers and evaluates candidates for the

NJEA Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service Award for Education and makes appropriate recommendations to the Executive Committee.

Chair: Danielle Clark, Camden

Staff contact: Gary Melton

Bergen: Argine Safari; Camden: Ana Sanchez; Cape May: Tammi Lee; Gloucester: Angela Chapman; Malika Moore; Middlesex: Jennifer Olawski; Monmouth: Margaret Watkins; NJREA: Stacy Morgan Santo; Passaic: Brenda Carswell-Avery; Somerset: Mary MacRae; Union: Lillian Alston

EDITORIAL

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

Chair: Erin Howe, Camden

Staff contact: Patrick Rumaker

Atlantic: Alphonso Harrell; Bergen: Shari Mendelson; Camden: Holly Pittman; Essex: Lauren Greenfield; Gloucester: Kathy Cartwright; Higher Ed: Donald Reilly; Hudson: Larissa Lentini; Mercer: Hussain Haqq; Middlesex: Andrew Lewis; Monmouth: Steven Tetreault; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Miriam Reichenbach; Ocean: Christine Smith; Preservice: Karalyn Olsen; Passaic: Sonya Squitieri; Somerset: Jamie Cameron; Union: Tia Reid

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

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

Chair: Joann Houck, Burlington

Staff contact: Robert Antonelli

Atlantic: Greta Bohren; Bergen: Rommy Buttafuoco; Burlington: Donna O'Malley; Camden: Marguerite Vallieu; Cape May: Gary O'Shea; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Essex: Donald Walker; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Higher Ed: Maria Maccanico; Hudson: Marquisha Reynolds; Hunterdon: Fiona Descala; Mercer: Antoinette Hopkins; Middlesex: Nancy Cogland; Monmouth: Regina Jagoo; Morris: Mark Eckert; NJREA: Barbara Newman; Ocean: Patti Watson; Passaic:

Nikki Baker; Salem: Jennifer Jenkins; Somerset: Christopher James; Sussex: Gillian Raye; Union: Michael Boyd; Warren: Scott Elliott

ELECTIONS

The Elections Committee: 1. sets standards and procedures, subject to the general policies of the Delegate Assembly, for all elections under the NJEA Constitution, and for the conduct and eligibility of candidates for elective office; 2. oversees NJEA elections procedures within counties or units; 3. conducts any necessary state elections; 4. provides oversight for the tabulation and certification of ballots; 5. resolves state elections disputes.

Chair: Eda Ferrante, Passaic

Staff contact: Aileen O'Driscoll

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

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

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

Chair: Sarah (Sally) Blizzard, Cumberland

Staff contact: Camy Kobylinski

Atlantic: Tomeka Sanderlin; Bergen: Rick Gladstone; Burlington: Marcia Stetler-Klock; Camden: Elizabeth Holsman; Cape May: Alice Barnes-Vasser; Cumberland: Judy Bryant; Essex: Christina Licitra; Gloucester: Brianna Hanson; Hudson: Amanda Mitchell; Hunterdon: Lynn Szczek; Mercer: Leah Pray; Middlesex: Francine Wilden; Monmouth: Karen Brower; NJREA: John Zurka; Ocean: Ronald Donnerstag; Passaic: Francis Koterba; Preservice: Marissa Readline; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Viktoria Wargo; Warren: Clorimar Rios

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The Government Relations Committee: 1. reviews and considers state and national legislation; 2. carries out the legislative policy of the Association; 3. lobbies legislators and other political leaders and decision makers; 4. works with county and local education associations to establish continuous lobbying efforts with legislators and representatives of state agency policy-making boards and commissions; 5. oversees county and local legislative action team efforts; 6. educates leaders and members about the necessity of political action efforts to make legislative advances; 7. maintains a close working relationship with the NJEA lobbyists and NJEA Government Relations Division; 8. networks with other unions, organizations, or special interest groups to secure legislative goals established by the Delegate Assembly; 9. chairs screening committees in N.J. legislative races.

Chair: Christina Dare, Gloucester

Staff contact: Marybeth Beichert

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

HEALTH BENEFITS

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

Chair: Dennis Carroll, Passaic

Staff contact: Jim Jameson

Atlantic: John Bennett; Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Kristen Frey; Camden County: Marisol Charernsook; Katrina Squire; Cape May: Catherine

Krause; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Anthony Rosamilia; Gloucester: Denise Kane; Higher Ed: Alvin Williams; Hudson: Kevin Reed; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto; Mercer: Rhonda Williams; Middlesex: Matthew Hrevnak; Monmouth: Denise King; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Judith Ruff; Salem: John Romano; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Carrie Odgers Lax

HEARING COMMITTEE ON CENSURE, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION

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

Chair: Lori Lalama, Passaic

Staff contact: Aileen O'Driscoll

Camden: Rosemarie Casey; Essex: Peter Blodnik; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson: Edwinta Rhue; Somerset: Andrew Coslit

HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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

Chair: Mecheline Farhat, Bergen

Staff contact: Marcia Klein

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

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

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

rights conference and recommends Human Rights Award winners, if any; 5. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

Chair: Kimberly Scott, Essex

Staff contact: Gary Melton

Atlantic: Thomas Taylor; Bergen: Yolanda Salazar; Burlington: April Newman; Camden: Kettchel Johnson; Cape May: Walter Johnson; Cumberland: Tiffanie ThrBak; Essex: Fayette Weatherington; Gloucester: Monica Moore-Cook; Mercer: Paige Hinton-Mason; Middlesex: Melissa Katz; Monmouth: Bridget James; Morris: Nanette Fandino Diaz; NJREA: Betty Meeks-Manning; Ocean: Lisa Simone; Passaic: Marco Martinez; Preservice: Heather Harris; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Ryan Cullinane; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall

INSTRUCTION

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

Chair: Brenda Martin-Lee, Burlington

Staff contact: Christine Miles

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

LEADERSHIP

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

Chair: Ann Kaspereen, Warren

Staff contact: Michael Saffran

Atlantic: Kevin Hackney; Bergen: Fanny Cruz-Betesh; Burlington: Melissa Foremny; Camden: Charles Pildis; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Stephanie Ross; Higher Ed: Robert Fusco; Mercer: Twanda Taylor; Middlesex: Daniel Fields; Monmouth: Cheryle Haynes; NJREA: Minnie Mozee; Ocean: Gina Pizzuto; Passaic: Katherine Telschow; Salem: Renee Jost; Somerset: Andrew Coslit; Sussex: Union: Robert Mangel; Warren: Laurie O'Brien

MEMBER BENEFITS

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

Chair: Gillian Raye, Sussex

Staff contact: Beth Schroeder-Buonsante

Atlantic: Robin Mottershead; Bergen: Susan Avallone; Burlington: Janene Onyango; Camden County: Kimberly Robinson-Taylor; Cape May: Jennifer Loper; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Essex: Donna Sabol; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity; Hudson: Jill Crawford; Hunterdon: Carol Rocha; Mercer: Regina Meehan; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; NJREA: Jeanne Kiefner; Brian Reilly; Ocean: Karen Schwing; Passaic: Christopher Awad; Salem: Cheryl Levitsky; Somerset: Nancy Kordell; Union: Tia Reid; Warren: Tara Anderson

MEMBERSHIP

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

Chair: Anita Kober, Hudson

Staff contact: Jaime Valente

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

MINORITY LEADERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

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

Chair: Tiffanie Thrbak, Cumberland

Staff contact: Gary Melton

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

NEA ACTIVITIES

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

Chair: Tamara Beatty, Burlington

Staff contact: Gary Melton

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

NEA ISSUES

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

Chair: Marilyn Weeks, Middlesex

Staff contact: Gary Melton

NEA Directors: Brenda Brathwaite; James Frazier; Anita Kober; Robert La Morte; Susan McBride; Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Peter Moran; Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Ashanti Rankin; Kimberly Scott; Marilyn Weeks; NEA Resolutions Committee: Peter Blodnik; Christopher Carpenter; Joshua Eckersley; Diane MacKay; Cassandra Montague; Michael Morton; Michele Shields-Buono; Resource: Michael Wildermuth

NJEA PAC OPERATING

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

Chairs: Christina Dare and Patricia Kebrdle

Staff contact: Al Beaver

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

PAUL DIMITRIADIS RIGHTS FUND

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

Chair: George Wood, Gloucester

Staff contact: Elizabeth Buonsante

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

PENSION POLICY

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

Chair: Howard Lipoff, Bergen

Staff contact: Sarah Favinger

Atlantic: Sandra Peart; Camden: Brian Simpson; Essex: Lois Infanger; Gloucester: Richard Wolf; Hudson: Mark Azzarello; Hunterdon: Fiona DeScala; Mercer: Daniel Siegel; Middlesex: Kenneth Veres; Monmouth: Casey Barilka; Morris: Kathleen Paterek; NJREA: Irene Savicky; Ocean: Erich Brunner; Passaic: Pamela Fadden; Somerset: Jordan Back; Mary Murdock; Union: Linda Cortinas

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Professional Development Committee: 1. researches, initiates, and promotes appropriate activities in continuing professional education, in-service professional development, and professional standards; 2. stimulates research and proven innovations in its areas of interest; 3. considers long-range problems, policies, and solutions required in areas affecting the profession and the Association; 4. makes recommendations concerning programs to be presented at NJEA conferences and the annual convention; 5. works in conjunction with the Instruction and Certification, Evaluation, and Tenure committees to develop recommendations related to furthering professional "best practices"; 6. reviews and recommends legislative and regulatory proposals; 7. disseminates such information among the profession; 8. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

Chair: Jennifer Clemen, Bergen

Staff contact: Michael Ritzius

Atlantic: Brenda Brathwaite; Kelly Petrucci; Bergen: Stacey Brown; Burlington: Alexandra Paccione; Camden: Denise Jones; Cape May: June Camizzi; Cumberland: Lawrence Hickman; Essex: Avis Price; Hudson: Anita Kober; Hunterdon: Donna Pontoriero; Mercer: Kathryn Graf; Middlesex: Donna Jacobson; Monmouth: Steven Koumoulis; Morris: Angela Cordova; NJEA Preservice: Karalyn Olsen; NJREA: Diane Stelacio; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Passaic: Shaye Brown-Crandol; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: David Yastremski; Union: Tonya Scott-Cole; Warren: Laurie O'Brien

PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Chair: Peter Blodnik, Essex

Staff contact: Aileen O'Driscoll

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

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

Chair: Edwinta Rhue, Hudson

Staff contact: Eric Jones

Atlantic: Amy Gold; Bergen: Donna West; Burlington: Kimberly Niehaus; Camden: Cumberland: Stephen Garavento; Gloucester: Lynn Cianci; Hunterdon: Edward Dubroski; Mercer: Debra Baer; Middlesex: Claudia Robinson; Mercer: Debra Baer; Middlesex: Claudia Robinson; Monmouth: Sheila Caldwell; Morris: Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Susan Vigilante; Ocean: Patti Watson; Passaic: Javier Fresse; Somerset: Kristina Fallon Tomaino; Union: Annice Benamy; Edith Farrell; Angelo Marocco; Warren: Sharon M. O'Meara

SCHOOL FINANCE

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

Chair: Mariann Kronyak, Bergen

Staff contact: Dan Goldman

Atlantic: Sandra Peart; Camden: Adam Sheridan; Cumberland: Heather Musto; Middlesex: Tracey McGowan; Monmouth: Cheryle Haynes; Morris: Samantha Westberg; NJREA: Roger Baker; Passaic: Marc Foti; Salem: John Romano; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Vernon Spencer

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

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

Chair: Thomas Tamburello, Burlington

Staff contact: Michael Rollins

Atlantic: Kevin Hackney; Bergen: Amy Moran; Burlington: Tamara Beatty; Cape May County:

Kenneth Bassett; Cumberland: April Stevenson-Kinder; Essex: Micah Gary-Fryer; Gloucester: Marc Lopez; Hunterdon: Elizabeth McCann; Mercer: Angel Fuentes-Pesquera; Middlesex: Susan Ray; Monmouth: Karina McIntyre; Morris: Sara Kozlowski; NJREA: Karen Hughes; Passaic: Erin Kelly; Salem: Jennifer Lehr; Somerset: Marisol Espinoza; Sussex: Carla Mancuso; Union: Terron Singletary; Warren: Russa Nollstadt

TECHNOLOGY

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

Chair: Peter Moran, Burlington

Staff contact: Gabriel Tanglao

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

UNISERV

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

Chair: Ellen Ogintz, Mercer

Staff contact: Patrick Manahan

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

URBAN EDUCATION

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

Chair: Todd Pipkin, Passaic

Staff contact: Amanda Adams

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

VOCATIONAL, CAREER, AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Vocational, Career, and Technical Education Committee 1. makes the Association aware of changes occurring in vocational education; 2. reviews federal and state legislative proposals and regulations that impact vocational education and educators; 3. reviews certification requirements and makes recommendations for improvements; 4. considers problems in vocational education in New Jersey; 5. makes recommendations for solutions to the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly.

Chair: Erin Wheeler, Monmouth

Staff contact: Francine Pfeffer

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

WOMEN IN EDUCATION

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


Chair: Fatimah Hayes, Camden County

Staff contact: Meredith Barnes Bergen: Lisa Atlantic; Jayne Carmen; Bergen: Lisa Veit; Burlington: Debra Maida; Camden: Tracy Stephens-Austin; Cape May: Kimberle Bruckno Moore; Cumberland: Damita White-Morris; Essex: Angel Boose; Gloucester:

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Joyce Farr; Hudson: Katherine Chao; Mercer: Dana Lakins; Monmouth: Sarah Reichenbecher; Morris: Michele Miller; NJREA: Joan Jensen; Passaic: Kerriann Palmieri; Preservice: Olivia Haas; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: Aida-Janet Wahba; Union: Lillian Alston

WORKING CONDITIONS

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

Chair: Barbara Rheault, Atlantic

Staff contact: Jennifer Raike

Atlantic: Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Grace McCloskey; Camden: Lisa Campisi; Gloucester: Robert Dudley; Hudson: Christopher Kuchar; Middlesex: Jennifer Johnson;

Monmouth: Susan Morin; NJREA: Frank Foulkes; Ocean: Joshua Eckersley; Passaic: Louis Hill; Somerset: Kristina Fallon Tomaino; Union: Sue Tamburro

WORKSITE SAFETY AND HEALTH

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

Chair: Keith Hinton, Essex

Staff contact: Michael Rollins

Bergen: Deborah Rick; Burlington: Tomika Lamb; Camden: Colette Staab; Cape May: Gary O'Shea; Cumberland: Adrian Garrett; Gloucester: Robert Scardino; Hudson: Anna Picca; Mercer: Michael Giles; Middlesex: Cheryll Willis; Monmouth: Jonathan Trzeszkowski; Morris: Eugene Behme; NJREA: Rhondaleigh Austin; Ocean: Brenda Douglas; Passaic: Robin Holcombe; Somerset: Rhonda Sherbin; Union: Donald Frederick

YOUTH SERVICES

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

Chair: Mary Karriem, Essex

Staff contact: Amanda Adams

Atlantic: Trina Jenkins; Bergen: Martha Martinez; Camden: Cecil Leonard; Cape May: Mary-Theresa Smith; Cumberland: Damita White-Morris; Essex: Philip McCormick; Gloucester: Shannon Pizzuta; Hudson: Elsie Diaz; Mercer: Sandra Herrington; Middlesex: Noelle Ebler; Monmouth: Mary Scott; Morris: Lee Bensinger; NJREA: Abby Zahn; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Passaic: Hansley Cazeau; Somerset: Florrie O'Loughlin; Union: James R. Frazier

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NJEA STAFF

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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

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

In addition, it coordinates the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, the Bolivar L. Graham NJEA Intern Foundation, and the NJEA Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service to Education Award.

NJEA Member Rights, which comes under the Executive Office, coordinates the NJEA Legal Services Program, directing and managing the NJEA Legal Services Network and the Attorney Referral Program.

The newly created Office of Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance and existing Organizational Development Division are also under the Executive Director's supervision.

Also under the Executive Director's supervision are business operations, which includes personnel, business management, information systems, and purchasing/production. These functions cover all aspects of the Association's fiscal, facilities, equipment/technology, membership records, and personnel needs.

The Human Resources Office deals with personnel functions, including affirmative action and employee benefits.

Executive Office: Steve Swetsky, executive director; Kevin Kelleher, deputy executive director; Gary Melton, Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance manager; vacancies (2), associate directors; Patricia A. Habershtick, executive assistant/office manager; Kathleen A. Mathews, confidential assistant; Colleen Stevens, administrative assistant; Catherine M. Raffaele, administrative assistant; Antoinette Boyle, chief administrative assistant-Organizational Development/UniServ

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

Governance: Marie E. Blistan, president; Sean

M. Spiller, vice president; Steve Beatty, secretary-treasurer; Shannon Pellegrino, executive assistant; Nancy Bachrach, confidential assistant; vacancy, confidential assistant

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

Human Resources: Matthew Dirado, manager; Annette Ilagan Sr. Human Resource specialist; Dawn Goatley, Employee Benefits administrator

Organizational Development: Vacancy, director; Robert A. Antonelli, Eric Jones, Michael Rollins, Michael R. Saffran, Marguerite Schroeder, Jaime Valente, field reps; Linda Calehuff, Jennifer Donaghue, Tamika Elder, Victoria Lepore, Kimberly Lipcsey, program assistants; Organizational Development Consultants: Christina Dare; Jennifer Johnson; Andrew Lewis; Charisse Parker, Kathleen Paterek, Hannah Pawlak

BUSINESS

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

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

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

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

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

landscaping, mechanical, storage, and custodial services.

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

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

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

Accounting: Kristen Butler, CPA, finance and accounting manager; Michael Caracci, Jose Cancio, associate directors; Brenda Pabon-Guadarrama, Bonnie Weiss, chiefs-business services; Deschela Davis, Shirley Jones; Monica Winch, principal clerks-bookkeepers

Purchasing/Production: Kristen Butler, manager; Melody Washington, Andrea Meshofski, chiefs-business services

Building and Grounds/Parking Attendant: John Cottone, manager; James Buckley, chief-buildings and grounds; Artie Eischeid, Sandra Martin, Oscar Gee, facilities assistants-buildings and grounds

Information Systems: John Cottone, manager; Anthony Leuzzi, Donald Miller, Richard Nachbaur, Richard Roche, Ryan Stouffer, Jorge Salgado, associate directors; Denise Hamilton, R. Mills, Rich Driscoll, computer technicians

Mailroom/Printshop: Damien McKeever, manager; Eric O'Donnell, chief-duplicating and mailing; Stephen Feuerstein, principal offset operator; Ryan Eischeid, principal clerk; Gloria Lugo, senior clerk-receptionist; Andrew Mathis, Zann Williams, senior clerks; Latonya Reid, clerk

COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

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

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

The Division also:

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

Communications: Steven Baker, director; Beth Georgetown, administrative assistant

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

NJEA Review: Patrick Rumaker, Kathy Coulibaly, associate directors; Liz Murphy, secretary

Organizing and Coalition Building: Dawn Hiltner, associate director

Public Relations: Meredith Barnes, Dawn Hiltner, Christy Kanaby, Matthew Stagliano, associate directors; vacancy, secretary

Targeted/Electronic Publications: Diane Barry, associate director; Elizabeth Debar, administrative assistant

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

Communication consultants: LeShaun Arrington, Kimberly Bevilacqua-Crane, Angel Boose, Jennifer Clemen, Joseph Coleman, Mariann Kronyak, Rodney Lane, Ani McHugh, Sharon Milano, Kevin Parker, David Yastremski

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

NJEA Government Relations coordinates NJEA's legislative activities and political campaigns and is responsible for the monitoring functions of government departments, bureaus, and agencies. It also is responsible for working with Association committees that study educational legislation and regulations that recommend educational policy.

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

Al Beaver, director; Marybeth Beichert, Jerell Blakeley, Michael Flynn, Michael Giglio, Sean Hadley, Francine Pfeffer, Anna Hanzas, vacancy, associate directors; Mary Kemery, administrative assistant; Janet Bush, Carol McWilliams, Sabrina Moore, Christie Procell, Carolyn Thompson, secretaries

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES

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

The division is responsible for the NJEA Professional Development Institute, which endorses and promotes high-quality professional development programs. The division also oversees NJEA Priority Schools Initiative (PSI) and the Teacher Leader Academy (TLA). The PSI provides support and resources to program schools, using research on effective school practice to improve the culture of learning to reduce learning gaps to the benefit of all students. Through NJEA, the TLA enables candidates to receive the teacher leader endorsement on their instructional certificates, with the option to earn graduate credit through Thomas Edison State College.

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

The division also focuses on a wide range of professional development and continuing education issues. It works extensively with the N.J. Department



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KEYNOTES:

- **Dr. Ghodly Muhammad** – author of *Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy*.
- **Priya Vulchi and Winona Guo** – authors of *Tell Me Who You Are* and the co-founders of *Choose.org*
- **Dr. Michael Eric Dyson** – professor, prolific author, and political analyst

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(Additional sessions and registration info coming soon)

of Education (DOE) to promote effective professional development practice consistent with NJEA policy. The division provides support to the State Professional Learning Committee which advises the DOE on continuing education in the state.

The division coordinates major statewide instructional issues conferences and scores of specialized meetings. It plans and administers the NJEA Convention—the Association's premier professional development event—developing and coordinating professional programs and activities, as well as overseeing facilities arrangements, logistical services, and exposition services. It also manages the Association's new online learning resource NJEA Learning Division staff assists members and local and county affiliates in the field on these issues as needed through the NJEA-NEA UniServ network.

Professional Development: Michael Cohan, director; Amanda Adams, Camy Kobylinski, Chrissi Miles, Michael Ritzius, Janet Royal, Gabriel Tanglao, Richard Wilson, associate directors; Felicia Davis, Cindy Vannauker, Vicki Serreino, administrative assistants; Brielle Allison, Theresa Mura, Davella Ward, secretaries

Professional Development Consultants: Renee Ahern, Eric Brenner, Shan Byrd, Genevieve Di Trani, Jennifer Dubroski, Edward Dubroski, Esther Innis, Greg Jablonski, Donna Jacobson, Brian Janik, Joan Jensen, Jacynth Johnson, Pamela

Koharchik, Danielle Kovach, Margaret Leventhal, Brenda Martin-Lee, Deanne Martini, Michael Mason, Mary Steinhauer, Tiffanie ThrBak.

Priority Schools Consultants: Deborah Adams, Katherine Clark, Angela Coxen, Ann Floyd, Brian McLaughlin, Candida Palmieri, Eliza Peña, Carolyn Schultz, Teresa Stallone, Diane Stelacio, Danele Still, Dorjima Tchourumoff, Linda Thomas, Maryann Woods-Murphy

Teacher Leader Consultants: Lizandaa Alburg, Johanna Amaro, Christine Candarella, Dawn Howlen, Anna Muessig

RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC SERVICES

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

The Division provides analytical and statistical information for other NJEA divisions including determination of fiscal impact of proposed legislation, evaluation of workshops and conferences, review of education research, guidance on issues of member benefits and retirement, and consultation on local fiscal operations impacting the bargaining process.

Denise Graff Policastro, director; Liz Rylak, administrative assistant

Education And Evaluation Research: Julie Giordano Plotkin, associate director; Lori Legette, administrative assistant

Library: Martha O. DeBlieu, associate director

Member Benefits: Beth Schroeder Buonsante, associate director; Liz Rylak, administrative assistant

Negotiations Assistance: Leigh Davidson, Thomas Predale, Peter Vala, Gregory Yordy, associate directors; Jacqueline Candy, secretary

Pension and Benefits: Robert Bobik, Dan Goldman, James Jameson, Michael Salerno, associate directors; Roxie Muhsin, secretary; Felicia Tard, principal clerk

Statistics and School Funding: Sarah Favinger, associate director; Crystal Inman, program assistant; vacancy, Secretary

Pension Consultants: Mary Ann Del Duca Cinque, Barbara English, Alan Gilbert, Erland Nordstrom, Clarence Osborne, Linda Ruth, Joanne Sanferraro, F. Gary Wikander, Kathleen Wollert

Every effort is made to produce an accurate organizational directory. If you wish to correct an error, email Liz Murphy at lmurphy@njea.org.

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UNISERV REGIONAL OFFICES

The NJEA-NEA UniServ Network provides extensive field services to members and local and county affiliates throughout the state.

Operating on a coordinated, statewide basis, the UniServ field representatives and office staff members work out of 18 regional offices to supply doorstep service to members.

Four regional directors coordinate the UniServ network of regional offices and are assisted by four administrative assistants and a chief, administrative assistant.

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

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

Thomas Hardy, James H. Loper, Patrick Manahan, Mayrose Wegmann – regional directors;

Toni Boyle, chief administrative assistant

UNISERV SOUTH (REGIONS 1-5)

509 S. Lenola Rd., Bldg. 4, Moorestown, NJ 08057-1556;
(856)-234-0522

Patrick Manahan, regional director
Susan Schroeder, administrative assistant

UNISERV CENTRAL (REGIONS 7-12 AND 29)

Raritan Plaza II, 91 Fieldcrest Ave., Ste. A3, Edison, NJ 08837-3627;
(732)-287-6899

James H. Loper, regional director
Vacancy, administrative assistant

UNISERV NORTHEAST (REGIONS 15, 19 - 25)

70 S. Orange Ave., Ste 260, Livingston, NJ 07039-4919;
(973)-321-3221

Thomas Hardy, regional director
Verlencia Waring, administrative assistant

UNISERV NORTHWEST (REGIONS 13, 17, 27-28)

23 Rt. 206, Stanhope, NJ 07874-3264;
(973) 347-0911

Mayrose Wegmann, regional director
Brenda Champion, administrative assistant

REGION 1

(Atlantic and Cape May counties) – 436 Chris Gaupp Drive, Ste.201, Galloway, NJ 08205-4464;
(609) 652-9200

UniServ reps: Vincent Perna, Myron Plotkin, Stephanie Tarr

Office staff: : Crysty Jenkins, administrative assistant; vacancy, secretary

Consultants: Constance Baker, Franklin Butterick, Brian Currie, Jean Hovey, Mario Montanero, Curt Nath, Martha Septynski

REGION 2

(Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties) – 7 Myers Drive., Tomlinson Prof. Bldg., Ste. F, Tomlinson Prof. Bldg., Mullica Hill, NJ 08062;
(856) 628-8650

UniServ reps: Desirée Brennan, Louis Randazzo, John Staab, Anna Waltman

Office staff: Donna Pacetta, administrative assistant; Elizabeth Parker, secretary

Consultants: Sandra Beals, Mona Bennett, Alison Braun, Anthony Cappello, Stephen Garavento, Mildred Johnson, Louis Russo, Stephanie Wheaton, Michael Wichart & vacancy

REGION 3

(Camden County) – 1020 Laurel Oak Rd., Suite 101, Voorhees, NJ 08043-4315; (856) 782-1225

UniServ reps: Sharon Allen, Jim Boice, Ryan McCarty, Caroline Tatum

Office staff: Gale Quinn, administrative assistant; Jessica Vasquez-Denney, secretary

Consultants: Jessica Cook, Fatimah Hayes, Philip Magazzo; Ryan McCarty, Judi Myers; Kathleen Quinn

REGION 5

(Burlington County) – 509 S. Lenola Rd., Suite 4, Moorestown, NJ 08057-1566;
(856) 234-2485

UniServ reps: Michael Kaminski, Angel McDermott, Harry Zakarian

Office staff: Linda Sacks, administrative assistant; Kristin Hunt, secretary

Consultants: Joseph Coleman, Deborah Bruhn, Mary Brennan-Farnen, Marliese Filbert, Lisa Trapani, Stacey Williams

REGION 7

(Ocean County) – 1433 Hooper Avenue, Suite 225, Toms River, NJ 08753-2200;
(732) 349-0280

UniServ reps: Coleen Neil, Jennifer Raika, Wendy Sistarenik

Office staff: Carmen Torres Izquierdo, administrative assistant; Lily Tremari, secretary

Consultants: Michael Fletcher, James Huebner, Michael Mannion, Kimberly Shaw, Daniel Staples

REGION 8

(Mercer County) – 172 W. State St., Trenton, NJ 08608-1211; (609) 896-3422

UniServ reps: Alexander DeVicaris, Jennifer Larsen, Susan Nardi

Office staff: Evelyn Procell, administrative assistant; vacancy, secretary

Consultants: Michele D'Angelo, Talithe Duncan, Jason Pukel, vacancy

REGION 9

(Monmouth County) – 1345 Campus Parkway, Ste. A-9, Wall Twp., NJ 07753-6828; (732) 403-8000

UniServ reps: Christopher Johnson, Naomi Johnson-Lafleur, Lorraine Tesaro

Office staff: Debbie Pukel, administrative assistant, Anne Elluzzi, secretary

Consultants: Denise King, Diane Vistein, Erin Wheeler, Tracie Yostpille

REGION 11/12

(Middlesex County) – Raritan Plaza II, 91 Fieldcrest Ave., Ste. A3, Edison, NJ 08837-2838; (732) 287-4700

UniServ reps: Thomas Bohnyak, Brian Furry, Nancy Grbelja, Thomas Hayden

Office staff: Margaret Fudacz, administrative assistant; Ileana Rivera, Sharon Tricarico, office assistants

Consultants: Douglas Dale, Brian Geoffroy, Keith Presty, Timothy Simonitis

REGION 13

(Hunterdon and Somerset counties) – 27 Minneakoning Road, Flemington, NJ 08822-5726;
(908) 782-2168

UniServ reps: William Render, Brian Rock, Fred Skirbst

Office staff: Lynne Nelson, administrative assistant, Tabatha Walton, secretary

Consultants: David Bacon, Stephen Halldorson, Christopher James, Cheryl Mitchell, Charisse Parker

REGION 15

(Union County) – 312 N. Avenue East, Ste. 2 & 3, Cranford, NJ 07016-2464; (908) 709-9440

UniServ reps: Dominick Giordano, Allyson Ponter, Maryanne Rodriguez, Ted Tympanik,

Office staff: Diane Gourley, administrative assistant; Holly Smith, secretary

Consultants: Eloy Delgado, Eda Ferrante, Esther Innis, Glen Robertson, Helynn Smith

REGION 17

(Morris County) – 601 Jefferson Road, Ste. 105, Parsippany, NJ 07054-3790; (973) 515-0101

UniServ reps: Douglas Finkel, Vickie Walsh, John Williams

Office staff: Heather Marsh, administrative assistant; Chanae Phifer, secretary

Consultants: Pamela Fadden, Deirdre Falk, Louis Migliacci Jr., Steven Spangler, vacancies (2)

REGION 19

(Hudson County North and Newark/Essex) 6600 Kennedy Blvd., East, Ste. 1L, West New York, NJ 07093-4218; (201) 861-1266

UniServ reps: Tom DeSocio, Edward Stevens

Office staff: Kristy Pessoa, administrative assistant; vacancy, office assistant

Consultants: Emily Litman, Beverly Senior, Shareen Shibli

REGION 20

(Hudson County South/Jersey City) 1600 John Kennedy Blvd., Ste. B, Jersey City, NJ 07305-1702; (201) 653-6634

UniServ reps: John Dillon, Kevin McHale

Office staff: Veronica Pereira, administrative assistant; vacancy, office assistant

Consultants: Emily Litman, Shareen Shibli

REGION 21

(Essex County) – 70 S. Orange Avenue, Ste. 250, Livingston, NJ 07039-4903; (973) 762-6866

UniServ reps: Luis Delgado, Ryan Edwisch, James McGuire

Office staff: LaQuia Norment, administrative assistant; Shaunesa Walker, secretary

Consultants: Antoinette Blaustein, Patricia Kebrdle, Edward Lesser, Christopher Tamburro

REGION 23/25

(Bergen County-East and West) Heights Plaza, 777 Terrace Ave., Ste 404, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604-3114; (201) 292-8093

UniServ reps: Carol Feinstein, RoseLouise Holz, George Lambert, Richard Loccke, Joe Tondi

Office staff: Karen Cummings, administrative assistant; Dawn Valentine, secretary; Joanne Cannon, administrative assistant; Laura Pometti, office assistant

Consultants: Michael Deorio, Laura Grasso, Marianne Kronyak, Margaret Novicki, Dayna Orlak, Adrian Roriguez, Christina Ventre, Michael Warren

REGION 27

(Passaic County) – Preakness Valley Office Park, 504 Valley Road, Suite 150, Wayne, NJ 07470-3534; (973) 694-0154

UniServ reps: Ron Bivona, Lori Cintron, Melanie Lemme, Sasha Wolf

Office Staff: Kathryn Maron, administrative assistant; Karen Mattioli, secretary

Consultants: Marc Foti, Javier Fresse, Lakresha Harris-Hodge, Sharon Milano, Brian Watson, Pamela Wilcznski

REGION 28

(Warren and Sussex counties) – 23 Rt. 206, Stanhope, NJ 07874-3264; (973) 347-5717

UniServ reps: Kim Cowing, Henry John Klein, John Ropars

Office staff: Lori Garofano, administrative assistant; Anne Chirico, secretary

Consultants: Greg Babbitt, Richard Dispenziere, Patricia Resslerand, Nancy Richeda, Susan Sawey, Theresa Snyder

REGION 29

(Higher Ed) – 180 W. State St., PO Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-0211; (609) 689-9580

UniServ reps: Marcia Kleinz, Maurice Koffman

Office Staff: Karen Perry, administrative assistant, Jean DiQuinzio, office assistant

Consultants: Edward Carmien, Nicholas DiCicco, Mingyon McCall, Oron Nahom, vacancies (2)

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NJEA COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS AND PRESIDENTS

The county education associations, affiliates of NJEA, coordinate activities in political action, training, bargaining, and organizing with local associations, as well as social activities. They provide a vehicle for local associations to network within the county and coordinate activities with NJEA. The elected county association presidents serve on the policy-making NJEA Delegate Assembly

ATLANTIC COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

Barbara Rheault, president
PO Box 156, Egg Harbor City, NJ 08215-0156,
(609) 593-3293

BERGEN COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

Susan A. McBride, president
210 W. Englewood Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666-
3512, (201) 833-9166

BURLINGTON COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

Anthony M. Rizzo, president
621 Beverly Rancocas Rd., East Ridge Plaza Suites
3A and B, Willingboro, NJ 08046-3727,
(609) 871-2232

CAMDEN COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

Danielle M. Clark, president
2 Sheppard Rd., Sheppard Office Park, Suite 700,
Voorhees, NJ 08043-4787, (856) 489-1267

CAPE MAY COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

Stacey Salerno, president
13 Trotter Way, Cape May, NJ 08204-3844,
(609) 385-3645

CUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

Mildred C. Johnson, president
Dandelion Plaza, 1672 N. Delsea Drive, Suite A-2,
Vineland, NJ 08360, (856) 794-1221

ESSEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

Anthony M. Rosamilia, president
886 Pompton Ave., Suite A-2, Cedar Grove, NJ
07009-1257,
(973) 736-5650

GLOUCESTER COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

Susan E. Clark, president
190 North Evergreen Avenue, Suite 108,
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ACTIVISM GETS RESULTS

STORIES FROM THE FRONT LINES

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

VENTILATION MATTERS, DISINFECTING LESS SO

The Metuchen Education Association has worked with district administrators and its UniServ field Rep, Nancy Grbelja, about the district pandemic plan.

After collecting members' questions before schools opened, the Metuchen Health and Safety Committee brought in NJEA Organizational Development Field Representative Mike Rollins and Allen Barkkume, an industrial hygienist with New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC). They met with local union leaders and district officials to review the questions, the district's pandemic plan and a consultant's ventilation report.

"Allen explained that if you have good air flow coming in, you don't need to go as high with the filter rating," Grbelja says. "They agreed to bring individual air purifying units into rooms without

windows. We didn't see a red flag."

The committee reported the results on a call attended by about 200 members, comprising most of the local association, and administration officials. Barkkume introduced the ventilation "tissue test" tool, a simple way to check air movement around intakes and exhausts with a tissue taped to the end of a long stick.

NJEA and WEC's disinfecting hazard alert also was an important resource for both districts. It includes warnings about disinfectant misuse and overuse and less toxic options than many schools currently use.

"You don't want to increase anti-microbial resistance by using disinfectants a lot," Grbelja says. "We wanted to be sure the kids weren't using disinfectants, just soap and water, on their desks."

SURVEYS, WALK-THROUGHS FIND ISSUES

When the district excluded some Freehold Regional Education Association members from its pandemic planning, FREA President Sarah Reichenbecher and a union reopening committee prepared their own document. The 16 to 20 members—representing different buildings and jobs—read guidelines, talked to administrators

and surveyed members twice.

It took Reichenbecher several days to analyze the more than 2,000 responses to the first one.

"We ended up with 70 to 80 pages of questions," she says. The local sent them to building principals and the head of buildings and grounds. "When we got to WEC, we decided to focus on ventilation issues."

They organized focused walk-throughs of six high schools with Barkkume, the business administrator, the building's principal and head of maintenance, and the district maintenance person. Reichenbecher also inspected the transportation and buildings and grounds offices.

"It helped us understand the building systems a lot better," she says.

Members got a copy of Barkkume's report.

"We still have concerns about capacity, but at least we don't have to worry about the building for now," Reichenbecher said. "Having an expert, especially a third party, explain things so we could understand was incredibly valuable. I learned how to ask questions, how to talk to people about their concerns."

Being organized and delegating was also important.

"The reopening committee did an incredible

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

job,” Reichenbecher added. “It would have been overwhelming if the FREA Executive Committee had taken it on by itself. And now we know who wants to be more involved with health and safety in their building.”

INFORMATION AND TRAINING ARE ESSENTIAL

Since the pandemic hit, Barkkume has provided advice to NJEA locals, assigned other WEC hygienists to help, and conducted school walk-throughs.

Little or no information and training about disinfecting hazards is a common theme. Some people have asthmatic reactions to commonly used products. At least one situation led to a complaint to Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH).

“Too often, custodians aren’t being told what they need to know,” Barkkume says. “For example, one worker got only a really quick information session from a sales rep. There’s no documentation of the training, and it wasn’t done by a qualified person.” The sidebar summarizes some aspects of the New Jersey Hazard Communication Standard.

As one local education association representative implores: “People need training before they use any new chemicals. Be more aggressive, sometimes, to protect your association’s members.”

Barkkume adds, “File a PEOSH complaint if you have a strong case.”

COMMITTEES MAKE IT BETTER

“We never say a school’s safe,” Barkkume says. “We can say if ventilation meets the state’s minimum requirements or, in some cases, exceeds them.”

Detailed inspections take time, he says; a space could have problems that people don’t know about or consider. Many ventilation issues depend on the building’s age, maintenance practices, funding and upgrades.

“It’s not something where you can just look at documents and say it’s good or here’s what needs to be fixed,” Barkkume says. “There are such long-term problems in some places where the local associations with health and safety committees are the ones getting things done.

“Being organized, doing things—that’s how you get results,” he adds. “Committees help administrators uncover things that are misunderstood or misrepresented. You need people on the ground, before, during and after to know the history of which spaces are bad, and if things have really been fixed.”



This tissue test is a simple way to check air circulation using a tissue taped to the end of a long stick, such as at this air supply vent where the tissue should blow at a right angle from the stick.



This image demonstrates a lack of airflow, as this tissue is not being pulled against this exhaust vent.

New Jersey’s Hazard Communication Standard says employers must,

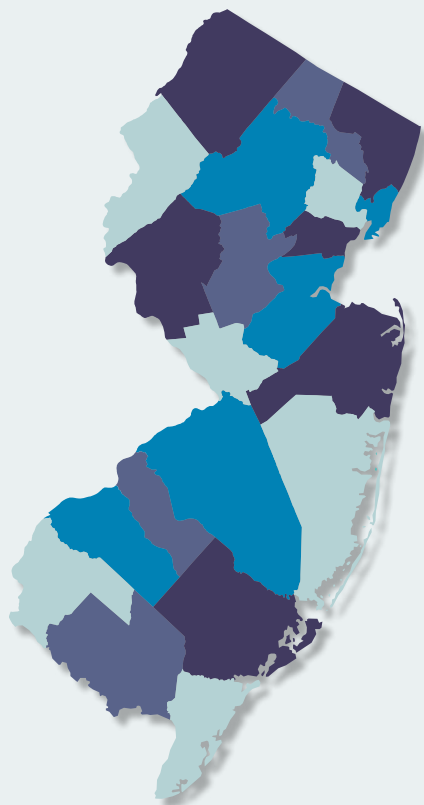
among other things, “Train all workers who are potentially exposed to hazardous chemicals. Hazard Communication Standard training must be provided by a technically qualified person, on paid time, and in a manner consistent with the educational level, literacy, and language of the employee being trained.” See bit.ly/njhazcomstandard.

Resources

NJEA, Health and Safety Manual, other OHS materials
njea.org/issues/health-safety/health-safety-publications

Health and Safety Committees Knowledge + Action = Change
njea.org/hscommittees920/

NJEA, NJ WEC
Disinfecting can be hazardous to all staff and students
assets.njea.org/njea-media/Disinfecting.pdf



SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT [LEARNING.NJEA.ORG](https://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 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 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 the webinar, 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.



JOIN US AT THE NJEA TEACHER LEADER ACADEMY

Teacher leadership is more important than ever

The NJEA Teacher Leader Academy is a one-year, 12-credit program* for candidates seeking to earn the teacher leader endorsement. A new cohort is scheduled to begin in March 2021.

Teacher leaders create new models of professional learning, develop new systems to monitor student progress, connect with families and communities and advocate for the profession.

Join our program and collaborate with fellow educators who are finding ways to lead from the classroom as they share ideas, support their colleagues, and work with school and district leaders to create systemic change that will support high-quality teaching and learning.

*12 credits are offered through Thomas Edison State College



WEB: <https://www.njea.org/tla/>
EMAIL: teacherleader@njea.org



Statewide standardized tests hinder educational equity

By Dr. Christine Miles

Last spring, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gov. Phil Murphy and the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) sought a federal waiver to suspend the statewide assessment system mandated by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In addition, New Jersey's antiquated graduation testing requirement for the Class of 2020 was waived for the 13,000 graduating seniors who had yet to fulfill it.

But this year, outgoing Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos refuses to grant U.S. Education Department (USDE) assessment waivers to states and the NJDOE is forging ahead with the exit-testing requirement for the Class of 2021. Educators, parents and students, however, patiently await support and relief from the Biden administration as districts continue to adjust to shifting internal and external conditions and cope with ongoing misfortunes, building closures, and trauma.

Time with students is *supremely precious*. New Jersey students across grades 3-11 endure a minimum of 63.5 hours of statewide standardized assessment each school year—more time than any other state in the nation. Administering a statewide standardized assessment under the current circumstances will have an increasingly negative impact on the already strained time available for effective teaching and learning. And, to what end? Statewide standardized assessment data during a pandemic will be neither valid, reliable, nor useful.

Testing proponents claim that statewide standardized assessment will ensure equity in this chaotic time by revealing “learning losses.” This is educational gaslighting at its finest. The New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) will fail to illuminate academic backsliding as this is not what the assessment was designed for. How will a test suddenly be able to do what it has historically *never* been able to do?

Standardized assessments do not enhance

equity; they reinforce inequity. In an equal system, every community benefits from the same supports, while in an equitable system, every community is provided with the support needed to be successful. The true inequities lie in the systemic under-resourcing of schools in various communities throughout New Jersey.

While the digital divide is slowly closing, more work needs to be done to ensure universal high-speed connectivity and access to appropriate devices. As we anticipate that in-person teaching and learning will experience ongoing disruptions leading up to and during the statewide assessment window, it will be exceedingly difficult to put the required testing structures and security measures in place. Access to alternate pathways to graduation has already been widely disrupted, raising significant equity concerns. School and testing-site closures eliminate the SAT, ACT, PSAT, Accuplacer and ASVAB pathways for seniors who have yet to fulfill their exit-testing requirement.

At the time of writing, the state plans to implement the portfolio process, an alternate pathway to graduation offered during senior year, beginning in this month. This process has disproportionately been used as a graduation pathway by historically marginalized communities, including low-income students, English language learners (ELL), and students with disabilities. In any given year, the portfolio process requires substantial facilitation and one-on-one support from school staff. During the ongoing pandemic, this requirement is inappropriate, unethical, and targets under-resourced communities.

The USDE and NJDOE should instead encourage actions that ensure our students, educators, and communities not only survive and recover, but thrive—academically, physically, and emotionally—following the disruption and trauma of COVID-19:

- We have the opportunity to assess what students need through authentic, locally determined and curriculum-embedded formative assessments.
- We can supply our students with targeted and actionable feedback specific to their individual needs.

- We can look to the future by emphasizing acceleration as opposed to remediation strategies, which have been proven to diminish student achievement.
- We have the chance to recover and rebuild mental health through a commitment to trauma-informed care and social-emotional learning strategies.
- We have the obligation to flood our schools with the resources necessary to support health, mental health, and social services.

As we look to the future let us leave behind what has already failed us in the past, and instead focus on what will work in the best interests of our students' needs. 🏡

A recent history of assessment

March 9 – Gov. Murphy declares public health emergency

March 18 – Gov. Murphy orders all school buildings to close for in-person instruction

March 24 – NJDOE receives assessment waiver from USDE; Gov. Murphy announces cancellation of statewide assessment system for spring 2020

April 7 – Gov. Murphy waives exit-testing requirement for the Class of 2020

Aug. 13 – Gov. Murphy authorizes schools to open for in-person instruction subject to health and safety protocols

Sept. 2020 – USDE Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos sends letter to Council of Chief State School Officers announcing no statewide assessment waivers in 2020-21

Nov. 18 – NJDOE releases statewide assessment calendar for 2020-21

Nov. 25 – Federal government cancels the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)

Dr. Christine Miles is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She can be reached at cmiles@njea.org.

THE 5 W'S AND AN H OF THE NJEA EARLY CAREER NETWORK

BY MARIAH BELBER



Early Career Network

When you hear “NJEA Early Career Network,” chances are your first thought is of the NJEA Convention and a long line of members on Main Street NJEA waiting for their tickets to the popular Early Career Networking Night. While that is one of the Early Career Network’s biggest events of the year, there is so much more to this newer initiative from NJEA and NEA that is helping to shape the future of our union.

Since the pandemic began, the ECN has been working hard to support members in their first five years during this unprecedented time. We have partnered with NJEA staff to provide Google Classroom training, a certification and tenure “Ask me Anything” session, Chapter 44 (health insurance) workshops, and workshops about various virtual learning platforms. While these activities are geared toward members in their first five years, all members are invited and encouraged to attend.

During the summer of 2020, the ECN hosted a statewide mile challenge called The 180 Project. Over 220 members connected and strived to walk or run 180 miles within two months to represent the law that mandates New Jersey’s minimum number of instructional school days.

We are currently running another health and wellness event, “Beat the Blues,” where members will have three months to complete 100 workouts that last 20 minutes or more. During this, members will be able to connect through a Facebook group and participate in member-run workouts and meditations to help “beat” the winter blues!

WHY IS THE EARLY CAREER NETWORK IMPORTANT?

Now more than ever, getting NJEA members involved in the association early in their careers is critical. This allows our members to learn the inner workings of a union and understand why being a member is vital. It also allows early career members to connect with one another and discuss the wins and struggles they may have as a member in their first five years.

WHO IS PART OF THE EARLY CAREER NETWORK?

The Early Career Network, or ECN, is a group of members who collaborate with NJEA staff from the Organizational Development and UniServ divisions to invite members in their first five years into NJEA spaces. There are three groups based on location that plan events geared toward members who fall into the 0-5 years category, but all NJEA members are welcome to attend, from NJEA Preservice to NJREA.

Our three groups, Team North, Central Connection and Team South, are made up of passionate organizers and leaders from the counties they serve, and many are leaders in their local associations as early career members. These organizers are mostly in their first five years as educators or have just exited the “early career” stage.

WHAT DOES THE ECN DO?

In pre-COVID times, the three teams met and planned events geared toward members in their first five years that address some of NJEA’s core values: professional development, political action, advocacy, and racial and social justice. The ECN also holds events around leadership at local, county and state levels, to expose newer members to how the union is structured. Since many early career members are burdened with student debt, we have hosted events about student debt and how one of the NJEA/NEA Member Benefits programs can help provide relief.

WHEN DID THE ECN START?

Five years ago, a few early career members who held local leadership positions attended a Winter Leadership Conference. Looking around the space, they quickly realized that there were very few other early career folks in attendance. This realization led them to found the NJEA Early Career Network to encourage fellow early career members to get more involved with their union and advance their advocacy skills.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Are you a member in your first five years or just interested in supporting those who are? Make sure you check out our social media postings and join us at our next virtual event, and one day, in-person events again!

If you are a local or county leader who is interested in getting your early career members more engaged, please reach out to the Early Career Network in your area to discuss events near you or help getting your own Early Career Committee started!

Visit njea.org/earlycareer to learn more. On Facebook, Instagram and Twitter search for NJEA Early Career. 📱

Mariah Belber is the Pride chair and webmaster for the Highland Park Education Association. She is a teacher in the advanced learning program in Highland Park Public Schools. Belber can be reached at mariah.elizabeth@gmail.com.



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- Virtual Murder Mystery Party
- Book signings
- Broadway entertainment

Visit **memberbenefits.njea.org/live-home** and sign up for an account on Plum Benefits/Tickets at Work through NJEA's Plum Benefits member page.

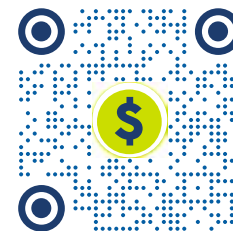


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Follow **@NJEAMemberBenefits** on Facebook for discounts and services that save you money.



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picture!



Access all this
and more at

memberbenefits.njea.org

A YEAR IN PRESERVICE

BY OLIVIA HAAS, THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, SECRETARY OF NJEA PRESERVICE

The year of 2020 has surprised us all. I would have never predicted that so many life changing events could have happened in a single year. In the midst of the happy moments, the sad moments, and the isolation 2020 has brought upon us, I am grateful that I decided to become a member of NJEA Preservice. Joining NJEA Preservice has opened up a new chapter in my life.

I joined in March of 2020 before the pandemic altered our lives. Since then, not only has my personal life changed, but my professional life has changed as well. When I became an NJEA Preservice member, I gained access to a variety of workshops with topics such as social justice, time management, and the challenges facing education. These workshops have provided me with a safe space where I can share my concerns with current educators and preservice members. Because of these workshops, I have learned from others' experiences. These workshops have provided me with solutions to struggles students and colleagues might be facing. I have also learned a variety of pedagogical practices to implement in my future classroom.

The first NJEA Preservice event I attended was a workshop with early career educators who shared stories about their experiences. In addition, I received advice on how to get a job, including valuable interview tips, that I will use in the future. The preservice workshops have taught me much in the last few months, and I look forward to attending more.

On June 1, 2020, I became the secretary of NJEA Preservice. I was honored to fulfill this leadership position and excited to be a part of something bigger than myself. Through the secretary position, I have met many amazing people and have had many positive experiences.

I have played an active role on the leadership team, and I attended a virtual leadership retreat over the summer. I met New Jersey's teacher of the year. I also met with preservice leaders across the nation monthly to discuss what they are doing for preservice members and see what we can do better.

Over the summer, I attended the 2020 NEA Aspiring Educators Virtual Conference, which included workshops, yoga sessions, and the opportunity to meet future educators from across the country.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL NJEA PRESERVICE MEMBERS

New this year, NJEA Preservice has game nights for its members, an idea that was developed by our leadership team. Together, my fellow officers and I planned the game nights for our members and had prizes sponsored by NEA Member Benefits, California Casualty, and Buyer's Edge, Inc. At our game nights, I've learned about the amazing benefits being an NJEA member has to offer. I also met new members and made connections.

In November, I attended the NJEA Convention virtually. This was my first time attending the convention, so I was excited that I was able to witness a virtual convention. I attended many sessions, met new people, and learned about the professional development opportunities that are available to me as an NJEA Preservice member.

I have gained so much from being a member of NJEA Preservice this year. From being a member, I obtained a leadership position, attended a wide variety of workshops, and received many benefits. I have made connections with educators and preservice members across the nation, and I have learned what it means to be an educator. I am eager to see what 2021 has in store for NJEA Preservice members.

Does your school host student teachers and practicum students?

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

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

NJEA Preservice members go on to become local association leaders after graduation and lead the profession on their respective campuses. To sign up for membership, visit njea.org/preservice. 📄

NEW HOMEBUYER'S WEBINAR

Presented by NJEA/NEA Member Benefits and Buyer's Edge Realty Executives Learn what to expect in your journey to homeownership. Use NJEA/NEA Member Benefits to make smart choices and save you money along the way!

Register at njea.org/mbwebinars.

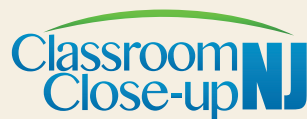




Classroom Close-up NJ looks back at **Barnyard Day**

High school students from the North Warren Regional School District showcase the school's agricultural program by hosting a preschool and early elementary community outreach program called Barnyard Day.

Students organize all the activities, which include hay rides, animal exhibits, planting in the greenhouse, and plenty of fun and games.



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.



SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT INCREASE

The Social Security Administration recently announced that there will be a 1.3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in retirees' Social Security benefit payments beginning in January 2021. Social Security benefits are adjusted annually to protect retirees from the effects of inflation. The COLA is an increase—if any—as measured by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For Social Security beneficiaries receiving Medicare, Social Security will not be able to compute their new benefit amount until after the Medicare premium amounts for 2021 are announced.

The increase in the COLA also influences the earnings limit for those collecting early Social Security. The earnings limit is the amount an early Social Security recipient can earn before a reduction in benefits takes place. The current earnings level is \$18,240 and will rise to \$18,960 in 2021.

Should you have any questions regarding Social Security payments, visit ssa.gov.

YEAR	INCREASE
2007	3.3%
2008	2.3%
2009	5.8%
2010	---
2011	---
2012	3.6%
2013	1.7%
2014	1.5%
2015	1.7%
2016	---
2017	0.3%
2018	2.0%
2019	2.8%
2020	1.6%
2021	1.3%

2021 MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS ANNOUNCED

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in November announced the 2021 premiums for Medicare Part B.

For most Medicare beneficiaries, premiums, deductibles and surcharges will increase. Premiums will rise to \$148.50 per month, an increase of \$3.90, while Medicare Part B deductibles will increase by \$5 to \$203. Retirees will also pay a different premium amount in 2021 if they fall into a different income-related category. This change happens once individual filers reach \$88,001 or a joint-filer reaches \$176,001, for income earned in 2019.

The Social Security Administration uses the income reported two years ago to determine a Part B beneficiary's premium. Thus, the income reported on a beneficiary's 2019 tax return is used to determine whether the beneficiary must pay a higher monthly Part B premium in 2021. Beneficiaries whose income has decreased significantly in the past two years may request that the information from more recent years be used to calculate the premium.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION RELATED TO SOCIAL SECURITY

For Medicare beneficiaries who have Medicare Part B premiums automatically deducted from Social Security benefits, the Social Security Cost of

Living Adjustment (COLA) must be large enough to cover the premium cost. Since some beneficiaries already pay lower-than-standard premiums because of this rule, the 1.3% increase in the 2021 cost-of-living adjustment won't be enough to cover the premium increase of \$148.50 per month, and, as a result, beneficiaries to whom this applies will continue to pay a lower premium.

REIMBURSEMENTS FOR PRMB RECIPIENTS

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

Additional details can be found by visiting the NJREA webpage at njea.org/njrea and will be in the January issue of the *NJEA Review*. If you have questions about your Medicare Part B premium, call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227.) Any ques-

tions regarding the reimbursement process should be directed to the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524. Members also can view updates via the division's "Letters to Retirees" at state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pension-retirees.shtml.

Around the counties

Due to COVID-19 concerns and restrictions, all meetings/events are subject to change. For questions, call your county REA. For trip details, check the county newsletter

ESSEX COUNTY REA'S winter meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 24 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Beverly Johnson Showers at 862-955-4177.

2021 MEDICARE PART D PREMIUMS ANNOUNCED

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

While there is no standard Medicare Part D cost associated with the program, enrollees whose incomes exceed the legislated threshold amounts—\$88,001 in 2019 for a beneficiary filing an individual income tax return or married and filing a separate return, and \$176,001 for a beneficiary filing a joint tax return—will pay a monthly, income-related payment. Please see the chart below for specifics.

INDIVIDUAL TAX FILERS	JOINT RETURN FILERS	2021 PREMIUMS
\$88,000 or below	\$176,000 or below	\$0.00
\$88,001 to \$111,000	\$176,001 to \$222,000	\$12.30
\$111,001 to \$138,000	\$222,001 to \$276,000	\$31.80
\$138,001 to \$165,000	\$276,001 to \$330,000	\$51.20
\$165,001 to \$499,999	\$326,001 to \$749,999	\$70.70
Above \$500,000	Above \$750,000	\$77.10

The Social Security Administration uses the income reported two years ago to determine the Part D beneficiary's payment. In other words, the income reported on a beneficiary's 2019 tax return is used to determine whether the beneficiary must pay a monthly, income-related payment in 2021. Beneficiaries whose incomes decreased significantly in the past two years may request that the information from more recent years be used to calculate the payment.

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

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



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STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA welcomed **DESIRÉE BRENNAN** to full-time staff on Dec. 1 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 2 office in Mullica Hill.

Brennan was a French and English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at Gateway Regional High School in Woodbury Heights for over 18 years. She was president of the Gateway Regional Education Association. Since 2019, Brennan served as a part-time NJEA consultant in Organizational Development and became a part-time NJEA UniServ consultant for Region 2 in 2020.

Brennan earned a bachelor's degree with honors in French and secondary education from Rutgers University and a master's degree in teacher leadership and ESL from Rowan University.

She lives in Sicklerville with her husband Jim.

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JANUARY & beyond

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings and events are virtual.

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 Conference

1/30

Saturday

Winter Leadership Conference I

2/6

Saturday

Educational Support Professionals Conference

2/20

Saturday

Winter Leadership Conference II

3/6

Saturday

Winter Leadership Conference III

3/26

Friday

NJEA Executive Committee and County Presidents Council meetings

3/27

Saturday

NJEA Delegate Assembly

4/10

Saturday

Higher Education Conference

deadlines

1/20 Winter Leadership Conference I
Event date: Jan. 30

1/22 ESP Conference
Event date: Feb. 6

2/10 Winter Leadership Conference II
Event date: Feb. 20

2/24 Winter Leadership Conference III
Event date: March 6



Save the Date

NJEA Higher Education Conference

Saturday, April 10

This will be a virtual event.

See the February NJEA Review for details.

LOOKING FORWARD: REINVESTING IN PUBLIC EDUCATION



Joe Biden, with then-NEA President Lily Eskelsen García, at the 2019 NEA Representative Assembly during a candidate forum

After a dizzyingly challenging year for educators, 2021 will begin on a better note as President-elect Joe Biden's education priorities begin to drive education policy in America. His plan is informed by professionals with actual classroom teaching experience, first and foremost among them is the incoming first lady, Dr. Jill Biden, a former high school teacher and current community college professor. While, at the time of this writing, Biden had not yet named his secretary of education nominee, he has publicly stated that it will be someone with classroom experience.

The most pressing task on the agenda will be working with Congress on coronavirus-related relief for schools, including critical funding for health and safety measures. The administration would be wise to revise and clarify guidance for schools regarding COVID-19, strengthening the safety protections for students and staff and outlining enforcement mechanisms for those districts that fail to comply.

Biden's plan also addresses everyday educational needs and proposes much-needed support. First, the president-elect plans to triple Title I funding and earmark some of those funds specifically to increase teacher pay, which is significantly lower than other professions that require comparable education and experience. Title I funding goes to low-income districts. Another administration priority is living up to the federal obligation to fully fund, within 10 years, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Further, Biden will seek funding to construct, renovate and modernize public school buildings.

The Biden education plan focuses on enhancing mental health resources for students, including drastically increasing the ranks of school psychologists, counselors, nurses, and social workers in order to double the number of health professionals currently employed in schools.

Additionally, the administration will seek to diversify the pool of public school educators by recruiting people of color to the profession. Biden

also intends to reinstitute school desegregation strategies that were in place during the Obama administration.

As for higher education, improving affordability is a major theme. Among the concerns Biden hopes to address is fixing the existing Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. Further, new loan forgiveness programs are planned that would forgive \$10,000 of student loan debt for every year of national or community service for up to five years. He has also expressed his support for tuition-free public colleges and universities for students from families whose annual income is below \$125,000.

On the other end of the spectrum, Biden's plan advocates for the institution of public pre-school for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Many of the programs will hinge upon the cooperation and control of Congress, which will

have to pass legislation and provide funding. As of press time, the fate of Congress is in the hands of Georgia, where run-off elections this month will determine which political party controls the closely divided Senate.

None of this means that we will never disagree with Biden administration. We will always advocate for students and our profession, whoever is in the White House. But President-elect Biden has shown that he respects educators and is committed to ensuring we have a seat at the table. There is a lot to look forward to as his administration's education plan is put into action. After four years of hostility and attacks, educators are ready to welcome an administration that understands we are allies and advocates in the work of building up our public schools and strengthening our democracy. 🇺🇸



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