

REVIEW

FEBRUARY
2021

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an education and advocacy resource

Kimberly Scott-Hayden

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KIMBERLY
SCOTT-HAYDEN

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PANDEMIC

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EXHIBITORS

T.E.A.C.H. VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021

Teaching, Equity, Access and Childhood Healing

SATURDAY,
APRIL 17, 2021

In these changing times, we must come together to enhance our professional learning, support one another on our professional journey and expand our educational community. Join us for this powerful conference.



KEYNOTES:

Dr. Ghodly Muhammad,

Culturally and Historically Responsive Education for Equity and Excellence

Priya Vulchi and Winona Guo,

Racial Literacy

Michael Eric Dyson,

In Caricature: Racial Profiling and Its Impact on Students of Color

SCHEDULE:

8:30-9 a.m.

Virtual Platform Opens

9 a.m.

Keynote and Debrief

10:30 a.m.

Keynote and Debrief

11:45 a.m.

Lunch and Entertainment

12:45 p.m.

Afternoon Focus Sessions (*Select One*)

2:15 p.m.

Keynote and Closing

In addition to the keynote addresses, participants can select one focus session for the afternoon.

Cost: **FREE** for NJEA Members.

The conference provides five hours of professional learning credit. Participants must attend the entire conference to receive a certificate.

The Power of Student Voice Guiding Our Growth – **Shan Byrd (she/her):**

Student voice helps teach us to become more self-aware, self-reflective and inclusive practitioners. In this session, we will lift up students' voices to share youth perspectives on issues of equity and inclusion in the classroom. We will explore strategies for professional growth through self-reflection.

STEAM Teacher Leaders for Racial Literacy – **Kristin Nakaishi (she/her), Jim Hall (he/him) and Ikechukwu Onyema (he/him)**

In August 2020, a group of STEM teachers came together with the ambition of using our content areas to contribute to the broader movement for Black lives. Since then, we've co-designed a space of peer learning, self-organizing, and collaboration for STEM teachers to advance racial justice. Come and learn what we do and how we do it.

AMHOTINO Curriculum Implementation (Spotlight on K-6) – **Tamar LaSure-Owens**

The AMHOTINO (Amistad, Holocaust, Latino) curriculum implementation allows educators to offer students an extension, expansion, and enlightenment into American history that is inclusive, accurate and unbiased. Throughout this session, participants will focus a lens on learning progressions that will identify areas of understanding upon which to build.

Asbury Park Healing Together with KYDS – **Alisha De Lorenzo (she/her) and Rodney Salomon (he/him/they)**

In 2015, a movement began to center healing and transformational experiences for youth and adults who work with youth in Asbury Park. All members of a community have access to grow and thrive when we engage minds, bodies and souls in the process of healing. Hear from Asbury Park's "Konscious Youth Leaders" about what it takes to create a self-healing community.

The Role of Collective Efficacy to Address Inequity – **Dr. Stefani Arzonetti Hite (she/her)**

When school leaders—both formal and informal—work to flatten hierarchies long present in schools, the resulting empowerment develops cadres of equity champions, motivated to ensure ongoing collaboration to meet the needs of marginalized or disadvantaged students. In this session, we learn how two schools successfully closed opportunity gaps for their students with an intentional focus on building collective efficacy.

Healing Justice and The Impact of Incarceration and the Carceral State on Muslim Youth in the Classroom – **Reda A. Taleb, J.D. (she/her/hers),**

Detroit-based entrepreneur and criminal justice reform advocate

What does healing justice look like when educators are informed about the impact of incarceration and the carceral state on Muslim youth? Research demonstrates that addressing the root of the trauma will substantially change the trajectory of a person's life. Join Reda Taleb in learning about trauma-informed care for educators seeking to help Muslim youth transition from trauma to transformation in the classroom and beyond.

Healing Centered Schools – **Linsey McMurrin and Stacy Bender-Fayette**

We know that students do best when they feel safe and connected. This session will discuss how understanding NEAR Science (Neuroscience, Epigenetics, ACEs and Resilience) can help transform schools to meet the needs of students and their families.

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Register at
[njea.org/teach.](https://njea.org/teach)

South Orange Maplewood EA (SOMEA) members protested their return to school buildings on Jan. 13 prior to the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine for staff. The first phase of students was scheduled to return Jan. 19. Pictured is SOMEA Pride Chair Kristie Thomas at Columbia High School.



Parent Melanie Conklin shows her support for SOMEA members.



Adam Ziering at Columbia High School's front door.



Parent Libby Clarke joins Seth Boyden Elementary School teachers Carol West and Rosemary Connell.



FEATURES



24 | MEET KIMBERLY SCOTT-HAYDEN

Kimberly Scott-Hayden is the 2021 NJEA Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the Year. The list of her accomplishments and acts of service is impressive but does not do justice to the energy that Scott-Hayden brings to the work she does. Her work as an ESP in East Orange provides Scott-Hayden with the opportunity to continue her lifetime of giving to the community, to colleagues, to students, and her union.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



30 | LET'S REINVENT TESTING

Testing needs to be reinvented. Instead of one-and-done paper-pencil testing, repurposed computer-based testing software can help transform the classroom into a student-centered, collaborative experience.

BY GLEN COLEMAN



32 | LEARNING FROM THE 1918 FLU PANDEMIC

As schools continue to navigate the choppy waters roiled by COVID-19 even as we look forward to finally receiving a vaccine, it is important to remember that this isn't an unprecedented crisis. History can be a helpful teacher, and an overview of how New Jersey dealt with its schools during those fraught months in 1918 and 1919 can be both enlightening and instructive.

BY BILL COLE



34 | VISIT THE NJEA CONVENTION EXHIBITORS

At this past year's NJEA Convention, you interacted virtually with new exhibitors and visited your old favorites. We'd like to reintroduce to you the exhibitors who supported us at the convention. Please browse the listing, visit the exhibitors' websites, and reach out to forge new connections.

COLUMNS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 7*ESPs: Heroes of our school communities***THE ADVOCATE 8***Know. Lead. Act.***THE BULLETIN BOARD 10***Cool stuff to check out***THE LAW AND YOU 13***The future of snow days***THE NJEA REPORT 14***Education in the news***JUSTICE 23***Freestyle Fridays***HEALTH AND SAFETY 38***SDA grant funding needed***THE TOOLBOX 41***Social media PD***SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY 42***Workshops and conferences***PROFESSIONAL****DEVELOPMENT 43***Some evaluation reminders***SPEAK OUT 45***Education is political***EARLY CAREER 46***Relying on community***MEMBER BENEFITS 47***Get your money's worth***PRESERVICE MEMBERS 48***Inclusion through integration***CLASSROOM CLOSE-UP 49***Bubbles for autism***RETIRED MEMBERS 50***News and events***GOVERNANCE 52***Proposed amendments to NJEA Constitution***STAFF NEWS 62***Hires and promotions***COMING UP 65***What's next at NJEA***FINAL EXAM 66***Physical and mental health*

40%

The percentage of New Jersey elementary schools with no counselor on staff in 2018-19.

Source: Education Law Center, "New Jersey's School Counselor Crunch," Dec. 15, 2020. (edlawcenter.org)



On the cover

East Orange Maintenance Association President Kimberly Scott-Hayden, an inventory control clerk for the East Orange School District, is the NJEA 2021 ESP of the Year. Scott-Hayden's work provides her with the opportunity to continue her lifetime of giving to the community, to colleagues, to students, and her union. See pages 24-29.



PHOTO BY
Jennifer Cohn Marsh



GOOD NEWS

Best AP Scores in the Nation

New Jersey is first in the nation in the percentage of Advanced Placement (AP) exams taken by public high school students that result in scores high enough to qualify for college credit.

Source: College Board, "AP Cohort Data: Graduating Class of 2019."



VOLUME 94 NUMBER 07

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REVIEW

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ESPS: THE HEROES OF OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITIES



NJEA President Marie Blistan addresses the NJEA Equity Alliance Weekend. The conference was held virtually. Read more on pages 16-17.

Educational support professionals (ESP) are truly the unsung heroes of our school communities. No one who works in public education receives the respect and recognition they deserve, but that is especially true for our ESP colleagues.

That is why we fought so hard to secure job justice bills that would provide ESP staff with due process and prevent subcontracting during the course of a contract. This was a multiyear initiative that depended on the activism and endurance of all our members. As a result of our efforts, we were ultimately successful in passing the strongest due process law in the nation for ESPs and protections against privatization that made districts address issues at the bargaining table.

ESP staff provide essential services, without which our schools would not function. They go above and beyond their job descriptions every day to ensure that New Jersey's public school children are able to learn in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. During the pandemic, ESP staff have stepped up to ensure that students have access to nutritious meals, safe and clean school buildings, technology, and a vital connection between home and school when distance learning made us feel so far apart.

ESP members are essential to our union, as well. NJEA would not be the strongest public school employee union in the nation without them and their tireless efforts to advocate on behalf of their colleagues, their students and their communities.

This month, we profile Kimberly Scott-Hayden, the 2021 NJEA ESP of the Year and an inventory control clerk in the school district she attended as a student, East Orange Public Schools. Kimberly's story is an extraordinary one of service and tireless energy to benefit her students, colleagues, and community. I know that you will be as inspired by her as I have been for the many years I have known her as an active and engaged member of our NJEA family.

I hope that you will join with me in celebrating ESPs. Together, as a united association, we have built the best system of public education in the nation. Together, we will face whatever other challenges come our way. Thank you for all that you do to make the future brighter for our students, our communities, our profession and our country.

Marie Blistan

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: Governor Murphy's State of the State Address begins with our NJEA member and leader in Trenton, Twanda Taylor, demonstrating the work of our members every day with our students. Her lesson today: we will get through this TOGETHER!

On Jan. 16, Gov. Phil Murphy's State of the State address, delivered virtually, began with an introductory video featuring a nurse, two small-business owners, and teacher and Trenton EA President Twanda Taylor. NJEA President Marie Blistan posted screenshots of Taylor's appearance. The full video and the governor's address can be viewed at bit.ly/stsnj21.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: So important that the voices of Paterson residents will finally be heard again in support of their public schools!

On Jan. 6, at its virtual meeting, the New Jersey State Board of Education returned full local control to Paterson Public Schools. NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller joined federal, state and local leaders in congratulating Paterson, saying in part, "I'm very pleased that we're finally taking the step to give the voice and the power back to Paterson residents, particularly families who rely on the city's public schools. It's a fundamental part of a democracy, and it's something that we all have faith in. We should make sure that our institutions are governed locally, by the people. Our schools are an important part of holding up that ideal." Spiller's remarks can be viewed on his Facebook page.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Breaking good news from the governor, including the suspension of SGOs in this year's evaluations! This didn't just happen because policymakers thought it was the right thing to do—it was a combination of member organizing and action and leadership and governance's continual lobbying efforts on all levels. Thanks to all who advocated!

On Jan. 11, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty shared a screenshot of Gov. Phil Murphy's announcement on Facebook that he had signed an executive order that, for the 2020-21 school year, waives the graduation test requirement, removes SGOs from the calculation for teacher evaluation, and extends the time certified teachers can serve as substitutes. The governor wrote that "This is not a regular school year. We have to be more flexible and more understanding." See Page 20 for more.

KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

NJEA MEMBERS TO VOTE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT QUESTIONS

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA), the association's policy-making body, voted at its Nov. 7, 2020, and Jan. 9, 2021, meetings to accept recommendations made by the NJEA Constitution Review Committee to place several constitutional amendments on the spring 2021 election ballot.

The constitutional questions cover the following issues:

- Clarifying the limited rights in two special membership categories—general professional members and subscribing members—and aligning the language in both of those categories.
- Enhancing the formula used to determine the minimum representation goal of ethnic-minority members on the DA by adjusting how many statewide at-large ethnic-minority DA members and alternates would need to be elected by the DA to achieve that goal if the numbers of ethnic-minority DA members regularly elected fell short.
- Approving proposed editorial changes designed to clarify, update, and improve the NJEA Constitution to enhance readability, consistency, and style throughout the association's main governing document. These proposed editorial changes resulted from an in-depth review of the Constitution conducted by the Constitution Review Committee, the first such study completed in decades.

The proposed constitutional amendments and more detailed information on these questions are spelled out in this edition of the *Review*, beginning on Page 52.

CLEARING THE RECORD

The January 2021 edition of the *NJEA Review* included the NJEA organizational directory. The listing for staff in the Membership office of the Business Division was omitted. The staff members are:

Damien McKeever, manager; Evelyn Dones, membership specialist; Marisol Ruiz, chief-business services; Tammi Antonelli, principal clerk-bookkeeper; Charisse Huff, principal clerk-bookkeeper; Lesley Newman, principal clerk-bookkeeper; Susan Walker, principal clerk-bookkeeper; Karyn Snyder, principal clerk-bookkeeper; and Murjani Andrews, principal clerk-bookkeeper.

In addition, in the section for the Research and Economic Services Division, Lorraine Jones should have been listed as the administrative assistant in Member Benefits. Dan Goldman, who is listed with "Pension and Benefits," should also have been listed with "Statistics and School Funding."

The editor of the *NJEA Review* apologizes for the omissions.

DA TO HOLD NEA DIRECTOR ELECTION

Nominations for three of New Jersey's nine representatives on the NEA Board of Directors and for alternates will be accepted by the NJEA Executive Committee in February and submitted to the Delegate Assembly (DA) for its virtual March 27 meeting.

The NEA Board of Directors is responsible for setting general policies between annual NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) meetings. It consists of at least one director from each state affiliate, at-large directors to meet representational guarantees, and representatives for students and retired members. Each state is entitled to an additional director per 20,000 active and life members.

The elected board members will serve three-year terms from Sept. 1, 2021 to Aug. 31, 2024. Elected alternates will serve one-year terms beginning Sept. 1, 2021.

The NJEA Executive Committee will submit nominations to the DA in a report in March. Additional nominations may be made by DA members from the floor. No nominating speeches are permitted.

Any NJEA-NEA member, who is also a member of their affiliated local and county association, where eligible, may run. Nominations shall include the nominee's name, school district or higher education institution, and county or other unit of representation.

If there are more than three candidates in either category and the DA meeting is conducted virtually, the DA rules provide that DA members will subsequently vote by mail to elect the NEA directors and alternates. The DA rules detail the nomination and election process.

Under the DA rules, when nominations for New Jersey NEA director are taken at a virtual meeting, candidates will be given an opportunity to submit a recorded speech that may not exceed two minutes. The recordings must be submitted to a provided site within four days of the DA meeting. All speeches that meet the time-limit requirements will be uploaded to a site that will be shared with DA members. The recordings will be listed by position and in alphabetical order based on candidates' surnames.

For more information or to sign up to attend the virtual DA meeting, members may visit njea.org/da on or after March 17. The deadline to sign up to attend is noon on the Thursday prior to the DA meeting.

Anyone interested in being nominated as an NEA state director or alternate should contact their NJEA Executive Committee member. For more information, contact the NJEA Governance Office at 609-599-4561, ext. 2293.

“

The NEA Board of Directors is responsible for setting general policies between annual NEA Representative Assembly meetings

Sandra H. Class of 2007

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COOL STUFF



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New Jersey seniors can apply online for the annual Janet Logan Daily Foundation Scholarship, which recognizes college-bound students from varying academic backgrounds who have routinely demonstrated maturity and integrity within and beyond the classroom.

Applications will be accepted until April 1, 2021. Visit janetlogandailyfoundation.org to review eligibility requirements and submit an online application.

QUICK TIP: EQUITY MAPS

Considering national dialogues around race, inequality, and discrimination in America, educators—more than ever—must ensure that our classrooms and schools foster equity. Embedded within equity are the concepts of listening to all voices and allowing those from marginalized groups to speak their truths. Unfortunately, studies consistently show that, in classrooms nationwide, white male students participate in classes at a disproportionately high rate. This leaves female students, students of color, and others out of the conversations that are happening in our classrooms.

The iPad app named “Equity Maps” is a tool that assists educators in tracking the level of equity within students’ classroom participation. The app is designed to track the level of participation in classrooms and discussions through allowing educators to input students’ gender identity, race, ethnicity, and other demographic factors. Educators can then, using the intuitive interface, track students’ participation during a class

or discussion. Once the class or discussion has ended, the app displays the level of equity in terms of the number of times students participated, the length of “air time” each student had, and more. Additionally, the app can track the types of comments students made during the class or discussion, making it an extremely useful tool for teachers using whole-class discussions as a regular pedagogical technique.

Equity Maps has helped my students and me reflect on our class participation and make self-regulated adjustments to ensure that all voices are heard equally. If education is the “great equalizer,” let’s embody equity, and make certain that our classrooms are equitable.

Submitted by Jonathan Lancaster, Bergen County Vocational-Technical Schools EA

Do you have a quick tip that could help your colleagues? Email it to NJEAREview@njea.org.



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Questions, contact
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THE FUTURE OF SNOW DAYS

By Kaitlyn Dunphy, Esq.

Snow days bring up nostalgic memories of childhood for many. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, not everyone will be so lucky as to enjoy frolicking in the snow on an unexpected day off from school. A change in the law has allowed remote learning to replace snow days, but only for the time being.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) requires schools to provide public school facilities for at least 180 days of the school year in order to receive state funding. This past spring, the Legislature amended the applicable statute to respond to the need to switch to remote and distance learning. The law was revised to allow virtual or remote instruction to count toward this 180-day requirement. However, this is only the case when the school is closed for three or more consecutive days due to a declared state emergency, declared public health emergency, or when the appropriate health agency has directed a closure for public health reasons.

This amendment remains in effect during the ongoing public health emergency, since all schools were closed for at least three consecutive days during the spring. Therefore, the NJDOE is permitting remote instruction to count toward

the 180-day requirement if the school is closed during inclement weather, but only during the current public health emergency.

While school districts are currently permitted to offer remote instruction in place of closing school for a snow day, this does not mean that school districts are doing away with them completely. There's no requirement that snow days be eliminated altogether. Some superintendents have gone on record as still supporting the use of snow days, citing students' social and emotional need for a break, especially during this trying year.

Others have taken the middle road, saying that it depends on whether power or internet service goes out during the storm. Perhaps blackout days will be the future snow days? Still others have said they will look to the calendar they have set for the year, particularly whether and how many snow days are available.

School districts often build snow days into the year's calendar. If not, or if they are all used, the remaining options are to extend the end of the school year or to hold instruction on days that were previously scheduled as off, possibly cutting into spring break. Some superintendents may choose to use the snow days built into the

calendar, but if more are needed than planned for, remote learning could be used in place of the time-honored snow day. Or they may simply decide to hold instruction remotely instead of calling a snow day for continuity of learning.

What does this all mean for the future of snow days? Will they be a relic of the past? Not necessarily.

The amended law only comes into play when schools are closed for three or more consecutive days because of a declared state emergency, declared public health emergency or when the appropriate health agency has directed a closure for public health reasons. If these preconditions aren't met, then remote instruction would not count toward the 180-day requirement that schools need to meet to be eligible for state aid. A new statutory amendment would be needed to replace snow days with remote instruction when there's no ongoing emergency. For now, the future of snow days remains to be seen.

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A change in the law has allowed remote learning to replace snow days, but only for the time being.

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

School nurses among first NJEA members to receive COVID vaccine

While the music over the supermarket intercom coincidentally played Pat Benatar's 1980 classic "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," school nurses in communities surrounding the Mullica Hill ShopRite in Gloucester County lined up to receive their first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine. Among those in line on Jan. 11, the second day the vaccine was available to school nurses, were Deptford's Josephine Gazzola, Kim Helfand, and Bonnie Boucher; Pitman's Sarah Weng; and Delsea Regional's Cindy Mendenhall.

Boucher explained that after hearing the news that ShopRite would be dispensing the vaccine, school nurses had been texting each other for the latest news on when the vaccine would be available to them.

"Communicating with each other got us here today," Boucher said.

ShopRite staff pharmacist Adam Fanelle said that he could tell the moment when school nurses started tweeting about being able to get the vaccine. That's when the calls started pouring in for appointments.

Those currently eligible for the vaccine choose an appointment time—at the Mullica Hill ShopRite appointment are made on the hour and half-hour.

You should set aside an hour for the appointment. The line was not long on Jan. 11 at 1 p.m. but the paperwork takes about 10 minutes to complete. Health care professionals Niketia Walker and Jessica Hollembeak guide those receiving the vaccine through the paperwork and the overall process. You'll then spend about another 10 minutes with the pharmacists as they set up your dose and enter the appropriate data into the computer.

After you receive the shot, which takes less than 10 seconds, you are required to wait in a seating area for at least 15 minutes to ensure that you do not have an allergic reaction. Nationwide, such reactions have been rare.

The wait didn't bother Weng, who in addition to being one of the first school nurses in the state to receive the vaccine, had also been among the school nurses who volunteered at COVID-19 testing sites in Gloucester County on the day they first opened in April.

"Woohoo! Vaccine #1 in the bag!" Weng exclaimed proudly on her Facebook page from the ShopRite parking lot as she sported the Band-Aid on her upper arm.



School nurses from Deptford were among the first NJEA members to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. From left: Bonnie Boucher, Josephine Gazzola, and Kim Helfand.



Pitman school nurse Sarah Weng demonstrates the power of the COVID-19 vaccine.



Deptford school nurse Kim Helfand receives her first COVID-19 vaccine shot at the ShopRite pharmacy in Mullica Hill from staff pharmacist Adam Fanelle.

Despite the wait time, the school nurses from Deptford followed the injunction to leave no one behind.

"I'm holding everyone up," Gazzola joked, being the last of three to receive her shot.

All of the nurses were optimistic about a future in which everyone who can receive the vaccine takes it.

"It feels like we're truly turning a corner," said Mendenhall.

Helfand, a nurse at Deptford High School who serves as the district's head nurse, said that she would recommend that people treat the vaccine as an extra layer of safety and for the time being continue social distancing practices and wear masks.

"The science is there behind the shots," Helfand said. "They took all the steps to get the approval. Nothing was skipped over. It's important to believe in the science. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel."

NJEA Delegate Assembly adopts vaccine policy

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) overwhelmingly adopted three recommendations in a joint report from the Working Conditions and Youth Services committees that outlines association policy regarding vaccines. The policy recommendations address student vaccination, access to vaccination for educators, and the need for a vaccine education and confidence campaign, that acknowledges both the racially disparate impact of the COVID virus as well as the historic abuse and mistreatment of individuals and communities of color in the medical arena.

The recommendations, each receiving more than 90% approval, read as follows:

Recommendation No. 1: that NJEA believes that vaccines are essential medical tools in preventing infectious diseases. The association acknowledges that vaccines must be pervasive to be effective. NJEA also believes that parents/guardians should follow vaccination guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the N.J. Department of Health. The association further believes that the New Jersey Legislature should establish clear guidelines for waivers that minimize the numbers of unvaccinated students to those necessary due to documented medical conditions.

Recommendation No. 2: that NJEA believes that educators, with school nurses having first access, should receive priority access to COVID-19 vaccines because of the importance of safe, equitable, and effective in-person instruction and support, and our members' role in delivering nutrition, instructional materials, and remote instruction to our students even when school buildings are closed. NJEA further believes that any COVID-19 vaccine mandates for school employees should be the same as COVID-19 vaccine mandates for the general public.

Recommendation No. 3: that NJEA believes evidence-based vaccination campaigns are integral in maintaining student and community health. NJEA will support statewide efforts to build vaccine confidence and remind the public of appropriate mitigation strategies to stop the spread of disease.

We recognize that racial inequities have been made exponentially worse due to the cross-sector impacts of the pandemic, and this will require us to stand and advocate with our students and their families. The CDC and other government agencies should consistently and explicitly acknowledge and communicate the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities and other people of color and take steps to ensure vaccines are readily accessible and available to our most impacted communities. Vaccine distribution planning and evidence-based vaccination campaigns must specifically address the disproportionate suffering in communities of color and must account for vaccine hesitancy based on historical abuses and exploitation of communities of color. NJEA will advocate that any such vaccination campaigns include representation of Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and other people of color.

Vaccine plans must also ensure equitable access to vaccines in rural and isolated communities.

NJEA honors four leaders in social justice and equity

NJEA honored four New Jerseyans for their commitment and work for social justice and equity: retired educator and historian Shirley Satterfield, teacher Thomas “TJ” Whitaker Jr., school social worker Philip McCormick and Assemblywoman Linda Carter.

The awards were presented during the 2021 NJEA Equity Alliance Conference.

Six NJEA committees that play key roles in the association’s efforts to create a more just and equitable climate in public education—and in our union—collaborated to host the conference: the Human and Civil Rights Committee, the Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee, the Urban Education Committee, the Women in Education Committee, and the Exceptional Children Committee.

Held remotely over the weekend of Jan. 15, the conference opened with an address from NJEA’s officers and the chairs of each committee.

In her remarks, NJEA President Marie Blistan focused on why educators and why NJEA must be leaders in social justice and equity, taking a moment to say the names of some of those lost, murdered because of their race: George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rashard Brooks, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice and Philando Castile.

“We say their names for what happened this summer, and the summer before that, and the summer before that,” Blistan said. “We say their names for next summer and the hope for a different summer in the years beyond. We say their names so the world—so we—may never forget the high cost of living in a society when institutional racism remains unchecked. In some corners, embraced and even celebrated. We say their names as a daily reminder that our nation’s soul is sick and needs to be healed through love.”

Baruti Kafele, a former elementary school teacher in East Orange, a middle and high school teacher in four different urban schools, including Newark Tech, which went from a low-performing school in need of improvement to national recognition, which included *U.S. News and World Report* recognizing it three times as one of America’s best high schools.

Today, he is one of the most sought after school leadership experts and education speakers in America. Kafele focused on educating across all disciplines from a social justice perspective.

“Social justice education is the ongoing, student-centered, exploration, examination, and assessment of the world upon which your students exist through their own lens,” Kafele said. “It’s an interdisciplinary critical analysis of the world around them with respect to their relationship with it and how they fit in it via their own self-expression relative to issues of social justice, social injustice, and overall systemic and individual racism whether it be unconscious, implicit, or explicit.”

Kafele highlighted the student-centered nature of teaching for social justice.

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When we infuse or incorporate social justice into our classrooms it’s got to be about the children.

“When we infuse or incorporate social justice into our classrooms it’s got to be about the children,” Kafele said. “It can never be about us. It doesn’t mean we don’t have a role. But it’s not about our politics. It’s not about our worldview. As the youngster, I don’t need to hear your [the teacher’s] interpretation of whatever it is. I need you to hear mine as the student.”

Over the course of the weekend, attendees participated in two to three of 15 equity focused workshops. The weekend concluded with another keynote, this one from Damon Lee, a New Jersey native from a family of educators who went on to play a principal role on hundreds of entertainment projects in film, television and online content.

Lee reflected on his experiences and as Black public school student on New Jersey and as an adult in the education and entertainment worlds.



Shirley Satterfield

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Award
NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee

“Shirley Satterfield has been involved with many organizations during her ongoing career as a teacher, school counselor, researcher, historian, and tour guide and embodies the spirit of this award,” said NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee Chair Kimberly Scott-Hayden.

Shirley Satterfield, a retired Princeton High School guidance counselor and local historian, was raised in Princeton, representing the sixth generation of her family to live in the community.

Satterfield experienced Princeton’s racial evolution firsthand, attending the Witherspoon School for Colored Children when segregation was still the official and explicit policy in Princeton Public Schools. Princeton’s began to integrate in 1947, following the landmark New Jersey Supreme Court decision in *Hedgepeth and Williams v. Board of Education*, Trenton, NJ in 1944. She transferred to Nassau Street School and later was graduated from Princeton High School.

Prior to teaching and serving as a school counselor at Princeton High School, Satterfield worked in East Windsor. While at Princeton High School, she founded the historic high school female leadership group, P.U.L.S.E, which stands for Pride, Unity, Leadership, Sisterhood, and Esteem and works to further understanding about and respect for individuals, regardless of their ethnicity, race, or gender.

She led the fight to have her neighborhood—now known as Witherspoon-Jackson—declared as Princeton’s 20th historic district. She serves as president of the Board of Trustees of Witherspoon-Jackson Historical and Cultural Society, which is dedicated to researching, preserving, understanding, and celebrating the history of African-Americans in Princeton. Under her leadership, 26 plaques are being placed around the neighborhood’s Heritage Trail.

She also established the Albert E. Hinds Memorial Walking Tour, which seeks further to expand awareness of Princeton’s African-American history and honors the late Princeton history enthusiast and social justice, community, and civil rights activist.



Thomas "TJ" Whitaker Jr.
Judith Owens Spirit Award Recipient
NJEA Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee

"TJ is a fearless advocate for his students, working to close achievement gaps, to modify leveling and discipline practices, and to bring in professional development opportunities to ensure racial and social justice," said NJEA

Minority Leadership and Recruitment

Committee Chair Tiffanie ThrBak.

Thomas "TJ" Whitaker, Jr., an English language arts teacher and community advocate at Columbia High School in Maplewood, where he has taught for the past 15 years. During his years of service, he has used his varied responsibilities, including serving as the district's affirmative action officer, to empower and inspire his students, colleagues, and the community at large.

Whitaker serves as the faculty advisor of CHS' newly formed Black Student Union (BSU). The BSU provides students with a platform to share—with the staff and the student body—their experiences with racism and ways to better serve all students. Despite some obstacles, within less than a year of BSU's inception, students led an engaging and thought-provoking assembly discussion on institutional racism and bias in the school and community, educating staff and students about ways of working to overcome it.

More recently, Whitaker established a Youth-Led Participatory Action Research (YPAR) group, in which students work to find and present statistical data and best practices in working to achieve social justice in schools. Additionally, Whitaker was one of the founders of the MapSO Freedom School, which serves to provide professional development in working to create social justice-oriented classrooms and anti-racism curricula.

Following events of implicit and explicit racism in the U.S., the MapSO Freedom School hosted events, including a "Charlottesville Teach-In" to discuss ways of being allies to students and proponents of social justice in the classroom. The MapSo Freedom School has worked in conjunction with various organizations including the South Orange-Maplewood Education Association (SOMEA), the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education, the South Orange-Maplewood Community Coalition on Race, and the Black Parents Workshop.



Philip McCormick
Equality Champion Award Recipient
NJEA Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee

"It would be hard to find an educator who has done so much during the past few years to advocate for queer youth and staff than our winner this year," said NJEA Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Committee Chair Thomas Tamburello.

Philip McCormick is a school social worker and case manager at South Orange-Maplewood's Columbia High School. His involvement in LGBTQ+ advocacy spans local, county, state, and national contexts. He served on the NJEA SOGI Committee as Essex County representative from 2014 to 2019 and on the Essex County Education Association LGBTQ+ Committee from 2016 to 2020, including as its co-chairperson from 2016 to 2019 and from 2019 to 2020.

McCormick helped re-establish the Northern New Jersey chapter of GLSEN, which champions LGBTQ issues in K-12 education. He was the chapter's co-chairperson from 2016 to 2018 and an Executive Board member from 2018 to 2020. He appeared in a segment of "One-on-one with Steve

Aubato" at the 2018 NJEA Convention to discuss his work.

McCormick participated in training for the National S.E.E.D. (Seeking Educational Equality and Diversity) Project in 2013. After being trained, he led a S.E.E.D. cohort during the 2013-2014 school year, in which teachers and ESPs met monthly to expose implications of privilege and oppression related to race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, age, and physical and mental ability.

Part of GLSEN's work involves promoting inclusive policies, which McCormick helped support in his work with his chapter. Philip also participated in the NJEA LGBTQ+ Curriculum Cohort, in response to legislation calling for an LGBTQ+ inclusive curriculum, to help teachers prepare more inclusive lessons for LGBTQ+ students and students of color.



Assemblywoman Linda Carter
Elizabeth Allen Award
NJEA Women in Education Committee

"Assemblywoman Linda Carter has been leading the way to help women succeed both in and out of the classroom and has been a trailblazer in the New Jersey Legislature," said NJEA Women in Education Committee Chair Fatimah Hayes.

Linda Carter has spent her career fighting for the underprivileged and middle-class communities. She has served locally for nearly two decades, as a member of the Plainfield City Council and as a member of the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders—now known as the Union County Board of County Commissioners—earning a reputation as a bold progressive, and pragmatic trailblazer willing to take on a wide array of challenges that affect her communities.

On May 24, 2018, Carter, a lifelong resident of the City of Plainfield, was appointed to serve as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly representing the 22nd Legislative District, composed of Union, Middlesex and Somerset counties to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Assemblyman Gerald B. Green. Shortly thereafter, Carter was elected at a special election held on November 6, 2018, to fill the unexpired term.

Carter currently serves on the Science, Innovation, and Technology Committee, the Telecommunications and Utilities Committee, the Law and Public Safety Committee and was recently selected to serve on the New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus 2020 Census Reapportionment Policy Committee.

Carter is an NJEA member who works as a structured learning experience teacher coordinator for the Passaic Public Schools in Passaic City. She serves on NJEA's Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee.

While serving in the Assembly, Carter has:

- Supported a bill that directs the N.J. Department of Education to develop an outreach program to encourage young women and minorities to pursue postsecondary degrees and careers in STEM.
- Sponsored a bill that authorizes the Secretary of Higher Education to impose a fine against an institution of higher education that fails to appropriately respond to a student's allegation of sexual assault by another student.
- Sponsored a bill that requires institutions of higher education to report any allegation of sexual misconduct by health care professionals to the licensing board for investigation.
- Sponsored "Emma's Law," which requires school buses that transport students with special needs to be equipped with certain safety features.

NJEA and NEA congratulate Education Secretary-designate Miguel Cardona



Photo credit: Connecticut State Colleges and Universities

On Dec. 21, then President-elect Joe Biden said that he had selected Connecticut Commissioner of Education Miguel Cardona as his pick to lead the U.S. Department of Education.

Cardona began his career in public education as a fourth-grade teacher at Israel Putnam School in Meriden, Connecticut. He went on to become the youngest principal in Connecticut at age 28 at Hanover Elementary School—also in Meriden. Prior to his appointment as Connecticut's commissioner of education in August 2019, Cardona was assistant superintendent in Meriden.

As a public school student himself, the son of parents who had moved to Meriden from Puerto Rico, he lived in public housing and did not speak English as a young child.

NJEA RESPONDS TO CARDONA NOMINATION

NJEA's officers, President Marie Blistan, Vice President Sean M. Spiller and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, released the following statement on Cardona's nomination:

"We congratulate Dr. Cardona and look forward to working with him to help all schools in the United States emulate the success of New Jersey's best-in-the-nation public schools. Our public schools can serve as a model of what is possible when committed educators, involved families and forward-thinking communities work together to provide students with the support and resources needed to thrive socially, emotionally and academically.

"We trust that Dr. Cardona shares our commitment to racial, social and economic justice for our students and the communities in which they live. There is so much work still to do to overcome systemic oppression and discrimination and achieve true equity for all students. We will continue to pursue that critical work in New Jersey, and we are pleased that we will have an ally in Washington pushing for that across the nation."

NEA PRESIDENT BECKY PRINGLE LOOKS FORWARD TO CARDONA'S LEADERSHIP

"When a record number of Americans turned out to vote for President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, they sent a resounding message demanding justice, stronger public schools and more opportunities for all students—Black and white, Native and newcomer, Hispanic and Asian alike.

"In these tough times, students, educators, and families face unprecedented challenges—from the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis to the systemic racism that has held back too many students for too long. We look forward to partnering with Secretary-designate Miguel Cardona in taking on these challenges together.

"As a former public-school teacher, he understands what's at stake for students and promises to respect the voice of educators as we work to safely reopen school buildings, colleges, and university campuses, while also forging a path to transform public education into a racially and socially just and equitable system that is designed to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

"Dr. Cardona will help fulfill President-elect Biden's promises to make community college free, tackle the student debt crisis, and enable college graduates to pursue careers in education and public service by expanding and simplifying the Public Service Loan Forgiveness and Teacher Loan Forgiveness programs.

"Secretary-designate Cardona is someone who respects educators as the professionals that they are, will listen to our experiences as the people who know the names of our students, and ensure that we have a voice in developing and implementing education policy.

"As someone who has experience as a fourth-grade teacher in a public school classroom and later being named Connecticut's principal of the year, he understands that educators go above and beyond to help students succeed.

"Through his lived experiences and work as an educator, Secretary-designate Cardona knows that we must make improvements for our students both inside and outside the 'schoolhouse' by tackling issues such as 'housing insecurity, hunger, and economic instability,' to help our students succeed.

"Unlike Betsy DeVos, Secretary-designate Cardona will ensure that the federal government's role in education is to ensure access and opportunity for every student. He is someone who will defend our students' civil rights and focus on the success of all students. And he will work collaboratively to promote proven education models such as community schools and policies that provide whole student support.

"Secretary-designate Cardona has the compassion and life experiences that are needed as the next secretary of education and I look forward to partnering with him to ensure every student gets what they need and deserve."

NJEA establishes Office of Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance

Gary Melton appointed first manager



At the 2019 NJEA Convention, Gary Melton with Dr. Cornel West.

NJEA has created the Office of Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance and has promoted Gary Melton to be its first manager. The creation of the new office highlights NJEA's commitment to justice and equity in all aspects of the union's work and the recognition that such important work needs a permanent home within the union's structure.

Melton will manage staff assigned to the new office to develop and implement programs designed to carry out NJEA's social, racial and economic justice initiatives. Melton also will provide guidance to NJEA's officers, executive director, and staff concerning governance issues.

"My vision for this new office will hit on four areas," Melton says. "Professional development, leadership, conferences, and staff development, all related to issues of equity. We are going to be taking a close look at where there are inequitable practices and address them so that we eliminate barriers for members and staff."

Melton is working to build a team that will address equity issues across the organization. While much work has already been done, particularly with the REAL Movement, the Equity Alliance, the Members of Color programs, and the NJEA Minority Leadership Committee's work, Melton is working to provide a fresh vision for the future of the organization.

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Melton will manage staff assigned to the new office to develop and implement programs designed to carry out NJEA's social, racial and economic justice initiatives.

"In terms of my logic map for the first year, it's going to be about building understanding," Melton says. "Each year, we're going to be providing a vision for that year so that we are constantly moving the work forward."

One of Melton's first initiatives is to use NJEA's monthly governance meetings to provide racial and social justice training for members who have been identified by their county leaders as influencers who will push the social justice work forward.

Melton also emphasizes that while a lot of the work is focused on issues confronting Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), human and civil rights also must include LGBTQ+ and women's issues.

"The Black experience in America has been a driving force in terms of ensuring equity, ending prejudice, stopping discrimination and eliminating systemic racism," Melton says. "These are all human and civil rights issues, but we can't just stop there. There are injustices affecting our LGBTQ+ communities as well as indigenous and other people of color. To quote Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.'"

Melton has been employed by NJEA since January 2018 as an associate director in the Executive Office. Prior to that, Melton was employed for 21 years as an educator in the Atlantic City and Egg Harbor City Public Schools. Melton served in various local association capacities at the local level, including senior vice president, treasurer, negotiations chair, legislative chair and building representative. For the Atlantic County Council of Education Associations, he served as president and chair of the Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee.

In his position as associate director in the Executive Office, Melton has managed association work around racial and social justice issues. He led the creation of the NJEA Equity Alliance and has helped coordinate the work of the related committees. He has been instrumental in helping drive NJEA's internal work around race and equity through his position, but also as part of the NJEA/USA Labor-Management team developing strategies for training and learning.

Governor's executive order removes SGOs from evaluation

Waives exit testing grad requirement

On Jan. 11, Gov. Phil Murphy issued Executive Order 214, which waives the exit testing requirement for current 12th graders and removes student growth objectives (SGOs) as a factor in teacher evaluation for the 2020-21 school year.

Because statewide standardized tests were not administered last year, median student growth percentiles (mSGPs), which are calculated based on student performance on the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments, were already removed from teacher evaluation for the current school year.

The executive order did not address the administration of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA) this spring. The NJSLA includes the exit-test that fulfills the graduation requirement. To cancel the administration of the NJSLA would require a waiver from the U.S. Department of Education. At press time, just prior to the final day of Trump administration, the U.S. Department of Education was not considering any such waivers. In a Jan. 11 press briefing, *NJ Spotlight* reported that neither the governor nor acting Commissioner of Education Angelica Allen-McMillan committed to applying for a waiver should it become available as the Biden administration takes over.

NJEA's officers, President Marie Blistan, Vice President Sean M. Spiller and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, expressed their appreciation for the governor's actions in a statement following the governor's State of the State address on Jan. 12.

"Yesterday's executive order waiving high school exit exams and eliminating student growth objectives as an element in evaluation for the current school year further demonstrate that [Gov. Murphy] understands the extraordinary nature of the challenges facing our schools," the statement read. "That flexibility, in the face of overwhelming stress and uncertainty, demonstrates that his stated commitment to the educational, social, and emotional needs of our entire education community is sincere."

The executive order also extended the time during which certified teachers can serve as substitutes. Murphy ordered that for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency, individuals holding either a certificate of eligibility or a certificate of eligibility with advanced standing working in an area not authorized by their credentials may fill vacant teaching positions for up to 40 school days and shall not be subject to statutory time limitations. Such individuals, as well as those employed as substitutes, may serve for an additional 20 school days upon a school district's written application to the commissioner of education.

In that application, districts must report on their efforts to hire an appropriately certified teacher and their inability to do so. Districts must also demonstrate that the substitutes are subject to periodic monitoring by a supervisor.



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



NJEA Teacher Leader Academy concludes successful first year

The final session of the first class of candidates in the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy (TLA) met on Dec. 19. Successful completion of the yearlong program, which concludes with an evaluation by an external review board, leads to TLA candidates receiving the teacher leader endorsement on their teacher certification.

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

"I continue to hold that the ones who make the best decisions about schools are the ones closest to kids," said Richard Wilson. "The phrase 'leading from the classroom' should not be a cliché."

The entire TLA Class of 2020 met for the first time on Jan. 23. Throughout 2020, they met with regional study groups on a weekly basis and monthly as a whole group. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings moved into a virtual space, but otherwise continued uninterrupted.

Wilson asked candidates bring to the final session an artifact that represented their journey throughout the year. The artifacts were as diverse as the candidates and revealed their personal and professional growth over the course of the year: a passport, a song, a baseball bat, a glass butterfly, kosher salt, a figure of a lighthouse, olive oil, and a mirror among others.

Sharon Ortiz, a Family and Consumer Sciences in West Orange had brought the butterfly.

"I had anticipated growth, but my metamorphosis was stronger than I expected," Ortiz said. "I thought a leader was one person forging ahead and if you're alone that's OK. But that's not OK. It's about collective efficacy. I feel like a monarch now, and I am ready to soar."

"I used to think leadership was a seat at the table, and I have had seats at lots of tables," said Charlene Gerbig, and elementary school teacher in Closter and vice president of the Closter Education Association. "Now I know it's about building your own table and bringing others to it."

Nicole Jacinto, a teacher in Union Township, described teacher leadership as a beacon.

"I don't have to be the rescue boat," Jacinto said. "But the light guiding people to find their own way to the harbor."

Megan King, a teacher in Passaic City, noted her evolving understanding of leadership.

"At the beginning of the program I thought

**“
I continue
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to kids.”**

I was a leader already—it was about me," King said. "I now see leadership as developing trust and holding space for others. I used to tell others what to say. Now I see leadership as giving others the opportunity to use their voice."

Lateefah Scott, a teacher in Atlantic City, displayed a Zoom background of her looking at herself in the mirror. She explained that self-reflection led her to consider the type of leadership she wants to project.

"You might think that you are projecting one thing as a leader, but others see it differently," Scott said. "You have to have trust in people for them to trust you."

Syreeta Primas, a teacher in Pleasantville, brought the olive oil.

"There is a crushing that has to take place to get the essence out of what is in the olive," Primas said. "Over this time there has been some pressing, in a good way, to get the essence out of us. The press had made us stronger. It has made us pool our resources to find the things that we didn't know were in our reservoir. I've learned that we can't give up. We can't stop, even when there's opposition. I believe the change is going to come from people like us and how we empower other people. Keep pressing. Don't stop. This is just the beginning of our journey."

Teacher Leader Academy

Candidates

Johanna Amaro
Brittany Bloss
Dana Bobertz
Christine Canderella
Charlene Gerbig
Monica Goncalves
Christine Hewitt
Nicole Jacinto
Megan King
Maureen Loutzenhiser
Sharon Ortiz
MaryEllen Patricco
Claudette Peterkin
Syreeta Primas
Dawn Rivas
Justin Saxon
Lateefah Scott
Christin Walsh

TLA Consultants

Linzandaa Alburg
Johanna Amaro
Christine Canderella
Dawn Howlen
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Richard Wilson

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FREESTYLE FRIDAYS

OUR PANDEMIC RESPONSE

BY IKECHUKWU ONYEMA

The axiom that even the most challenging crisis can provide opportunity captures the spirit of my conversation with Gabriel Tanglao as we conceived Freestyle Friday. Gabriel works in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. We spoke immediately after the March 9 state of emergency announcement regarding the COVID quarantine. We wondered if we could ‘remix’ the traditional webinar format of delivering professional development workshops.

Maybe you’ve endured a well-intentioned presenter delivering a thoughtful slideshow—maybe that presenter was you. Did the dull monotony of it undermine the content? For Gabriel and me, this experience needed fresh attention. In hip-hop, a core traditional practice of the culture is to remix—to reimagine anew classic melodies and lyrics for the present time and generation. With Freestyle Friday, we sought to transform the classic workshop template into a podcast-style webinar format in order to advance the work of racial and social justice, which seemed ever more urgent in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

While Gabriel and I knew that this global pandemic was life threatening, we couldn’t have imagined the over 24 million infections and 400,000 deaths nationally as this piece goes to press. Nor could we have imagined the global mobilization against white supremacy sparked by the murders of Ahmad Arbury, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and too many others to name. We did believe, however, that special stewardship would be needed as educators stepped up to serve the most vulnerable in unimaginable ways—like we always do.

How could we share their stories? How could we hold space for educators to make sense of this uniquely traumatic moment? Did the virtual silos into which we were now all relegated offer any opportunities? The flow of our conversation and the weight of these questions gave birth to Freestyle

Friday—a video interview podcast format with me as the host, Gabriel as the producer, and two brilliant educators—one local and one national—sharing how we were improvising in the classroom and the community to serve our students during this pandemic season.

From April to June 2020, these weekly conversations felt more like a collective exploration of complex educational issues during a moment of deep uncertainty. Packed with diverse perspectives, mostly centering Black, Indigenous and People of Color voices, our special guests offered a wealth of insights. Here is snapshot of the lineup:

- Ep. 1 - Think Global, Act Local: Mutual Aid Networks
 - Erika Strauss Chavarria and Christina Jacquez
- Ep. 2 - Xenophobia toward Asian and Muslim Communities
 - Estella Afi Owoimaha-Church and Nagla Bedir
- Ep. 3 - COVID-19’s Impact on Students with Special Needs
 - Stephanie Tellez and Dr. Tiffanie ThrBak
- Ep. 4 - From the Ground Up: Community First
 - Jessyca Mathews and Zellie Thomas
- Ep. 5 - Reflections on Climate Justice and Beyond
 - Sam Kapoi and Rachael Arens
- Ep. 6 - White Aspiring Antiracist Educators
 - Terry Jess and Jim Boice
- Ep. 7 - Black Women Teaching and Leading
 - Mrs. Turquoise LeJeune Parker and Petal Robertson
- Ep. 8 - Community Organizing in the Uprising
 - Chigozie Onyema and TJ Whittaker
- Ep. 9 - Freedom Dreaming and REAL Movement-Building
 - Fatimah Hayes and Gabriel A. Tanglao

Through facilitating these interviews, I realized as a years-long consumer of hip-hop that the true essence of a ‘freestyle’ had eluded me. Gabe captures it, saying that “freestyle is when an MC flows with the lyrics from their head without having to write them down.” The agility required to balance preparation and spontaneity was invigorating for my guests and me. I couldn’t have

foreseen how I would be inspired by organizers in North Carolina and Detroit, how ignorant I was of the experiences of children with special needs and their families, or how the ancestral practice of carving Hawaiian canoes (Hōkūle’a) might inspire us all to commit to climate justice.

I did not expect that a special community would form as we bonded through these virtual

“

With Freestyle Friday, we sought to transform the classic workshop template into a podcast-style webinar format in order to advance the work of racial and social justice.

conversations. What created that special magic? Was it the craving for human connection during the early stages of quarantine? Did the courageous narratives of how educators responded compel people to continue tuning in?

The Freestyle Friday experience helped inspire my imagination about what is possible, even in this moment of chaos, when we build our connections with one another and keep it REAL. As a platform for educators to seize our political initiative in all of its variety, Freestyle Friday answered the well-known hip-hop call and response—Can I kick it?/Yes you can!—with resounding affirmation.

Look out for the season release of our Freestyle Fridays in spring 2021 at real.njea.org.

Ikechukwu Onyema is a chemistry teacher at East Orange Campus High School. He can be reached at ionyema02@gmail.com.



A LIFETIME OF GIVING

MEET NJEA ESP OF THE YEAR

Kimberly
Scott-Hayden

By Kathryn Coulibaly

As NJEA President Marie Blistan likes to say, educational support professionals, also known as ESPs, should really be known as *essential* school professionals because they—and the work they do—are the heart and soul of our school communities. No one better exemplifies that dedication, service, and community spirit than 2021 NJEA ESP of the Year Kimberly Scott-Hayden.

The list of her accomplishments and acts of service is impressive but does not do justice to the energy that Scott-Hayden brings to the work she does. She is a proud graduate of East Orange Public Schools, where she currently serves as an inventory control clerk, assists the supervisor of Security Services, and is the president of the East Orange Maintenance Association. She is also the daughter of Amy and Lester Scott who both worked in East Orange, Amy as a revered kindergarten teacher and Lester as a maintenance worker/painter.

For Scott-Hayden, who graduated from Clifford J. Scott High School in 1988, coming to work in the district in 1995 was like coming home. After her parents repeatedly encouraged her to apply to work in the district, she started her first day on the job on Dec. 18, 1995—her birthday.

“That was my birthday present to myself that year,” Scott-Hayden recalls. “I’d worked at the YMCA of Montclair with children after school and at

Brookhaven Health Care, but my parents knew that I belonged here and that I had a lot to contribute to this community. There’s a lot of history and connection for me in East Orange; what better place to work than a place where I can give back?”

Scott-Hayden’s mother was instrumental in showing her how she could give back to her community through the school district.

“Watching her work and give so much of herself was really powerful,” Scott-Hayden says. “She would make sure kids who didn’t have coats and gloves were taken care of. We’d take her students with us to the circus or to the beach. We still have relationships with these people today; they see us as their family. My mother had such compassion and love and she passed that on to me.”

GIVING TO UNION MEMBERS

Another value her parents passed on to her was being an active member of her union. As soon as Scott-Hayden joined the district, her parents urged her to become involved: advice she has taken and run with!

Since becoming president of her local association, Scott-Hayden has grown its membership from 40 to 400. Her unit now represents maintenance, security guards, teaching assistants, and paraprofessionals. She also has served as an officer with the Essex County Education Association, served on the NJEA Delegate Assembly and the NJEA Executive Committee, and currently is an NEA Director.

Scott-Hayden was featured in an NJEA ad for Ch. 78 relief and ESP Job

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.



Kimberly Scott-Hayden (center) and EOMA leadership are wearing a T-shirt carrying the message "Freedom Ain't Free." The shirt was commissioned by the NJEA Members of Color (MOC) Network.

“*Scott-Hayden’s mother was instrumental in showing her how she could give back to her community through the school district.*”

Justice bills. She has written numerous grants totaling over \$100,000 to benefit students, her local association and staff in her district. She initiated innovative programs on professional development (PD) including financial literacy and empowerment, Safe Space Collaboration Centers, and the first-ever PD at Sea event for ESP and certificated staff to be held in 2021, when it is safe to do so.

GIVING TO SOCIAL JUSTICE

Scott-Hayden also is an active member of the NJEA Amistad Stakeholder Group. The state’s Amistad mandate is intended to teach the history of Africans and African Americans in the United States and their role in building this nation. The NJEA Amistad Stakeholder Group, created in 2018, is a coalition of education stakeholders representing educators, parents, school and district administrators, education advocates and the New Jersey Department of Education, which seeks to ensure that the mandate is fully implemented.

“As chair of the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee, we included all our Equity Alliance chairs as part of that work; we all needed a seat at the table,” Scott-Hayden says. “I brought the information about Amistad to my district when it first became law. We are 90 percent African American in our district and our staff is very diverse, but we have not done what we needed to do to educate our students about the role Africans and African Americans have played in American history. It was very enlightening to sit around the table with the stakeholders, teachers, principals, supervisors, PTA members and discuss these topics. We had all these different groups that touch education in different aspects talking about how we would incorporate the curriculum. And we wanted to ensure that teachers had support to

integrate the curriculum into every subject: from math to music to science to history. Just having these conversations made us realize the power this would have on our students.”

GIVING TO STUDENTS AND THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Scott-Hayden does not let job descriptions hold her back; one of her biggest pet peeves is when an ESP colleague says they are “just” an ESP.

“We can—and do—have a great impact on students just through the simplest acts of caring about our students and our colleagues,” Scott-Hayden says. “My passion is helping other support staff recognize their talents and contributions. We need to tell our stories about how we impact our students.”

Scott-Hayden’s work touches every student in the district. She is responsible for handling all assets for the district that are \$200 or above. She ensures supplies are properly inventoried and tagged, she works with her four colleagues to ensure that shipping and receiving, mail, and in-district supplies for students including paper, pencils, and computers are delivered, barcoded, logged in and distributed appropriately.

In addition, Scott-Hayden is the district liaison for school resource officers. She works closely with SROs in the district to cover staffing in needed buildings and handle issues in the large district which has 22 buildings and more than 10,000 students.

“When I came into the district our SROs were primarily hourly contract employees,” Scott-Hayden recalls. “We worked with the New Jersey Department of Justice on a grant in 2001 and started the program to ensure we had staffing levels where they needed to be, vehicles, and bullet proof vests as well as covered the needs of the Division of Security Services to keep our

**“
I’m a person who
believes that
there’s always a
solution, we just
need to work
together to figure
it out.”**

students and school buildings safe and secure. I got involved initially because of the purchasing aspects, but I also made sure we were following all of the guidelines outlined in the grant and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as required when dealing with the city, chiefs of police, and the superior officers who oversee the resource officers.”

For Scott-Hayden, forming those relationships has been vital to the success of the program and the safety of students and staff as well as the community.

“We hear about issues with police in our schools across the nation and instances where SROs have overstepped their role,” Scott-Hayden says. “But in East Orange, most of the officers in our schools are people of color and who came from our school district or neighboring district. Most of them are alumni and they still see themselves as part of our school community and as a way of giving back. They identify with our students and they work to understand what’s going on with them. They have absolutely been partners with us in identifying ways to enrich our students lives and keep them safe.”

Scott-Hayden is currently working with SROs, as she had with the support of former district superintendent. She is now working with the new superintendent who is already deeply entrenched in the East Orange community as a former educator and administrator. They are on track to roll out a comprehensive after-school program. It will be implemented after the pandemic and will provide students with a place to go after school, homework services, counseling, peer mediation, and food. Her local union members and other staff along with the SRO officers are planning to volunteer when the program is up and running.

In the meantime, SROs and district staff have volunteered their own time and money to take students to games like the NJ Nets, Knicks, NJ Devils and more.



Kimberly Scott-Hayden is the
2021 NJEA ESP of the Year.



Visit njea.org/ESPOY2021 to hear Kimberly Scott-Hayden talk about the East Orange community and her dedication to it.



Kimberly Scott-Hayden attended the same East Orange Public Schools that she now proudly serves.

GIVING TO FAMILY

Scott-Hayden's involvement in her district also led to her meeting her husband, Eric Hayden, a retired police officer who works as a security guard in the district. As a further testament to Scott-Hayden's extraordinarily giving nature, she donated a kidney to her husband of 21 years in September. Scott-Hayden, who has three children, is also raising three of her seven grandchildren.

If it all sounds exhausting, you're right! But Scott-Hayden's can-do spirit just doesn't quit.

GIVING DURING THE PANDEMIC

She starts her day at school at 7 a.m., and no two days are alike.

"I'm in full 'let's see what we can do' mode from the time I walk in the door in the morning until I leave around 5 p.m.," Scott-Hayden says. "I'm doing inventory, scheduling security staff, dealing with security issues, bar coding laptops, delivering supplies, making an emergency run to the county superintendent's office, or working to get something to Trenton. I'm constantly problem-solving."

When the pandemic struck, Scott-Hayden's considerable connections and problem-solving skills were essential in providing an effective scheduling for food services distribution so that students were fed daily at the grab-and-go sites. This also included maintaining adequate coverage seven days a week, 24 hours a day for the district's fire and security coverage.

"A lot of people tell me I'm straightforward," Scott-Hayden says. "If I don't know something, I'm not going to tell you I do. I'm a person who believes that there's always a solution, we just need to work together to figure it out. I work with everyone from the superintendent on. You have to be able to communicate well. People know what I say is what I'm going to do. And I stay calm in a crisis. I will work with you to find the right person to solve a problem."

Scott-Hayden's contributions to her school community, East Orange, Essex County, NJEA, and NEA are impressive—and she is not done yet. As the 2021 NJEA ESP of the Year, she has a powerful platform to uplift and inspire educational support professionals and educate others about the value of the work they do.

"I feel humbled by this award," Scott-Hayden says. "I don't do this work for recognition. I'm one of the behind-the-scenes people. I'm focused on how we will help our students and our members."

While the global pandemic may disrupt some of perks of being the NJEA ESP of the Year, Scott-Hayden has already been nominated for the NEA ESP of the Year award. She will attend the NEA ESP Conference, which will be held virtually this year, and is entitled to a Disney vacation, funded by NJEA, when it is safe to travel. Scott-Hayden will also receive an ESP of the Year ring, she will be a featured speaker at the NJEA ESP Conference, and she will be honored at the 2021 NJEA Convention. 🏠



Clockwise from left: Eric Hayden, EOMA VP Security (Scott-Hayden's husband); Meran Senior, EOMA Secretary; Trisha Butts, EOMA VP for Teacher Assistants/Paraprofessionals and Membership Chair; Hakim Sims, Supervisor of Safety and Security, AbdulSaleem Hasan, East Orange Superintendent of Schools and former NJ Deputy Commissioner of Education; Mr. AbdulSaleem Hasan; Marissa McKenzie, Director of Labor Relations and Employee Services; Maria Rodriguez, EOMA Treasurer; Brian Kenney, EOMA Recording Secretary. Kimberly Scott-Hayden at center.

LET'S REINVENT TESTING

By Glen Coleman

Testing needs to be reinvented. Instead of one-and-done paper-pencil testing, repurposed computer-based testing software can help transform the classroom into a student-centered, collaborative experience.

The chart below distinguishes traditional and innovative

approaches to computer-based testing. When teachers leverage online testing's superpower—instant feedback—students can better strategize ways to succeed and teachers can better craft lessons that create relevance between content and students' interests.

Traditional Test	"Test" as Formative Assessment
Test is taken at the end of a unit.	Test is taken at the beginning of a unit.
Test is taken once. Students don't get feedback until the teacher returns the test.	Test taken as many times as needed to gain mastery, perhaps a 100. Feedback is immediate via computer generated answer key. Students work together to figure it out.
Test questions tend to be straightforward, high stakes, and (perhaps) not so imaginative. If you get it wrong, you lose points.	Test questions can convey a narrative, compel conversations or stimulate debates. Points earned after a specific score demonstrate mastery.
Heavily weighted test grade. This supposedly incentivizes students to study but has the potential to stifle their voice.	Not heavily weighted grade, 10 points+/-. A dynamic emerges where students help each other throughout the "test taking" experience. They self-advocate, ask for help, and come to rely on one another, which results in an "all boats rise" culture.
The test is a static document.	The test is a living document that students and teachers can revise in real time.
Once a test is completed, answers are perhaps forgotten and relevance suffers.	Repetition reinforces content knowledge. Additionally, once students complete the test, they can apply that knowledge to answer real-world questions/contemporary issues. (See Venezuela project below.)

Let's define "tests" in my class. They are, basically, 10-point assignments that codify course content; they could be as rigorous as a final exam but can be retaken until mastery. My initial expectation is generally 100; yet expectations may vary by class and context. An 85 might motivate students to work with great determination for an entire class period.

My "tests" are also taken in the beginning of a unit. Students work on the tests in small groups and are encouraged to teach each other the answers. If a student gets an answer wrong, they take the "test" again. This repetition helps develop grit and deepens content mastery.

If not completed in a class period, it can be retaken at lunch—only correcting the questions that were wrong. Yes, they can bring a friend. The next day, I may require students to retake the same test without notes—independently, only once. Again, this is not tied to a heavily-weighted grade. This teamwork helps fuel engagement.

Repurposing testing software can elevate the questions that are "tested." Instead of simply asking—for example, "Who is Louis XVI?"—I can now tell a story by creatively reimagining how to ask questions. For example, when teaching the French Revolution, I might ask questions like the ones below.

1: ____ Louis XVI	A: The first one being that he lived in a gilded cage known as Versailles, which isolated him from his people.
2: ____ There were numerous problems with his leadership style	B: Was a young and inexperienced king who was unprepared to face France's numerous crises, which would end his reign.
3: ____ This palace would become so lavish	C: Spread news of the king's lavish consumption, a message he could not squash.
4: ____ All the while the printing press	D: That it became an object of scorn where the king "devoured the people's substance," so said Robespierre.

Correct answers: 1 = B; 2 = A; 3 = D; 4 = C.

The matching section above is just one example of a dozen such questions I might ask to help students comprehend and appreciate larger themes. Again, I can revise expectations as students give feedback. (We can create them together, which could be its own article.) I generally craft questions to convey different kinds of learning on Bloom's Taxonomy. For example: matching questions are useful to drive storytelling, multiple-correct-answer formats help to spur analysis of primary sources, and true/false choices can motivate close reading.

REVISING TESTS COLLABORATIVELY

But more important than students learning about the French Revolution, I wanted them to understand issues of 1789 in a 2020 context. So, in my testing, I created charts that required students to compare the history to contemporary issues: income inequality, national budgets and deficits, taxation policy, maps of foreign wars, and political cartoons. Through the test, we debated answers, attempted to create working conclusions, or revised questions for which we as a class could find no agreement.

Revising tests is as easy as projecting the working document on a screen for all to see as we modify it together. This gives students a voice, autonomy, clarity of purpose and helps forge a growth mindset and culture of collaboration. Now, most importantly, we can use this information for more inspired learning such as projects, debates, for example, our project on Venezuela.

VENEZUELA PROJECT AND REINVENTED TESTS

In the 2019-20 school year, my colleagues and I developed what I believe turned out to be an inspired end-of-unit assessment on the French Revolution. Worth a test grade of 50 points, students were tasked with delivering two-minute speeches with no notes on this prompt: "Based on your understanding of the French Revolution, what can be done so that Venezuela avoids its own violent revolution?"

We Skyped with a Venezuelan family—the parents are teachers—and asked what they thought can be done to avoid Venezuela's collapse. This galvanized students and staff to send the family more than 250 pounds of food and medical supplies. The family responded with a cellphone video of their singing "Amazing Grace" and "Guantanamera" to us.

The topic became urgent, profound, and required action; the history gave context to our conversation. This was facilitated by the formative test that the students took at the start of the unit, which made the topic accessible, conversable and relevant. The test gave the students the context in which to discuss the calamity happening in Venezuela today.

After students Skyped, crafted and delivered speeches—students delivered them at least twice, once with peer review by all classmates, the other time one-on-one with me—I surveyed students and asked how they found the three-pronged approach, which consisted of:

1. Taking the test collaboratively.
2. Retaking it individually.
3. Applying their knowledge to Venezuela's turmoil.

Ninety-two percent of students said they thought the system worked and identified different reasons. Some liked the clarity of expectations of the test, that it explained material clearly or spurred collaboration; several appreciated that they could retry until mastery. What I liked was the fact that the test did not count as a *test*. The need to succeed was constructed through peer motivation.

Dr. Glen Coleman teaches social studies at River Dell High School, is an HP Teaching Fellow for using technology for powerful learning, and hosts a podcast, Teacher Breathe. Coleman is nearing publication of his first book on how COVID is causing the reinvention of teaching. He can be reached at info@teacherbreathe.com.

Over the past few years, I have surveyed students on this system: first take the test together, next take it individually, finally use it to express something meaningful through an essay, speech, or project. Below are quotes from students. Overall, they like the system. The collaboration, clarity, and content give projects rich historical context arrived at by a highly student-centered engagement. Here is a sample of what students are saying:

- I think 100-or-Nothing Quia [online "tests" at Quia.com] is better because you really have to know the material to pass. To get 100 on them, you have to take it multiple times to get 100, which in my opinion, is better because you better understand the material each time you take the Quia.
- Doing the 100-or-Nothings are good practice. It is even better when we have the Quest the next day because the information is still fresh in our minds, so it is easier to take the Quest [take test once, no notes, independently]. I have never been a fan of essays, but I do think they are good to learn new/more information about the topic.
- I feel as though the system has been working for me although the essays can be a stretch at times. They are in fact fun to write, but sometimes they confuse me. I feel as if we spent one more day going over the 100-or-Nothing, I can retain the most important information. The essays are fun at times and bring new topics to the class which is interesting to hear.
- I like doing an essay or discussing a larger question because then I know where I'm at with my understanding. But I don't want to do an essay for every single topic.
- I think that the system is good because you learn by doing the 100-or-Nothing. Then, you get tested on what you remember. Then you expand your knowledge about interesting, real world topics.

One-and-done end-of-unit testing limits learning. Let's reinvent tests so that they serve as a formative yet crucial step towards student empowerment.

Getting started

To get started, employ a good web-based, test-taking program with the qualities listed below. I like Quia.com.

1. It is important to have the option to change when students can see the answer key. Ninety-nine percent of the time, I want students to see the entire test and answer-key at the beginning of a unit.
2. As teachers, you want the flexibility to randomize question order.
3. Make sure your testing application allows you to easily insert graphics, such as maps, art, charts, political cartoons or excerpts from books.
4. Students need to be able to access all their tests so that they can identify what they got wrong.
5. The more question types available the better. These are helpful: matching, fill-in blank for a paragraph (not just a sentence), multiple correct answers.
6. Time stamps are helpful because they can provide a metric of work ethic as reported on a spreadsheet. It would report when a student studied, how many times they attempted a test, and for how long they worked.
6. 7. In the online environment, we have to be creative.

New Jersey's schools during the 1918 INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

By Bill Cole

*Note: A condensed version of this story appeared in the Star-Ledger/nj.com on Nov. 8.
You may view it at <http://bit.ly/2MQgNHS>.*

*I had a little bird,
Its name was Enza.
I opened the window,
And in-flu-enza.*

This was a popular playground rhyme recited by children during the influenza pandemic of 1918, which wreaked havoc throughout the world. It ultimately claimed 675,000 American lives.

As schools continue to navigate the choppy waters roiled by COVID-19 even as we look forward to finally receiving a vaccine, it is important to remember that this isn't an unprecedented crisis. History can be a helpful teacher, and an overview of how New Jersey dealt with its schools during those fraught months in 1918 and 1919 can be both enlightening and instructive. Despite the difference of 100 years, conflicting opinions stemming from a combination of science, politics and ethics over the question of school closures echo with a familiar resonance.

The 1918 flu was spread widely and internationally by soldiers during World War I. The virus almost certainly did not originate in Spain, but it had a particularly high-profile lethality there, which gave it a dubious name: the Spanish flu.

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There were no tests or vaccines to help combat the virus at that time. Preventative measures such as practicing good hygiene, quarantining the infected and shutting down public spaces were the most common responses to its wrath. There were multiple waves of the disease between the spring of 1918 and the winter of 1919. The most virulent of those waves in the United States occurred during the fall of 1918.

THE FLU TAKES HOLD IN NEW JERSEY

Toward the end of September 1918, the massive risks posed by the pandemic were becoming apparent in New Jersey. Schools had already long been recognized as an efficient means by which to rapidly disseminate information. In Newark, 70,000 fliers reporting the imminent dangers of the virus were distributed to students to take home and share with their families. Newark teachers were given a speech to read to their classes about the mounting threat. The Sept. 27, 1918 edition of the *Newark Evening News* ran an excerpt of the prepared speech:

"A few weeks ago, some cases of Spanish Influenza were reported to have been found on ships arriving in the port of New York. Since then many thousands of cases have been reported from Boston, and a number of deaths. Some of our army camps are already infected with this disease, and there is reason to suppose that our own city will not escape. We may, however, do much to prevent this influenza from spreading in our families and a little knowledge may help us to control the disease should it appear in our own families or in the families of neighbors." (Source:

Influenza Encyclopedia, "Talks Explaining Influenza Prepared for Schools," <https://bit.ly/2XCgti2>.)

By the first week of October, with the threat swiftly becoming a reality, the New Jersey Board of Health ordered a mandatory statewide closing of most public establishments. Despite the evident warning signs, there were still those in the community who continued to minimize the gravity of the pandemic, not unlike those who believe COVID-19 is overblown. An Oct. 4, 1918 editorial in the *Madison Eagle*, a newspaper published in the borough of Madison, claimed the number of cases were being exaggerated,

"Humankind are somewhat like sheep in that they flock in the same general direction and are unceremoniously scared by the same bugaboos. Fashions change in ailments as in clothes and books. Just now the Spanish influenza is the popular fad. It's easy to get and very awful when one gets it, but a good many people who think they have it and so report are deluding themselves and causing epidemic lists to swell unnecessarily." (Source: MorristownGreen.com, "Quarantine, medical care, community: How Morris County overcame the 1918 influenza pandemic," <http://bit.ly/39oeK5z>.)

LIKE TODAY, SCHOOL CLOSURES UNEVEN

A notable exception to the statewide public shutdown mandate in early October were the schools. Though schools were being vastly shuttered across the country, New Jersey handled it its own way. Much like Gov. Phil Murphy's



decision this past August to provide flexibility for local communities to determine whether they were prepared to start in-person instruction or continue with remote learning in the fall, in October of 1918 Wallace Evans Edge, New Jersey's governor at the time, in conjunction with then State Health Director Jacob C. Price, granted local municipalities authority on whether to close their respective schools. As was reported in the Tuckerton Beacon on Oct. 17, 1918. See <http://bit.ly/3i6ZyO8>.

"Owing to the epidemic which seems to have nearly every state in its grasp, the [New Jersey] State Board of Health on Monday of last week ordered all local boards to shut down the places where people congregate, such as churches, theaters, motion picture theaters, barrooms, soda fountains, lodge rooms, dance halls and pool rooms. This order was mandatory as to the above, but local boards were given discretion as to closing schools." (Source: Begin With a Question, "How Did NJ Reopen Schools in 1918?" <http://bit.ly/3i6ZyO8>.)

Many public officials and community members still felt that children, especially those in urban settings, were better off being in school rather than playing in the streets. (See <http://bit.ly/2Xx8ser>.) Others disagreed citing the serious health concerns and debates inevitably persisted.

Although the spirit of local decision-making regarding schools was upheld at the state level, the inexorable surge in illness and death over subsequent weeks was impossible to ignore and school districts across New Jersey were eventually left little choice but to join other public spheres and close their doors.

It is not clear what the students of New Jersey did over the ensuing weeks and months. Their learning was undoubtedly disrupted. Students would have had minimal amounts of homework

during that time, according to Debbie Schaefer-Jacobs, curator in the Division of Cultural and Community Life at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. Teachers very well may have sent reading assignments home and if students wanted to practice spelling, they would have used alphabet or speller boards, which were popular learning tools at that time—a far cry from today's tablets, laptop computers and Google Classroom.

New Jersey officially ended its statewide quarantine on Oct. 21, 1918. However, local school districts were still given latitude about whether to open back up or not. As was reported by the *New Jersey Courier* of Toms River on Oct. 25, 1918.

"The reopening of the schools of New Jersey will not depend upon the lifting of the quarantine by the state board of health, but upon the conditions existing in the various municipalities. This statement was made on Thursday by [New Jersey] State Commissioner of Education [Calvin] Kendall. The erroneous impression had been gained that November 4 had been fixed for reopening of the schools. It is entirely a matter for the municipalities to decide, the commissioner said." (See <http://bit.ly/3i6ZyO8>.)

FLU RESURGENCE FOILS REOPENING PLANS

New Jersey wouldn't be out of the woods yet. By the early weeks of November, for example, new infections seemed to have decreased to the point that the municipalities of Hanover and Dover considered lifting their closures of public schools. This plan was soon thwarted after 90 new cases emerged, 60 of which were schoolchildren. This prompted Dover's Board of Health to again close all public facilities on Nov. 23.

This pattern emerged throughout New Jersey, and there was another extended quarantine in many parts of the state that lasted into December. The final wave of the virus appeared in January 1919 and dissipated once and for all that spring. Estimates of total deaths in the state caused by the flu pandemic have ranged from 10,000 to 20,000.

COVID-19 AND THE INFLUENZA OF 1918

As of Jan. 12, 2021, there were 17,980 confirmed deaths in New Jersey caused by COVID-19 and an additional 2,059 in which COVID-19 was deemed the probable cause—a total of 20,039 residents.

Today, New Jersey has a population of 9 million, compared to 3 million during the 1918 influenza pandemic. While the 1918 flu pandemic was a proportionally more devastating disease, the sporadic opening and closing of the schools imposed by that virus's unpredictable course seems disconcertingly relatable to the state's current plight. Like many other parts of the country, we have seen dizzying vacillations between opening back up to in-person instruction and closing back down after confirmation of positive cases within a given school community.

As we eagerly await the distribution of the vaccine, the debates about how to handle the education of our students in light of COVID-19 will likely continue to rage between state officials, school boards, parents, and school staff. Nonetheless, one thing will remain certain: the imperative to learn from our history, lest we repeat it 🦠



VISIT THE NJEA CONVENTION EXHIBITORS AND THANK THEM FOR THEIR SUPPORT

NJEA would like to extend its deepest thanks to our exhibitors for their support and participation in the 2020 NJEA Convention "Together from Home."

At this past year's NJEA Convention, you interacted virtually with new exhibitors and visited your old favorites. On these pages, we'd like to reintroduce to you the exhibitors who supported us at the convention.

Please browse the listing, visit the exhibitors' websites, and reach out and forge new connections.



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<https://georgian.edu/>

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<https://www.gratz.edu>

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<https://jodidee.com>

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MATHCOUNTS FOUNDATION

<https://www.mathcounts.org/club>

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CABINETS DIRECT USA

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<https://calmandsense.org/>

FHE HEALTH

<https://fhrehab.com>

M3E CHANGE ASSOCIATES INC.

<http://m3echange.com/schools>

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memberbenefits.njea.org

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<https://renpromo.espwebsite.com/>

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<http://www.featraining.org>

NEXTMARK FOUNDATION

<https://training.nextmarkfoundation.org/>

WILSON LANGUAGE TRAINING CORP.

<https://www.wilsonlanguage.com/>



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<https://www.drnj.org>



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<https://www.schoolcultureandclimate.org/>

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<https://www.njschooljobs.com/>



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GRANT FUNDING DESPERATELY NEEDED FOR SCHOOL REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT

BY HEATHER SORGE

COVID-19 has placed a spotlight on how badly many New Jersey schools need upgrades, repairs, and replacement. Overcrowding and outdated or nonexistent ventilation systems are especially prevalent. These issues have been plaguing some of our districts for years, and it's only getting worse.

National experts say that schools are one of our most hazardous indoor environments. Schools are up to four times more densely occupied than many offices, putting heavy demands on ventilation, mechanical, electrical, structural, and plumbing

systems and on maintenance and cleaning staff. School hazards include disrepair, poor ventilation, temperatures too hot or cold, mold and moisture, toxic materials, dust and dirt, germs, pests and pesticides, poor lighting, and construction and renovation-related hazards.

Unhealthy schools can trigger asthma attacks, allergies, headaches, fatigue, nausea, rashes and chronic illnesses. Staff and students miss school or are less productive because exposures to hazards in the school affect their health.

The state and local school districts don't provide enough money to routinely maintain all of these schools or build new ones when needed. Even urgently needed repairs are often not made. This is especially true in the 31 low-wealth, urban school districts in New Jersey, some of which are among the poorest in the United States. These districts depend on the Schools Development Authority (SDA) for funding. It is time for the Legislature to act and fund school construction programs.

SCHOOLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The SDA, which provides significant support to rebuild and upgrade aging facilities infrastructure, was launched in 2000 to comply with rulings in the landmark *Abbott v. Burke* case. Won by the Education Law Center (ELC), the rulings ordered the state to fully finance needed improvements to dilapidated, overcrowded and unsafe school buildings in the state's 31 most economically distressed districts. Initially dubbed "Abbott districts" they are now referred to as "SDA districts." In establishing the Abbott school construction program, the Legislature included grants for projects in non-SDA districts—called regular operating districts—and county vocational schools.

Despite the constitutional mandate, the state has failed to provide funding to the SDA since 2008 when the Legislature approved \$3.9 billion in bonding authority—\$2.9 billion for SDA districts and \$1 billion for regular operating districts. At this point, all of the 2008 money has either been

Heather Sorge is the organizer for Healthy Schools Now (HSN) with the New Jersey Work Environment Council. HSN is a coalition of more than 75 organizations representing a diverse set of stakeholders including public school advocates, parents, social justice advocates, faith leaders and environmentalists dedicated to ensuring all New Jersey children and school employees learn and work in safe, healthy, modernized school buildings. Please contact hsorge@njwec.org to get involved.

expended or is committed to the remaining dozen or so projects that will all be completed by 2024.

Although the program is nearly out of money, tremendous needs remain across districts. In 2016, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and the SDA surveyed the SDA districts about health and safety projects that may qualify for state school construction funding. In response, 23 of the 31 districts submitted 429 project applications to address significant unsafe, unhealthy and dangerous conditions: leaky roofs, crumbling facades, fire safety, and antiquated mechanical systems. Seventy-five of those applications involved inadequate heating and ventilation systems.

Of the 429 district applications, the NJDOE approved only 15 repair projects in just four districts for state funding. Only two of the approved projects included repairing unsafe ventilation systems. The NJDOE has provided no information on whether the SDA districts were able to complete the dozens of additional ventilation projects with other available funds.

In the most recently approved SDA Long Range Facilities Plans, the 31 SDA districts identified the need for over 300 additional major construction projects. And in a January 2019 Educational Facilities Needs Assessment, the Office of Schools Facilities at the NJDOE found that 15 districts have serious space deficiencies. The fact that many schools, particularly in the SDA districts, have not been able to reopen during the pandemic is directly related to poor ventilation systems and overcrowding.

WHERE WE ARE NOW

The SDA has already identified the next round of priority projects. It released a Statewide Strategic Plan last year identifying 24 priority projects in 18 school districts (see link in resources). None

of these projects can move forward unless the Legislature authorizes more funding for the construction program. The Legislature should work with the SDA and NJDOE to determine the amount of funding needed for school construction in both the SDA and Regular Operating Districts and propose a funding bill.

GRANTS FOR REGULAR OPERATING DISTRICTS

This problem is not just an issue for the 31 SDA districts, this funding issue affects all districts. In addition to aiding the SDA districts, the SDA also provides regular operating district grants. Non-SDA school districts are eligible to receive at least 40% of eligible project costs. Funds may be used to address health and safety and overcrowding issues, to provide spaces to deliver in-district programs for disabled students, or to deliver full-day kindergarten facilities for school districts required to provide full-day preschool.

NEXT STEPS

As ELC returns to court, once again advocating for the health and safety of our most vulnerable students, we need to support them by contacting our legislators and demanding that they reauthorize the constitutionally mandated funding that SDA districts need and deserve as well as money for regular operating district grants. See the sidebar for contact information for your legislators.

These school buildings have been in desperate need of repair for years, and in some cases decades, putting our staff and student's health and safety at serious risk. If we've learned one lesson from COVID, it's how our environment can reduce or encourage the spread of the virus. Let's take that lesson and turn it into positive action by ensuring that all New Jersey schools are safe and healthy.



National experts say that schools are among our most hazardous indoor environments.



Resources

Healthy Schools Now
njwec.org/take-action/campaigns/healthy-schools-now

ELC Abbott v. Burke overview
edlawcenter.org/litigation/abbott-v-burke/

NJSDA Strategic Plan
njsda.gov/NJSDA/Content/Projects/2019_Statewide_Strategic_Plan.pdf

NJSDA
njsda.gov/NJSDA/AboutWhatWeDo

Contact your legislator
njleg.state.nj.us
 In the left-hand sidebar under "Members," click on "Find your Legislator" for contact information.

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SOCIAL MEDIA PD

THE DIGITAL AGE OF COLLABORATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

BY DAVID EGGERT

As we make our way through a school year unlike any other, teachers across the nation are overwhelmed and working more hours than ever before. Our motivation to innovate may be difficult to awaken, but it is an essential component to our “temporary normal” as I like to call it. How can educators collaborate? How can educators learn about the latest apps and websites to use in their digital classrooms?

As a Google-certified trainer and an educator who seeks tools to enhance learning outcomes, I am continuously learning through the digital tools of social media. Hundreds of thousands of educators across the globe are collaborating through social media platforms to enhance their practices and learning outcomes for students. The culture formed among educators through social media is unique, strong, and keeps the field of education alive and well!

TWITTER

Twitter is my personal favorite platform for learning. Educators can develop professional learning networks (PLNs) to foster a sense of community. As an educator who created a professional Twitter to use throughout college, I have had many opportunities to learn and connect with fellow educators. (Follow me @MrEggersClass!)

I have had opportunities to connect with educators worldwide, and even connected with one principal through Twitter who later ended up being the administrator at the school where I completed my student teaching. Even now, throughout my day, even if I have only a few minutes of free time, I look at Twitter as an opportunity to see what ideas members of my PLN are using in their classrooms, and as an opportunity to continue my goal of being a lifelong learner. Twitter is free professional development at your fingertips! Here are a few simple ways to start using Twitter:

- Follow fellow educators: There are teachers in many school buildings and positions who use Twitter. Follow them with your professional account. They may share their opinions, additional professional development opportunities, and be your cheerleader when you are proud of yourself or need some feedback.

- Twitter chats: This is another fantastic way to use Twitter. There are hundreds of Twitter chats on various educational topics each week. Simply do a Google search of Twitter chats for educators, and many lists should appear! You can join for a few minutes, stay the whole time, or just scroll through the chat. #SatChat and #tlap are two popular chats to search in your Twitter search bar.

- Freebies: That's right! Freebies! Who doesn't love those? Many authors and education professionals host giveaways that you can win free books and subscriptions. I have so far won four free books through Twitter that are expanding my knowledge as an educator.

FACEBOOK

Scrolling through Facebook? Make your daily social media meaningful to your practice as an educator. Facebook groups exist for any topic, from GSuite to Orton Gillingham to mathematics to business education. On Facebook, many educators share what you would normally spend hours doing on your own. Much of what they share is free! Bitmoji classrooms and other resources are at your disposal to use immediately or save for a later date.

Asking for perspectives is easier than ever. When I scroll through Facebook, educators are asking questions, such as “Nearpod or Pear Deck?” or “How do you teach the magic /e/ rule to first graders?” The list of questions is endless, but within minutes, you gather resources and perspectives from different educators who do what you do. Save the files for later to your computer or right on Facebook.

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is another platform that educators turn to for inspiration, whether it be classroom culture, ideas for classroom design conducive to learning, or strategies to engage your learners. There are teachers in my school who collaborate with other educators through Instagram, and I have gained ideas from there as well.

Regardless of how you learn best, social

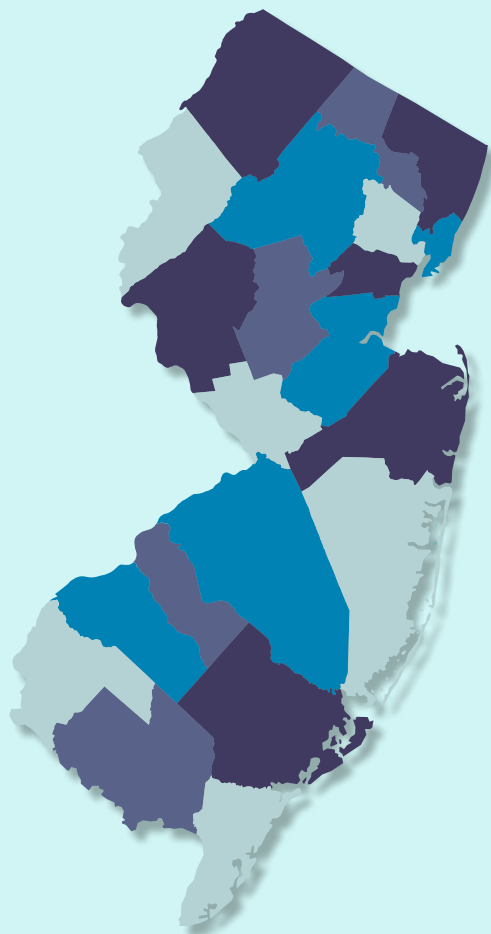


media is a place to explore. Finding what works best for you is important. Once you immerse yourself into a social media platform, it becomes a truly fun way to explore everything that is out there. Some of the best professional development I've had has been through social media networks. Using social media as an educator can save you time, money, and can be done from the comfort of your own home. 📱



David Eggert promotes PD available through social media.

David Eggert is a special education teacher in the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District. He can be reached at deggert95@gmail.com and followed on Twitter @MrEggersClass.



SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

This experience has been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on njea.org. Those seeking endorsement of a professional development experience that they will provide should call the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division at 609-599-4561.

SHOWCASE

CULTIVATING GIFTED MINDS: NJAGC VIRTUAL CONFERENCE 2021

Identifying, Engaging, and Supporting Gifted Learners from Underrepresented Populations

The annual conference of the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC), "Cultivating," will be held Friday, March 19. The program is open to educators, curriculum supervisors and administrators.

Participants will hear the keynote from Dr. Joy Lawson Davis and attend one breakout session in the morning and attend two breakout sessions in the afternoon. Davis' keynote is titled "Identifying, Engaging, and Supporting Gifted Learners from Underrepresented Populations." Her workshop is titled "Using Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in the Gifted Education Classroom."

Other workshops will address the educational and social/emotional needs of minority students, strategies for increasing equity in gifted programs, and other topics relating to broadening diverse representation in gifted education. Presenters will deliver sessions incorporating their vision of excellence in gifted education, such as showcasing successful programming for the gifted learner, sharing best practices to develop attendees' individual educational skills, and idea exchange seminars as a way of increasing participants' knowledge in the gifted field. Speakers will also provide an overview of teaching strategies, skills, and characteristics specific to the gifted learner.

The costs run from \$94-\$114, depending on membership in NJAGC. Contact Sue McGreevy at 856-273-7530 or mcgreevys@njagc.org for more information. Visit njagc.org to register.

MORE TO LEARN

2021 NJTESOL/NJBE VIRTUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

Equity for Language Learners

Three prominent keynote speakers and a special guest speaker, Dr. Stephen Krashen, will be featured at this year's NJTESOL/NJBE Virtual Spring Conference to be held May 25, 26, and 27. The keynotes are Dr. Jose Medina (Meeting the Needs of Emergent Bilinguals), Jane Hill (Language and Discourse for English Language Learners), and Dr. Kate Seltzer (Translanguaging Practices of Emergent Bilinguals).

All three days will include matters of general interest, content area instruction, bilingual/ESL Pre-K through 12, higher ed, teacher ed, adult ed, K-12 administrators, dual language/biliteracy, and the new 2020 WIDA Standards. There is one rate for all three days. Registration includes one free year of membership. There will be over 20 presentations each day (pre-recorded presentations followed by live Q&A sessions). Each paid attendee will have three-month access to all conference presentations on demand. Explore the virtual sponsor and exhibit halls. Learn about the latest products and services.

Register early for a discounted rate.

Visit njtesol-njbe.org/spring-conference for more information and to register. For other conference questions email Sandee McBride at conference-coordinator@njtesol-njbe.org or Michelle Land at vice-president@njtesol-njbe.org.

The more things change...

Some evaluation reminders

By Elisabeth Yucis

Note: On Jan. 11, Gov. Phil Murphy issued Executive Order 214, which removes student growth objectives (SGOs) as a factor in teacher evaluation for the 2020-21 school year. See Page 20 for details.

It's no secret that the COVID-19 pandemic has upended every aspect of our lives. But when it comes to educator evaluation, it appears that the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has resolved to essentially stay the course. As a result, evaluation during the pandemic looks much like it did prior to the pandemic, which has left NJEA members understandably concerned.

Focusing on factors within your control will be beneficial and promote self-efficacy, so we encourage you to use this year's evaluation as an opportunity to take a fresh look at familiar structures and practices.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS AND PORTFOLIOS

In the Educator Evaluation Guidance issued in September, the NJDOE emphasized existing regulatory flexibilities that allow districts to develop unique local evaluation practices. Whether you are working in a fully remote environment or spending time in the classroom with your students, an administrator will use a board-approved rubric to score your teaching and offer feedback.

We recommend taking a few moments to prepare for observations—whether traditional in-class observations or portfolio-based evaluations—by re-familiarizing yourself with the rubric and scoring practices being used in your district. Knowing the rules of the game will help you to strategize opportunities to put your strengths on display. We also recommend that you chat with colleagues and network within your local association to uncover tips and tricks that will help you shine when it comes time for observation.

Elisabeth Yucis is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She can be reached at eyucis@njea.org.

POST-OBSERVATION CONFERENCES

Regardless of how unconventional your observation might feel this year, the regulations require a post-observation conference. For the sake of health and safety, these can be held remotely for any staff member.

We recommend that you use your post-observation conference to emphasize how your in-class observation or portfolio observation illustrates your recent professional growth, as well as the opportunities you have taken to reflect on your practice and adjust strategies. Don't be shy: speak up about the ways in which you have risen to the challenge of educating students during a pandemic.

ANNUAL SUMMATIVE CONFERENCES

Ever since the pandemic closed buildings in March, you and your colleagues have been working harder than ever to support students while simultaneously navigating the personal stress of an unprecedented public health crisis. As with the post-observation conference, your annual summative conference will provide an opportunity for you and your direct supervisor to ensure that your hard work and growth is appropriately documented.

During this conference, make sure that you also submit your Professional Development Plan hours for this year—and last year, if you received NE in spring 2020. Educators who received NE last year should submit 40 hours compiled over two school years, and those who received scores last year should submit 20 hours earned this year.


EDUCATORS ON CAPS

The evaluation regulations lay out a clear timeline for the development and implementation of an educator's Corrective Action Plan (CAP), specifying that the CAP must be developed in collaboration between a teacher and their designated supervisor. All CAP regulations are still in effect, but you and your direct supervisor may have agreed to some changes for this year's CAP to reflect the new realities of your job.

If you have questions about your CAP, please reach out to your local association leadership and/or UniServ field representative for support.

NJEA SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

As always, NJEA is here to support you and advocate for fair evaluations. We know that so many factors probably feel out of your control right now, and it is our hope that focusing on what you can control will allow you to make the most of this school year.

The NJEA Learning portal, found at learning.njea.org, is a great place to go to find virtual professional development opportunities and other resources. For individual support, please reach out to your local association leadership, UniServ field representative, and NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division staff. 

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Knowing the rules of the game will help you to strategize opportunities to put your strengths on display.



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EDUCATION IS POLITICAL

by Jonathan Lancaster

In every facet, education is political. The outcomes of elections determine your school board's policies, your school district's budget, who becomes your superintendent, your content standards, your health care contributions, your time off—even your daily Pledge of Allegiance is dictated by politics. By its very nature of being a public institution, public education is political. It is vital for educators to understand the influence of politics—not just in education, but throughout our nation and globally—and, therefore, the need for discussing politics in the classroom.

In the current polarized political climate, educators are beginning to eschew political matters in class. It's a daunting task, and the fear of student or parent complaints, accusations of bias, and impassioned students regurgitating conspiracy theories are real threats in the current political climate. However, the recent messaging from parents and administrators of "keep politics out of the classroom" is misguided and harmful to our democracy.

It is not an educator's role to dictate political beliefs; however, it is their role to create opportunities where students can form their own. As educators, we are largely responsible for the

development of critical thinking, interpersonal, and communicative skills that are missing from contemporary political discourse. Many educators abhor what they see in Washington D.C., and for substantial reasons. However, as educators, we must realize that our schools are perhaps the strongest venue for depolarization within our political system.

While extreme political positions aren't necessarily a bad thing, the casting of false characterizations of the "other's" political affiliation is. Students are swarmed with ideological demagoguery from across the political spectrum, but without a setting in which to communicate with those who hold opposing views, the harmful political polarization is bound to continue.

This is to suggest that educators, especially those in the humanities, mustn't shy away from uncomfortable conversations. Topics of policy, race, LBGTQ+ topics, and more must be discussed in our public schools. While educators certainly need to treat these topics with the sensitivity and consideration they deserve—through properly integrating them into existing curricula, following district guidelines, and seeking support when needed—these topics are much too important to neglect or exclude. If these issues are not thoroughly discussed in class, students will be unable to critically think about these extremely important issues, communicate with those who hold other views, or feel empathy for the "other" side.

While I don't condone teachers "preaching" to students about political views, teachers must model

constructive conversations around uncomfortable topics, and steer the conversation into evidence-based, respectful discourse. If we don't, the age of show-business politics, sensationalism, and political provocation will become the norm.

Tomorrow's policies are created by today's students. Let's prepare our students by ensuring that politics stays in the classroom. 🏠

Editor's note

Readers of the column may wish to go to njea.org to read "STAT – Students Taking Action Together: Using Social-Emotional Competencies to Build Civility and Civic Discourse," which appeared in the November 2019 *NJEA Review*.

STAT is a project of Rutgers' Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab. It is an instructional strategy used with schools' existing content that builds students' social-emotional learning (SEL) skills in empathy, perspective-taking, emotion regulation, problem-solving, and respectful, effective communication.

STAT helps students analyze social issues—including historical and current events, and community and school issues, as well as those in literature—and formulate action plans in response to them.

To article can be found online at njea.org/student-taking-action-together-stat.

Jonathan Lancaster is a local association leader in Bergen County Vocational Technical Schools Education Association, where he serves as Legislative Action Team chair, early-career liaison, webmaster, and parliamentarian. He can be reached at lancaster.jonathan.l@gmail.com.

BUILDING AND RELYING ON COMMUNITY AS AN **EARLY CAREER MEMBER**

BY ROB MANGEL



Early Career Network

Anyone who has walked into a school building knows that it brims with energy. Throughout the day, students move through the hallways between classes as school staff work to facilitate learning and maintain the emotional and social well-being of students. While the symphony of a school is apparent to anyone who might step into a school building, what is not as obvious is the incredible isolation that can be felt as well.

One of the things that educator preparation programs and new staff orientations might not prepare school staff for is

the tremendous feeling of loneliness that working in education can bring. Many folks who work outside education do not understand what we do and are not fully able to engage with us about our work. Additionally, once we are in school buildings, many of us are so overwhelmed with the day-to-day work that we are not necessarily able to connect with each other in meaningful ways.

The great irony of this reality is that in order to thrive as school staff and to best meet our students' needs, we need each other. Your local association can offer wonderful resources to do just that. However as an early career NJEA member, and sometimes the only new staff member in your building, finding folks in similar circumstances can prove difficult. The NJEA Early Career Network has worked over the past few years to bring early career NJEA members together to meet this need.

Building a community is no easy task under the best of conditions. It requires groups of people to identify goals, set norms and expectations, and then regularly work collaboratively to build toward those goals. This is no straightforward endeavor. However, what is great about working in education is that we become adept at building communities!

Classroom teachers and educational support professionals alike all have an active hand in building a community of learners daily. We set expectations and goals for our students. The stability that these expectations provide is integral to student success both in and out of the classroom. In addition to stability, we also build community with our students through the sharing of experiences and ideas. We allow our students to share their stories with us,

and we share with them. This exchange helps to build trust in our buildings, and our students can come to rely on these spaces for support.

Nearly every day we extend community to our students, but doing it for ourselves is another thing entirely. At the end of a school day, it is sometimes difficult to find the energy to connect with each other. But it is important that we find each other and help each other.

By connecting with others, we can fight against the exhaustion and burnout we may feel. Exhaustion among all school staff is common, but ask any veteran staff member and they'll tell you that their first few years were especially difficult and exhausting. The potential for burnout among early career staff members is particularly acute. We can and should combat it together.

Organizational psychologist Adam Grant makes this point on his podcast *WorkLife*: "I found...that when people feel ineffective, helping others buffers against burnout. It makes them feel competent, which leaves them energized rather than exhausted." When we find and help each other by building communities, we also help ourselves. We feel more connected to our students, our colleagues, and our work if we collaborate and build together.

Building connections in your building is integral to thriving as a professional. As mentioned in last month's early career column, one of our "whys" is to welcome you into the profession and give you a space to collaborate and learn from each other. As we move deeper into the school year and we feel more burnt out, it becomes increasingly important that we find a community that gives us the meaning and the connection that will help us move through the remainder of the year.

To help build our community of educators, visit njea.org/early-career. 📌

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While the symphony of a school is apparent to anyone who might step into a school building, what is not as obvious is the incredible isolation that can take place as well.

Robert Mangel is a social studies teacher at Linden High School and vice president of the Linden Education Association. Mangel can be reached at robmangel@gmail.com.



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For those within five years of retirement, NJEA offers an online pension webinar for you to learn more about your retirement benefits. To sign up, go to the NJEA Events calendar found on the lower-right-hand side of the njea.org homepage and select the pension webinar that works best with your schedule.



LOWER YOUR STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Get informed about your student loan forgiveness options through monthly webinars designed for NJEA members. Register at njea.org/dndwebinars.

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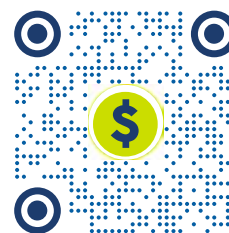


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INCLUSION THROUGH INTEGRATION

THE ROLE OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS IN REMOTE LEARNING

BY ERNEST MONACO JR.

2020 has been a year like no other. I have heard it described as exhausting, chaotic, surreal and a dumpster fire. Among educators, words and phrases such as the digital divide, synchronous, asynchronous, hybrid, and remote or virtual have all become part of our everyday vocabulary.

Despite all the negative associations that we may have with those concepts, there were many positive outcomes made as well. The year put a spotlight on the degree to which technology has become integrated into our society and how beneficial it can be for our students. Technology is the new normal as smartphones, tablets, and computers have become essential items for students and educators. But for the nearly seven million public school students who have disabilities, inaccessibility to curricula and challenges to the effective implementation of IEPs became increasingly prevalent during the pandemic.

This past semester I had the privilege of completing my student teaching experience in a school district in central New Jersey. As a teacher in fourth and fifth grade in an inclusion and resource classroom, I saw firsthand how challenging this transition was for this population of students and their families. While our students with disabilities may have their struggles, there are teaching practices that make their learning experiences better.

RELATIONSHIPS

Reaching students is the priority. Working together with the whole school team will facilitate their success. Collaborate with your school's secretaries, custodial staff, administrators, case managers, child study team members, paraprofessionals, parents, other teachers and, of course, the students themselves.

Despite parents' stressful circumstances, many have been furloughed or laid off, their involvement is crucial. Parents need to know that you are there to help their child succeed, and frequent communication reinforces that notion.

Many students perform differently in person than in a virtual space. Building relationships with students through their families and the whole school team helps us learn more about their learning styles at home.

KNOW YOUR RESOURCES AND HOW BEST TO DEPLOY THEM

Before I began my student teaching experience, I watched countless webinars on digital resources. I quickly realized that while each resource

has a specific purpose, I only needed a few resources to use every day. Too many could be overwhelming. The students seemed to perform better when a routine was established. Ask your administrators and colleagues what resources the district has subscribed to as well.

Another part of knowing your resources means fully understanding the platforms you use for video communication when teaching synchronously. I have seen many students kicked out of meetings because of internet issues, or instances of students talking when unmuted without audio heard, or students trying to share their screens but only showing black, or them working on an assignment that doesn't save.

When students do not complete an assignment or follow directions, our first instinct may be to give the students a consequence. But it is important to anticipate the potential for technological interruptions in lessons. Be flexible and talk with your students if problems arise.

DIFFERENTIATION AND ACCOMMODATION

Students with special needs often need scaffolding and specialized instruction. Students need tasks broken down. Students need clear and concise directions. Incorporating movement during lessons, providing brain breaks, providing fidgets, using a timer, and using student interests in lessons are all strategies that have been proven effective.

Additionally, technology can be a facilitator for students in their social-emotional development. Many of our students with disabilities have anxiety and feel uncomfortable expressing themselves. Many benefit from small-group instruction and may require 1:1 support. Teachers should check in daily, either formally or informally. Students also benefit from predictability. Teachers should give students expectations and establish rules and procedures early in the school year, including expectations for virtual instruction.

Even through these unprecedented times, students are willing to learn if lessons are engaging and motivating. Let's provide the best educational experiences possible for our students with disabilities by being positive, building relationships, knowing our resources, and accommodating properly. 🧠

Ernest Monaco Jr. is an NJEA Preservice ambassador and a graduate student at The College of New Jersey

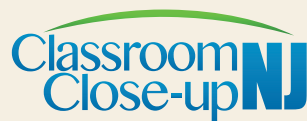
For more information on special education students and the coronavirus pandemic, visit the Pew Research Center site at pewrsr.ch/38I91ya.



Classroom Close-up NJ looks back at **Bubbles 4 Autism**

Educational support professionals (ESPs) are the backbone of our school communities. They see and interact with students in unique ways and their contributions are invaluable. NJEA honors ESPs in February with this look back at a special project spearheaded by ESPs at Holland Township Elementary School to celebrate and increase understanding and support for those living with autism.

Students from pre-K through eighth grade at Holland Township Elementary School blow bubbles in support of Autism Awareness and engage in a month of activities to learn how to be supportive, accepting and empathetic. The program includes fundraising activities for Autism New Jersey.



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.

NJREA ISSUES SCHOLARSHIP RENEWALS

College students who were awarded scholarships from NJREA may renew them each year, provided they meet the criteria for the award. Recipients of either the Elizabeth Allen or Isabelle M. Hickmann four-year scholarship are eligible for renewal if they maintain a college GPA of at least 3.0.

Recipients of the Fred E. Aug Community College Scholarship are eligible for renewal in their second year if they maintain a college GPA of at least 2.75. The following are renewal recipients for the 2020-21 school year.



Ryan Devine is a senior at Dickinson College and pursuing a STEM degree. He has continued to play basketball and was selected for the All-Sportsmanship Team for the Centennial Conference, as well as chosen to represent the Student Advisory Athletic Association for the NCAA. Devine reads to elementary students monthly and coaches basketball with special needs children.



Marissa Spletter is a junior and studying management at Boston College. She has been actively involved with campus clubs, intramural athletics and community service. Once COVID-19 hit New Jersey, she took advantage of her entrepreneurial skills and began donating handmade masks to Morristown Memorial Hospital and other local groups in need. To further her COVID-19 relief initiative, Spletter has created a website to engage with the community and provide updates. Her next goal is to study abroad at the University of Singapore in the spring of 2021.



Sabrina Costa studies biology UCLA. She is in her junior year. Her biggest hurdle was adapting to the difference in time zones between California and New Jersey. It was also an isolating experience being away from peers to collaborate and learn together. Although COVID-19 changed Costa's plans, she is grateful to be safe and continue her studies.



Simon Levien decided to take a sabbatical this year from Harvard because of the pandemic.



Bradley Ferguson is going strong in his sophomore year at Harvard. Although the onset of COVID-19 halted in-person classes, Harvard encouraged group work through Zoom. Ferguson has maintained his status as director of Harvard's National Model United Nations and director of the Regional Bodies Committee on the World Bank, which focuses on response to economic crises such as the Ebola epidemic and COVID-19 pandemic. Ferguson has adapted, persevered and maintained a positive outlook this year and is dedicated to take this experience as an opportunity to excel.



Toni Castellani adapted to her first year at Raritan Valley Community College, using the organizational skills and structure taught in her K-12 school years. Her focus this year has been giving back and helping others in need, such as donating to the school's food pantry and a local Equine-Assisted Therapy program. To further her community outreach, Castellani has been donating farm eggs from her own chickens to her local food pantry to directly give back to those in need.

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.

Join **MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA** for its spring meeting/luncheon on Thursday, March 11 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. An NJEA Member Benefits fair will be held. The cost is \$34. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

MORRIS COUNTY REA

welcomes you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, March 10 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The cost is \$35. To attend, call John Beekman at 973-514-1080.

The OCEAN COUNTY REA

will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Thursday, March 11 at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

WARREN COUNTY REA'S

next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, April 7 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. To attend, contact Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995.

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Members to vote on constitutional amendment questions

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (D.A.), the Association's policy-making body, voted at its Nov. 7, 2020, and Jan. 9, 2021, meetings to accept recommendations made by the NJEA Constitution Review Committee to place several constitutional amendments on the spring 2021 election ballot.

The constitutional questions cover the following issues:

- Clarifying the limited rights in two special membership categories – general professional members and subscribing members – and aligning the language in both of those categories;
- Enhancing the formula used to determine the minimum representation goal of ethnic-minority members on the Delegate Assembly by adjusting how many statewide at-large ethnic-minority D.A. members and alternates would need to be elected by the D.A. to achieve that goal if the numbers of ethnic-minority D.A. members regularly elected fell short;
- Approving proposed editorial changes designed to clarify, update, and improve the NJEA Constitution to enhance readability, consistency, and style throughout the Association's main governing document. These proposed editorial changes resulted from an in-depth review of the Constitution conducted by the Constitution Review Committee, the first such study completed in decades.

The proposed constitutional amendments and more detailed information on these questions are spelled out in the text in this notice.

As specified in NJEA Constitution Article XI:

"Amendments so proposed shall be published in full in the Official Publication of the Association and shall then be submitted by ballot to the active members of the Association under the provisions governing the election of officers (Article VIII).

"Voting on amendments may take place regardless of whether the election of officers is also taking place.

"A two-thirds vote of all the ballots cast on the amendment shall be necessarily for its adoption."

Mail balloting will be conducted April 1 to 15, 2021, with ballots sent to all eligible NJEA voting members. Ballots are due by noon April 15, 2021, at the address supplied on the ballots.

Proposed amendment to clarify limited rights of General Professional and Subscribing Members

These proposed changes would clarify that the members in these membership categories are not eligible to vote nor can they run for or be elected to NJEA elective positions. This simply reinforces the original intent of these categories.

These are not new membership categories. NJEA has offered both of these membership categories for decades as a way of building connections with other education professionals and individuals who support the Association's programs and goals or want to keep up with what is happening in New Jersey public education but are not otherwise entitled to join as full members.

Both of these categories were designed to allow individuals who are not eligible to be represented by NJEA for collective bargaining purposes – such as private school teachers and N.J. Department of Education staff and other individuals who support the organization's mission – who want to attend the NJEA Convention and certain professional development opportunities, as well as receive the Association's professional journal, the opportunity to do so through these special limited membership categories.

These individuals **do not** have access to the full array of membership benefits offered to other active and retired membership categories, including Legal Services.

NJEA membership figures show three subscribing members and 15 general professional members on the membership rolls now, but NJEA has not promoted or marketed these membership categories in some time.

Currently, the Constitution specifies that subscribing members receive the Association publications and entry into the NJEA Convention. Since the elimination of the *NJEA Reporter* and previously published separate NJEA Research and Economic Services salary publications, the only publication now provided is the *NJEA Review*.

At the same time, the Constitution indicates that general professional members "have the right to receive such services of the Association as the Delegate Assembly shall determine."

Besides confirming that individuals in these categories are non-voting and precluded from holding NJEA office, the proposed language would align both categories to specify that they "shall have the right to receive such services of the Association as the Delegate Assembly shall determine."

The specific constitutional amendment question would read as follows:

Constitutional Amendment Question 1:

Shall the following amendments to the NJEA Constitution, Article III-Membership in Section 3, General Professional Members, and in Section 6, Subscribing Members, be adopted as shown (with additions shown in boldface and underlined; deletions shown in brackets and struck out), to be effective Sept. 1, 2021?

Article III -- Membership

Section 3. General Professional Members. Any person engaged in any professional education capacity in New Jersey other than those specified in Section 1 may become a general professional member of this Association by payment of the annual dues. General professional members shall have the right to receive such services of the Association as the Delegate Assembly shall determine. **They shall not have the right to participate in Association elections nor run for or hold Association elective office.**

"Section 6. Subscribing Members. Any other person interested in advancing the cause of public education in New Jersey may become a subscribing member of the Association by payment of the annual dues. Subscribing members shall have the right to receive such [publications] **services of the Association** as the Delegate Assembly shall determine[and to attend the Annual Convention]. **They shall not have the right to participate in Association elections nor run for or hold Association elective office.**"

Proposal to enhance formula for determining at-large ethnic-minority D.A. representation

This proposed amendment would change the formula used to determine the required percentage of ethnic-minority D.A. members on the Association's primary policy-making body. It would raise slightly the minimum representation required annually for electing and seating statewide at-large ethnic-minority D.A. members to one more delegate than the strict proportional representation of ethnic-minority members currently required in the Constitution.

The goal of this change is to ensure enhanced participation by diverse members in the Association's governance – making it more representative not only of our diverse membership but also of the students that Association members serve.

Constitutional Amendment Question 2:

Shall the following amendment to NJEA Constitution, Article VI, Delegate Assembly, Section 1, to enhance the formula used to determine how many at-large ethnic-minority D.A. members and alternates would be required annually to achieve the ethnic-minority representation goal on the D.A. if not attained through the regular election process, be approved as shown (with additions shown in boldface and underlined; deletions shown in brackets and struck out), to be effective Sept. 1, 2021?

(NOTE: If the proposed editorial changes to the NJEA Constitution outlined in Constitutional Amendment Question 3 are passed, the constitutional language dealing with at-large representatives to the Delegate Assembly will be placed in a new Section 3 under Article V, with ethnic-minority at-large D.A. representatives covered in Section 3a as shown in the proposed language below with subsequent sections renumbered. If the separate editorial changes in the NJEA Constitution in this section are not approved, this language will remain in Section 1 or renumbered as required based on those approved changes. The text below contains both the editorial changes proposed, as well as the formula change which appears at the end of the second paragraph below to enable members to see how this complete subsection would read.)

Article VI – Delegate Assembly

Section 3. At-large representation on the D.A.

a. Ethnic-minority at-large D.A. representatives

[.Hff] Following an election and subject to any exclusions specified in the Constitution or Bylaws [provided hereinafter], **the Association shall identify** the percentage of **ethnic-minority** persons who are to [be] **serve** on the Delegate Assembly the following Sept.[ember] 1, **including those whose terms are continuing.** [, or if after September 1, who were on the Delegate Assembly as of September 1 immediately following the election, and who are ethnic-minority persons;]

If that percentage is less than the percentage of **self-**identified ethnic-minority persons who are **NJEA** active members [of the Association] as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining D.A. [the] membership [of the Delegate Assembly], the Delegate Assembly shall elect[;] annually, at one of its regular meetings, **at-large ethnic-minority D.A. members and an equal number of at-large ethnic-minority D.A. alternates** from the **NJEA** active membership, except those serving on the **NJEA Executive Committee**. [of the Association, ethnic-minority persons of such number as is necessary to increase the percentage of ethnic-minority persons of the Delegate Assembly so that it is not less than the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active members of the Association as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Delegate Assembly; as at-large members of the Delegate Assembly (and an equal number of alternates) for terms which, if elected by the Delegate Assembly following a regular annual election and prior to September 1 of any year, shall commence on September 1 of that year and shall expire August 31 of the following year, or if elected at any other time, shall commence immediately upon their election and shall expire on August 31 immediately following their election:] **The number of at-large ethnic-minority persons elected as D.A. members and alternates should increase the percentage of ethnic-minority members on the D.A. so that it reflects at least the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active Association members, plus one ethnic-minority member.**

If elected by the D.A. following a regular annual election and prior to Sept.[ember] 1 of any year, **the at-large terms** shall commence on Sept.[ember] 1 of that year and shall

expire Aug.[ust] 31 of the following year[; or i]. If elected at any other time, the terms shall commence immediately upon their election and shall expire on Aug.[ust] 31 immediately following their election.

The determination of the number of such at-large members to be added to the [Delegate Assembly] **D.A.** each year shall be based on the anticipated or actual membership of the [Delegate Assembly] **D.A.** on Sept.[ember] 1[as provided above], but shall not include consideration of any person serving in any other category of at-large membership on the Delegate Assembly which may be provided for [hereinafter] **in the Constitution and Bylaws.**

Proposed changes to update, clarify, and improve readability of the NJEA Constitution

These proposed changes are designed to clarify, update, make more consistent in style, organize more logically, and overall improve readability of the NJEA Constitution, the Association's primary governing document.

Some sections of the current Constitution contain multiple, varied concepts which make finding certain components difficult. As a result, some additional section headings and renumbering as a consequence are recommended to help members and leaders better navigate the document.

In addition, the current document contains numerous run-on, sometimes column-long sentences which make reading and understanding the text unwieldy for the regular reader. Where possible without changing the meaning or intent, the sentences have been broken down to make the document more comprehensible.

In addition, as a result of some amendments inserted at different times over the past decades, both style and organization of some components require adjustment.

The proposed changes include renaming the "Student" membership category to "Preservice" in Article III, Section 4. This category is composed of college students across the state who are preparing to become teachers.

The NJEA Delegate Assembly several years ago called for changing the NJEA Bylaws to institute the name change from "Student" to "Preservice," but the action taken did not follow the prescribed procedures required for amending the Bylaws. In addition, the action could not be completed since the Constitution, which provides for the "Student Member" category, had not been changed or proposed to be amended first. The group encompassing these members, originally called Student NJEA, changed its name to NJEA Preservice several years ago. Consequently, the proposed editorial changes include updating the name of the membership category to "preservice" to more accurately reflect the status of those members.

Article III, Section 7, which deals with Life Members, has been expanded to clarify that NJEA life members and NJEA retired life members are different membership categories with different applicable rights and privileges.

Article X would differentiate between "affiliates" and "affiliated groups."

(NOTE: This proposed question may be segmented on the ballot by NJEA Constitution articles and their sections to allow for members to more easily read, consider, and vote on the proposed modifications section by section.)

Constitutional Amendment Question 3:

Shall the following editorial amendments to the NJEA Constitution as shown (with additions shown in boldface and underlined; deletions shown in brackets and struck out) be approved, effective Sept. 1, 2021?

Constitution of the New Jersey Education Association

Proposed amendments:

Additions appear in **boldface** and are underlined.

Deletions are in brackets and struck out [].

Article I – Names

The Association shall be known as the NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, hereinafter referred to as “the Association” or NJEA.

Article II – Objects

This Association is established to:

- a. promote the educational interests of the State;
- b. ~~{to}~~ promote equal educational opportunity for all students;
- c. ~~{to}~~ secure and maintain for the office of teaching its true position among the professions;
- d. ~~{to}~~ promote and guard the interests of employees who are in employment categories eligible for membership.

Article III – Membership

Section 1. Active Professional Members.

Any person who

- a. ~~[(1)-who]~~ is regularly employed in a professional education capacity in a public school, college, university, institution, or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey and
 - b. ~~[(2)-who]~~ holds such a certificate if in a position which requires a certificate issued by the State Board of Examiners or holds an earned bachelor's degree if not in a position which requires such certificate, or
 - c. ~~[(3)-or any person]~~ is employed in a professional capacity by this Association, and,
 - d. ~~[(4)]~~ where eligible, is a member of the appropriate affiliated local and county associations and of the National Education Association
- may become an active professional member of this Association[;] by payment of the annual dues.

In addition, any other person employed in the public or private sector may become an active professional member of this Association by payment of the annual dues, provided, however, that such person is included in an employment category that, if related to the general educational community of interest, has been authorized by the Executive Committee as eligible for active professional membership.~~[-or-i]~~ If in an employment category not related to the general educational community of interest, such person must have [has] been authorized by the Delegate Assembly as eligible for active professional membership.

Active professional membership is limited to those persons who, where eligible, maintain membership in the appropriate affiliated local and county associations and the National Education Association. Active professional members shall have the right to vote, hold office, and receive services of the Association.

Section 2. Active Supportive Members. Any person employed in other than a certificated professional education capacity in a public or State school, college, university, or other institution or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey, and who, where eligible, is a member of the appropriate affiliated local and county associations and of the National Education Association, may become an active supportive member of this Association by payment of the annual dues.

In addition, any other person employed in the public or private sector may become an active supportive member of this Association by payment of the annual dues, provided, however, that such person is included in an employment category that, if related to the general educational community of interest, has been authorized by the Executive Committee as eligible for active supportive membership.~~[-or-i]~~ If in an employment category not related to the general educational community of interest, such person must have [has] been authorized by the Delegate Assembly as eligible for active supportive membership.

Active supportive membership is limited to those persons who, where eligible, maintain membership in the appropriate affiliated local and county associations and the National Education Association.

Active supportive members shall have the right to vote, hold office, and receive services of the Association.

Section 3. General Professional Members. Any person engaged in any professional education capacity in New Jersey other than those specified in Section 1 may become a general professional member of this Association by payment of the annual dues. General professional members shall have the right to receive such services of the Association as the Delegate Assembly shall determine. *(NOTE: Changes to this section are proposed in separate Constitutional Amendment Question 1 and would occur only if approved by NJEA members through the election process.)*

Section 4. [Student] Preservice Members. Any student in any New Jersey college or university preparing for teaching may become a [student] preservice member by payment of the annual dues. [Student] Preservice members shall have the right to receive such services of the Association as the Delegate Assembly shall determine.

Section 5. Retired Members. Active members upon retirement may continue to enjoy all rights and services, including the right to vote, but not to be elected to office, by payment of the annual dues as a retired member. Any other retired member, except a subscribing member, shall continue to enjoy such rights and services to which original membership entitled that member upon payment of annual dues as a retired member. Retired membership is limited to those persons who, where eligible, maintain membership in NEA-Retired, an affiliate of the National Education Association.

Section 6. Subscribing Members. Any other person interested in advancing the cause of public education in New Jersey may become a subscribing member of the Association by payment of the annual dues. Subscribing members shall have the right to receive such publications as the Delegate Assembly shall determine and to attend the Annual Convention. *(NOTE: Changes to this section are proposed in separate Constitutional Amendment Question 1 and would occur only if approved by NJEA members through the election process.)*

Section 7. Life Members.

- a. Persons qualifying for active membership may become NJEA life members pursuant to regulations adopted by the NJEA Executive Committee. No more than 1,000 persons shall be life members at any one time. A life member shall have all the rights and privileges of an active member for life.

b. Persons eligible for membership in the N.J. Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) may become retired life members of NJEA and NJREA, based on rules established by NJREA. These members may not be elected to NJEA office if retired, except for elective seats designated for the NJREA. They do not have the same rights and privileges as NJEA life members but have the same rights as NJEA retired members. Active members who are eligible to join NJREA prior to retirement retain all of their active member rights and privileges until they retire or as otherwise established in the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 8. Honorary Members. Honorary members may be elected by a vote of three-fourths of the Delegate Assembly, provided that nominations for such honorary memberships shall have been approved by a three-fourths vote of all the members of the Executive Committee. Honorary members shall enjoy all the privileges of the Association except those of voting and holding office[;] and shall be exempt from the payment of dues.

Section 9. Qualifications. Any person joining the Association shall agree to subscribe to its purposes as stated in Article II and to abide by the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 10. ~~[Code of Ethics]~~ Standards of Conduct. The Association, by vote of its Delegate Assembly, shall establish ~~[a Code of Ethics and such other]~~ reasonable standards of conduct [as] members ~~[of the profession]~~ shall be expected to follow **as required under the Hearing Committee for Censure, Suspension, and Expulsion of Members.**

Section 11. Censure, Suspension, Expulsion, and Reinstatement of Members. Any member may be censured, suspended, or expelled for just cause, after due notice and hearing.

There shall be a ~~[h]Hearing [c]Committee for Censure, Suspension, and Expulsion of Members~~ consisting of nine members, none of whom are employees of NJEA, elected by the Delegate Assembly ~~(D.A.)~~ for **staggered** terms of two years, **with four members' terms expiring in one year and five members' terms expiring the subsequent year.** [provided that, in the first year of implementation of this section, four shall be elected for a term not to exceed one year and five for a term not to exceed two years.]

In the event of any Hearing Committee member's resignation or retirement, the vacancy for the unexpired term [Vacancies] shall be filled by the ~~[p]President~~, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee[, for the unexpired terms].

~~[The composition of t]~~The Hearing Committee shall include at least one member from each of the following groups: active professional members who are "classroom teachers"[;] as ~~[the term "classroom teacher" is]~~ defined in the Bylaws; active professional members who are other than classroom teachers[;]; and active supportive members.

No more than one member ~~[of the hearing committee]~~ from **the same** [any] unit of representation, ~~[established pursuant to]~~ **as defined in** Article V of the Constitution, **may be elected to the Hearing Committee.**

At least one member of the ~~[h]Hearing [c]Committee~~ ~~[so constituted]~~ shall be an ethnic-minority person.

The ~~[h]Hearing [c]Committee~~ shall have the power to hold hearings and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for **a** determination ~~[for]~~ **concerning** each case arising under this section, subject to such standards as may be established.

The determination of the Executive Committee may be appealed to the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.**, which shall have the power to make a final determination. No member of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.**, who serves on the ~~[h]Hearing [c]Committee~~ or as an alternate on the Executive Committee when the matter is considered shall have a vote in the final determination by the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.**, nor participate in the debate on the appeal, except under such procedures as apply to all members of the ~~[h]Hearing [c]Committee~~.

The ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.**, shall have power to reinstate any suspended or expelled member.

The Executive Committee, with the approval of the Delegate Assembly, shall establish such standards and procedural requirements as it deems appropriate for the implementation of this section.

Article IV – Officers

Section 1. Officers. The officers of this Association shall be ~~[a] the~~ President, ~~[a] Vice[-]~~ President, and ~~[a] Secretary-Treasurer~~, who shall be elected for terms of two years and may not succeed themselves after serving two full terms in office. They shall be simultaneously elected as state delegates to the Representative Assembly of the National Education Association. No officer shall serve simultaneously as a member of the Delegate Assembly or as a Delegate Assembly Alternate.

The Officers shall assume the duties of their offices on Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 following their election[;] and shall hold office within their terms as long as they ethically perform the duties of their office and until their successors take office, provided[;] that **before assuming office** the Secretary-Treasurer ~~[before assuming office;]~~ shall give a bond approved by the Executive Committee. Vacancies in the office of Vice[-] President or Secretary-Treasurer which occur more than 200 days before the end of the term shall be filled by election; vacancies in the office of Vice[-] President or Secretary-Treasurer which occur 200 days or less before the expiration of the term shall be filled by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall appoint an acting Vice[-] President or acting Secretary-Treasurer until a vacancy is filled.

Section 2. Duties of Officers.

a. The President shall:

- (1) call meetings of the Executive Committee and the Delegate Assembly[,] and ~~[shall]~~ preside at such meetings;~~[-shall]~~
- (2) be an ex-officio member of all other committees[;] and ~~[shall]~~
- (3) perform such other duties as shall **be entrusted to** ~~[devolve upon]~~ that office.

b. The Vice[-] President **shall:**

- (1) in the absence of the President, ~~[shall]~~ perform all the duties and enjoy all the privileges of that office[;]
- (2) **become President** ~~[S]should the President of the Association die or resign[; the Vice-President shall become President. The Vice-President shall]~~
- (3) be **an** ex-officio ~~[a]~~ member of all committees, **and**
- (4) **perform such other duties as shall be entrusted to that office.**

c. The Secretary-Treasurer shall:

- (1) collect and have custody of all the funds of the Association[; ~~shall]~~
- (2) pay out such funds only on orders authorized for payment in accordance with rules and regulations recommended by the President and the Executive Director and approved by the Delegate Assembly[; ~~shall]~~
- (3) keep the accounts of the Association[;] and ~~[shall]~~ make an annual itemized report in writing of such accounts[;]
- (4) keep the seal of the Association[; ~~shall]~~
- (5) be an ex-officio ~~[a]~~ member of all committees[;] and ~~[shall]~~
- (6) perform such other duties as shall ~~[devolve upon]~~ **be entrusted to** that office.

Article V – Executive Committee

Section 1. Membership. There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of the NJEA officers[;] **and** one member from each unit of representation for each ~~[five percent]~~ 5% ~~[-]~~ or major fraction thereof[;] of the state total of active **NJEA** members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ in the unit of representation.~~[-provided; h]~~ However, ~~[that]~~ each unit of representation shall have at least one member[;] and ~~[there shall be]~~ alternate.~~[s; and provided f]~~ Further, ~~[that]~~ no unit of representation shall have more Executive Committee members from any one school district, college, university, institution, or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey than one for each 5% ~~[five percent]~~ of the state total of active **NJEA** members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association;]~~ or major fraction thereof[;] within that unit of representation and school district, college, university, institution, or agency.

The members of the Executive Committee and alternates shall be elected by the active **NJEA** members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ in their respective units of representation.

Upon completion of one full term in office, the immediate past president of the Association shall be a non-voting ex-officio member of the Executive Committee for two years.

Section 2. Terms and representation. The members of the Executive Committee other than the Officers shall be elected for terms of three years, in such a manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members, excluding the Officers, shall expire each year. (NOTE: This section is not new but was moved up from below with a new heading.)

Except for service by virtue of office, a person **from a unit of representation** who has completed three full consecutive three-year terms on the Executive Committee ~~[from a unit of representation], or the equivalent number of years in filling consecutive unexpired terms,~~ or the equivalent thereof for service as an at-large member hereinafter provided, **or any combination of these that equal nine consecutive years** may not again serve until three years thereafter.

The units of representation shall be as follows:

- a.** ~~[(1) twenty-one]~~ **one** unit[s] of representation~~[-one]~~ for each county – **totaling 21** –[;] representing the active members of the Association[;] **and** excluding the active members represented by other units of representation ~~[-principally]~~ **who are** employed in each county, respectively;
- b.** ~~[(2)]~~ such other units of representation as may be authorized and designated in the Bylaws.

~~[The members of the Executive Committee other than the Officers shall be elected for terms of three years, in such a manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members, excluding the Officers, shall expire each year.]~~ NOTE: This section has been moved above with a new heading.

Except to fill an unexpired term, units of representation with fewer than four members ~~[of]~~ on the Executive Committee shall elect no more than one member of the Executive Committee in any year. ~~[, and t]~~ Units of representation with four or more Executive Committee members ~~[of the Executive Committee]~~ shall elect those ~~[their]~~ members ~~[of the Executive Committee]~~ in such a manner that the number ~~[of members of the Executive Committee]~~ to be elected from that unit of representation in any year shall not exceed by more than one the number to be elected in any other year ~~[from the same unit of representation by more than one]~~.

If ~~[In the event]~~ the number of Executive Committee members ~~[on the Executive Committee,]~~ to which a unit of representation is entitled~~;~~ decreases in any year, as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Executive Committee, [a] the ~~[number of]~~ Executive Committee member(s) most recently elected ~~[of the Executive Committee,]~~ from that unit of representation~~;~~ such as is necessary to decrease the membership on the Executive Committee, from that unit of representation, to the correct number ~~for that year,]~~ shall vacate their position(s) on the Executive Committee at the end of their term of office to meet the reduced number required for that unit.

In the event the number of members on the Executive Committee~~;~~ to which a unit of representation is entitled~~;~~ increases in any year, as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Executive Committee, [a] the correct number of members shall be elected to the Executive Committee~~;~~ from that unit of representation~~;~~ such as is necessary to increase the membership on the Executive Committee, from that unit of representation ~~[, to the correct number]~~ for that year. ~~[and t]~~ Their terms shall commence on Sept. ~~[ember]~~ 1 of that year. ~~[and t]~~ The Elections Committee shall establish the initial terms for such positions in such a manner that it follows the intent of ~~[this Section of]~~ this Article of the Constitution with respect to the expiration of terms~~;~~ and the ~~[limiting of the]~~ number of Executive Committee members ~~[of the Executive Committee which]~~ who may be elected in any year from a unit of representation~~;~~ ~~[, shall be implemented]~~ ~~[, but s]~~ Such initial terms shall not exceed three years.

~~[The alternates shall be the members and alternates of the Delegate Assembly elected in their respective units of representation.]~~

(NOTE: Language on Executive Committee alternates deleted here that also reflects restriction of service on Delegate Assembly outlined below is proposed in Article V, new Section 3.)

No member of the Executive Committee shall serve simultaneously as a member of the Delegate Assembly or as a Delegate Assembly Alternate.

Members of the Executive Committee shall assume the duties of their office on Sept. ~~[ember]~~ 1 following their election. ~~[and]~~ They may serve in their terms as long as they ethically perform the duties of their office and, unless retired, so long as they remain employed in the unit of representation from which they were elected, subject to all of the provisions of this Section of this Article. ~~[, provided, h]~~ However, ~~[that]~~ persons who retire on or before Jan. ~~[uary]~~ 15 of a fiscal year may serve until Aug. ~~[ust]~~ 31 of that fiscal year~~;~~ ~~[and p]~~. Persons who retire after Jan. ~~[uary]~~ 15 may serve until the expiration of their terms or until Aug. ~~[ust]~~ 31 of the next succeeding fiscal year, whichever shall come first.

The Executive Committee shall meet on the call of the President or on the written request of one-third of its members.

Section 3. Executive Committee alternate. A member of the Executive Committee who is unable to be present at a meeting may designate an elected Delegate Assembly member or Delegate Assembly alternate from the same unit of representation to act in the place of that member. Since no member of the Executive Committee shall serve simultaneously as a member of the D.A. or as a D.A. Alternate, individuals who have served as an Executive Committee alternate shall abstain from voting at any D.A. meeting on items on which they took action while serving as an Executive Committee alternate.

Section 4. Voting. When recorded roll-call votes are taken of the Executive Committee as a whole, which shall be done upon request of any member of the Executive Committee, each unit of representation shall be allocated a vote. ~~[t]~~ The value of ~~[which]~~ that vote shall be determined by rounding to the nearest tenth the number produced by multiplying the state total of NJEA active members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ by 0.05 and dividing this product into the number of NJEA active members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ included in the unit of representation.

The aforementioned allocation of votes shall be determined annually by ~~[utilizing]~~ using the NJEA membership enrollment as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Executive Committee. ~~[, and t]~~ The allocation of votes ~~[so]~~ determined shall take effect Sept. ~~[ember]~~ 1 of that year.

Where a unit of representation is entitled to more than one member of the Executive Committee, the aforementioned allocation of votes to the unit of representation shall be divided equally among the positions~~;~~ ~~[including vacancies,]~~ on the Executive Committee to which the unit of representation is entitled, including vacancies.

When the ~~[aforementioned]~~ allocation of votes to a unit of representation cannot be divided equally among the Executive Committee positions~~;~~ ~~[including vacancies, on the Executive Committee]~~ to which the unit of representation is entitled, including vacancies, ~~[the allocation of votes shall be divided among the members of the Executive Committee from that unit of representation in such a manner: that]~~ one Executive Committee member ~~[of the Executive Committee]~~ from that unit of representation shall have a vote equal in value to 0.1 less than the value of the vote of each of the other Executive Committee members ~~[of the Executive Committee]~~ from that unit of representation, each of whom shall have votes of equal value. ~~[, t]~~

This procedure shall be repeated as many times as is necessary to effect the division in the aforementioned manner of the unit of representation's vote allocation among the positions~~;~~ ~~[including vacancies,]~~ on the Executive Committee to which the unit of representation is entitled, including vacancies. ~~[and]~~ This process shall be applied first to vacant positions on the Executive Committee from that unit of representation before it is applied to any person filling an Executive Committee position from that unit of representation.

Every vote assigned by virtue of dividing a unit of representation's vote allocation pursuant to this Section of this Article shall have a value equal to a multiple of 0.1.

When, in the aforementioned manner, one member of the Executive Committee from a unit of representation is assigned a vote the value of which is 0.1 less than the value of votes of each of the other members of the Executive Committee from that unit of representation, ~~[in the aforementioned manner,]~~ that member shall be considered to hold the least seniority as an Executive Committee member ~~[the]~~ from that unit of representation. ~~[, except]~~ However, if the Executive Committee member from that unit of representation ~~[person]~~ with the least seniority~~;~~ ~~[as a member of the Executive Committee from that unit of representation,]~~ has been elected to the Executive Committee in a simultaneous election with one or more other members of the Executive Committee from the same unit of representation, the person assigned the lower vote shall be the person elected in that simultaneous election to the Executive Committee by the lowest number of votes.

The Officers of the Association shall each be allocated a vote equal in value to 1.0.

Members of the Executive Committee, if duly appointed and serving as members of any other committee of the Association or of any subcommittee of the Executive Committee, shall each be entitled to a vote equal in value to every other member of that committee or subcommittee, their units of representation on the Executive Committee notwithstanding.

Section 5. At-large representation.

a. Ethnic-minority at-large representatives.

If, following an election and subject to any exclusions provided hereinafter, the percentage of ethnic-minority persons who are to be on the Executive Committee the following Sept. ~~[ember]~~ 1 ~~[, or if after September 1, who were on the Executive Committee as of September 1]~~ immediately following the election, and who are ethnic-minority persons~~;~~, including those continuing to serve as voting members on the Executive Committee, is less than the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active members of the Association as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the Executive Committee membership ~~[of the Executive Committee]~~, the Delegate Assembly shall elect ~~[, annually at one of its regular meetings]~~ from the active NJEA membership ~~[of the Association]~~, ethnic-minority at-large members of the Executive Committee and an equal number of alternates.

The number of ethnic-minority persons elected should ~~[persons]~~

of such a number as is necessary to] increase the percentage of ethnic-minority members [of] on the Executive Committee so that it [is not less than] **reflects at least** the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active **Association** members [of the Association] as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Executive Committee[; as at-large members of the Executive Committee (and an equal number of alternates) for terms which, i]. **If such positions are required, the election shall be held annually at one of the regular Delegate Assembly meetings.**

If elected by the Delegate Assembly following a regular Executive Committee election and prior to Sept.[ember] 1 of any year, **these at-large committee members' terms** shall commence on Sept.[ember] 1 of that year and shall expire Aug.[ust] 31 of the following year.[; or i] If elected at any other time, **these members' terms** shall commence immediately upon their election and shall expire on Aug.[ust] 31 immediately following their election.[; provided, however, that at]. **At** least one such at-large member shall be elected to the Executive Committee by the Delegate Assembly for every 1.5 votes[;] or fraction thereof[;] allocated to such at-large members by the procedure specified below for determining the value of the total vote allocated to such at-large members.[; except that t] The provision guaranteeing a minimum vote equal in value to 0.1 for each such at-large member shall not be utilized for determining the minimum number of such at-large members to be elected to the Executive Committee by the Delegate Assembly.

These at-large members shall have the rights and privileges, during their terms, of the other members of the Executive Committee.[; and, f]

For the purpose of taking recorded roll-call votes of the Executive Committee as a whole, **these ethnic-minority at-large members** shall be allocated a total vote the value of which shall be determined by rounding to the nearest tenth the number produced by multiplying the state total of active **NJEA** members [of the New Jersey Education Association] by 0.05, dividing this product into the state total of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active members of the Association, and subtracting from the quotient the total value of the votes allocated to all those members of the Executive Committee who are ethnic-minority persons and who are not such at-large members of the Executive Committee (nor who are serving in any other category of at-large members of the Executive Committee which may be provided for hereinafter).[; provided, h] **H**owever, [that] each such at-large member of the Executive Committee shall be allocated a total vote equal in value to no less than 0.1.

Where there is more than one such at-large member of the Executive Committee, the aforementioned allocation of votes to such at-large members of the Executive Committee shall be divided among such at-large positions on the Executive Committee, including vacancies in such positions, in the same manner as is provided for the division of votes among members of the Executive Committee from a unit of representation.

The aforementioned allocation of votes to such at-large members of the Executive Committee shall be determined annually by [utilizing] **using** the enrollment as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Executive Committee.[; and t] **T**he allocation of votes so determined shall take effect Sept.[ember] 1 of that year.

The determination of the number of such at-large members to be added to the Executive Committee each year and their vote allocations shall be based on the anticipated or actual membership of the Executive Committee on Sept.[ember] 1 as provided above, but shall not include consideration of any person serving in any other category of at-large membership on the Executive Committee which may be provided for hereinafter.

The Bylaws shall define the term "[E]thnic-[M]inority [P]ersons."

b. Active professional or active supportive at-large representatives.

In the event at least one active professional member or at least one active supportive member is not serving on the Executive Committee as of Sept.[ember] 1 each year (subject to any exclusions provided hereinafter), the Delegate Assembly shall elect [annually at one of its regular meetings] from the active professional or active supportive membership of the Association one person in the appropriate membership category as an at-large member of the Executive Committee (and one person as an alternate) so as to result in at least one Executive Committee member in each of these membership categories.

If such a position is required, the election shall be held annually at one of the regular Delegate Assembly meetings.

The term for this at-large member (and alternate) shall commence **on Sept. 1 of that year or** upon election **if the election is held after Sept. 1** and shall expire the following Aug.[ust] 31.

This at-large member shall have the rights and privileges, during the member's term, of the other members of the Executive Committee[; and f].

For the purpose of taking recorded roll-call votes of the Executive Committee as a whole, **this at-large committee member** shall be allocated a vote equal in value to the smallest vote allocated for that year to a unit of representation or 0.1, whichever is greater.

The determination as to whether or not such an at-large position shall be added to the Executive Committee in any year shall be based on the membership of the Executive Committee on Sept.[ember] 1 as provided above, but shall not include consideration of any person serving in any other category of at-large membership on the Executive Committee provided for herein.

Vacancies occurring in any at-large positions on the Executive Committee elected by the Delegate Assembly shall be filled in the same manner as is provided for the filling of other vacancies, and such persons shall serve as if elected by the Delegate Assembly for that term in which the vacancies occur.

The term "at-large," referring to positions on the Executive Committee as used in this Section of this Article, shall not be construed to include the Officers of the Association or any other Executive Committee positions which may be established in any other Section of this Constitution.

Section 6[2]. Duties.

It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to:

- a.** execute the policies approved by the Delegate Assembly;
- b.** transact other business of the Association at all times except during meetings of the Delegate Assembly;
- c.** propose policies for the consideration of the Delegate Assembly;
- d.** establish an administrative office of the Association;
- e.** authorize expenditures within the limits of the budget;
- f.** authorize the transfer of funds from surplus accounts to deficiency accounts within the limits of the total budget, after May 15 and before Aug.[ust] 31;
- g.** cause to be examined, by a certified public accountant, the accounts of the Secretary-Treasurer and have this audit submitted to the Delegate Assembly by the first regular meeting following each Annual Convention;
- h.** determine, with the approval by a two-thirds vote of all its members, legislative policies of the Association so long as these are not inconsistent with policies established by the Delegate Assembly;
- i.** approve the time, place, and program of the Annual Convention;
- j.** issue an official publication; and
- k.** make available a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws to any member who requests it.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to relieve from the duties of office any officer or member of the Executive Committee for cause, after

due notice and hearing. ~~[A committee on professional ethics]~~ **The Hearing Committee on Censure, Suspension, and Expulsion of Members** may also hold hearings and recommend to the Executive Committee appropriate action when an officer or member of the Executive Committee shall violate the Association's ~~[Code of Ethics]~~ **established standards which the Hearing Committee shall apply.**

Article VI – Delegate Assembly

Section 1. Membership. There shall be a Delegate Assembly (**D.A.**), the members and alternates of which shall be elected by ~~[the] NJEA active members [of the New Jersey Education Association].~~

Section 2. Units of representation.

The units of representation shall be as follows:

- a. one unit of representation for each county – totaling 21 – representing the active members of the Association and excluding the active members represented by other units of representation who are employed in each county, respectively;**
- b. such other units of representation as may be authorized and designated in the Bylaws.** (NOTE: These paragraphs were moved up, slightly modified, from later in this section.)

Each unit of representation shall be entitled to one delegate and one alternate for each one percent of the state total of **NJEA** active members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ or major fraction thereof, ~~[- provided, h]~~

However, ~~[that]~~ each county unit of representation shall have in addition as a delegate the president of the affiliated county association, at least one other delegate, and at least two alternates, ~~[- and provided further, that, e]~~ Except for the president of the affiliated county association~~[-]~~ or other person serving in the place of the president as hereinafter provided, no unit of representation shall have more delegates or more alternates from any one school district, college, university, institution, or agency operating under the laws of the State of New Jersey than one for each **1%** ~~[one percent]~~ of the state total of **NJEA** active members ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association;]~~ or major fraction thereof~~[-]~~ within that unit of representation and school district, college, university, institution, or agency.

In the event that the president of the affiliated county association is or becomes a member of the NJEA Executive Committee, the county association executive committee shall choose one of the members of its executive committee to serve on the NJEA Delegate Assembly in the place of its president.

~~[The units of representation shall be as follows:~~

- ~~(1) twenty-one units of representation, one for each county, representing the active members of the Association, excluding the active members represented by other units of representation, principally employed in each county, respectively;~~
- ~~(2) such other units of representation as may be authorized and designated in the Bylaws.]~~ (NOTE: These paragraphs were moved up in this section.)

Section 3. At-large representation on D.A.

a. Ethnic-minority at-large D.A. representatives

~~[Hf]~~ Following an election and subject to any exclusions **specified in the Constitution or Bylaws** ~~[provided hereinafter]~~, **the Association shall identify** the percentage of **ethnic-minority** persons who are to **[be] serve** on the Delegate Assembly the following Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1, **including those whose terms are continuing,** ~~[- or if after September 1, who were on the Delegate Assembly as of September 1 immediately following the election, and who are ethnic-minority persons;]~~

If that percentage is less than the percentage of **self-identified** ethnic-minority persons who are **NJEA** active members ~~[of the Association]~~ as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining D.A. ~~[the]~~ membership ~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~, the Delegate

Assembly shall elect~~[-]~~ annually, at one of its regular meetings, **at-large ethnic-minority D.A. members and an equal number of at-large ethnic-minority D.A. alternates** from the **NJEA** active membership, **except those serving on the NJEA Executive Committee** ~~[of the Association; ethnic-minority persons of such number as is necessary to increase the percentage of ethnic-minority persons of the Delegate Assembly so that it is not less than the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active members of the Association as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the membership of the Delegate Assembly; as at-large members of the Delegate Assembly (and an equal number of alternates) for terms which, if elected by the Delegate Assembly following a regular annual election and prior to September 1 of any year, shall commence on September 1 of that year and shall expire August 31 of the following year, or if elected at any other time, shall commence immediately upon their election and shall expire on August 31 immediately following their election.].~~ **The number of at-large ethnic-minority persons elected as D.A. members and alternates should increase the percentage of ethnic-minority members on the D.A. so that it reflects at least the percentage of identified ethnic-minority persons who are active Association members.**

(NOTE: This formula will change if Constitutional Amendment Question 2 is approved.)

If elected by the D.A. following a regular annual election and prior to Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 of any year, the at-large terms shall commence on Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 of that year and shall expire Aug. ~~[ust]~~ 31 of the following year~~[- or i]~~. If elected at any other time, **the terms** shall commence immediately upon their election and shall expire on Aug.~~[ust]~~ 31 immediately following their election.

The determination of the number of such at-large members to be added to the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** each year shall be based on the anticipated or actual membership of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** on Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 ~~[as provided above]~~, but shall not include consideration of any person serving in any other category of at-large membership on the Delegate Assembly which may be provided for ~~[hereinafter]~~ **in the Constitution and Bylaws.**

b. Active professional or active supportive member at-large D.A. representatives.

In the event **that fewer than** ~~[at least]~~ five active professional members or **fewer than** ~~[at least]~~ five active supportive members are ~~[not]~~ serving on the Delegate Assembly as of Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 each year (subject to any exclusions provided **in the Constitution and Bylaws**~~[hereinafter]~~), the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** shall elect annually at one of its regular meetings from the **respective NJEA** active ~~[professional or active supportive]~~ membership, ~~[of the Association]~~ the number of persons in the appropriate membership category as at-large members of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** ~~[and an equal number of alternates]]~~ necessary to produce a total of at least five ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** members in each of these membership categories~~[- provided, h]~~. However, ~~[that]~~ no more than one such at-large member ~~[or more than one such alternate]]~~ shall be from the same county.

The terms for these at-large members ~~[and alternates]]~~ shall commence upon their election and shall expire the following Aug. ~~[ust]~~ 31.

The determination as to the number of such at-large members to be added to the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** in any year shall be based on the membership of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** on Sept. ~~[ember]~~ 1 as provided above, but shall not include consideration of any person serving in any other category of at-large membership on the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ **D.A.** provided for herein.

During their terms, ~~[A]~~all at-large D.A. members ~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~ shall have the same rights and privileges~~;~~ ~~during their terms;~~ ~~[of the]~~ as other D.A. members~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~.

Vacancies occurring in any at-large positions on the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~D.A. shall be filled in the same manner as is provided for the filling of other vacancies ~~[and-s]~~. Such persons shall serve as if elected by the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. for that term in which the vacancies occur.

The term "at-large," referring to positions on the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~D.A. as used in this Section of this Article, shall not be construed to include the presidents of the affiliated county associations or any other ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. positions which may be established in any other Section of this Constitution.

Section 4. [2:] Terms of Office. Members and alternates of the Delegate Assembly shall be elected for terms of two years, approximately one-half of the members and alternates elected each year.

If~~[n the event]~~ the number of delegates~~;~~ to which a unit of representation is entitled~~;~~ decreases in any year, as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the D.A. membership, ~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~ a determination will be made whether ~~[and]~~ an insufficient number of ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. terms will ~~[be expiring]~~ expire Aug.~~[ust]~~ 31 of that year from that unit of representation to permit appropriate adjustment of that unit's ~~[of representation's]~~ delegate allocation.~~;~~ In that case, a number of delegates from that unit of representation, such as is necessary to decrease the membership on the D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~, from that unit of representation~~;~~ to the correct number for that year, shall vacate their positions on the D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ on Aug.~~[ust]~~ 31 of that year.~~;~~ ~~and a]~~

No member of the D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ may serve simultaneously as an Officer or member of the Executive Committee.

In order that approximately one half of the membership of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. from each unit of representation may be elected each year, the NJEA President ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~, after consultation with the members of the NJEA D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ and the NJEA Executive Committee from the unit of representation involved, may direct the election of one or more members or alternates of the D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ from a unit of representation for a one-year term.

The D.A. members and alternates ~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~ shall take office on Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 following their election and may serve in their terms as long as they ethically perform the duties of their office and, unless retired, so long as they remain employed in the unit of representation from which they were elected, subject to all of the provisions of Article VI, Sections 1 and 2.~~;~~ ~~provided, h]~~ However, ~~[that]~~ persons who retire on or before Jan.~~[uary]~~ 15 of a fiscal year may serve until Aug.~~[ust]~~ 31 of that fiscal year.~~;~~ ~~and p]~~ Persons who retire after Jan.~~[uary]~~ 15 may serve until the expiration of their terms or until Aug.~~[ust]~~ 31 of the next succeeding fiscal year whichever shall come first.

A person who has completed three full consecutive two-year terms ~~(totaling six years)~~ on the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. from a unit of representation, or the equivalent thereof for service as an at-large member or to fill unexpired terms, may not again serve until two years thereafter.~~;~~ ~~provided, h]~~ However, ~~[that]~~ this provision shall not be construed to include the period of service on the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. by virtue of being the president of an affiliated county association.

A member of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. who is unable to be present at a meeting may designate an elected alternate from the same unit of representation to act in that member's~~[the]~~ place~~[of that member]~~.

Section 5. [3:] Duties. The Delegate Assembly shall meet at the Annual Convention, and at least three other times during the school year and on call of the President, the Executive Committee, or on request of one-fourth

of its members.

It shall:

- a. fix and determine the policies of the Association~~;~~;
- b. approve a budget for the Association~~;~~;
- c. receive and act upon reports of the Officers, Executive Director, and all Standing and Special Committees~~;~~;
- d. elect the New Jersey representatives to the National Education Association Board of Directors by open nominations, secret ballot, and majority of those voting;
- e. approve borrowing funds upon a two-thirds vote of the body;
- f. approve legislative policies upon two-thirds approval of all members of the D.A.;
- g. have the power to relieve from duty of office any member of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. for cause, after due notice and hearing. The Hearing Committee on Censure, Suspension and Expulsion of Members may also hold hearings and recommend appropriate action when a member of the D.A. shall violate the Association's established standards under which the Hearing Committee shall function.

~~[The Delegate Assembly may by a two-thirds vote approve borrowing funds. Legislative policies shall require the approval of two-thirds of all members of the Delegate Assembly.]~~

~~By open nominations, secret ballot and majority of those voting, the Delegate Assembly shall elect New Jersey representatives to the Board of Directors of the National Education Association.]~~

The Delegate Assembly shall have the power to relieve from duty of office any member of the Delegate Assembly for cause, after due notice and hearing. A committee on professional ethics may also hold hearings and recommend appropriate action when a member of the Delegate Assembly shall violate the Association's Code of Ethics.~~;~~ *(NOTE: These paragraphs in slightly amended form were moved up and bulleted in this section.)*

Section 6. [4:] Retired Members. The New Jersey Retirees' Education Association (NJREA) shall be entitled to one voting delegate and one alternate to the Delegate Assembly for every 10,000 NJEA retired members, or major fraction thereof, ~~[of the New Jersey Education Association]~~ eligible to vote as of the date specified in the Bylaws for determining the number of delegates and alternates to which the ~~[New Jersey Retirees' Education Association]~~ NJREA is entitled. However, irrespective of the number of retired members, in no event shall the ~~[New Jersey Retirees' Education Association]~~ NJREA be entitled to more than four voting delegates and four alternates.

These delegates and alternates shall be elected by that organization and certified by its president.

This entitlement shall be determined by ~~[the]~~ NJEA ~~[New Jersey Education Association]~~ on an annual basis. Terms shall commence Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 following the determination of the annual entitlement. Nothing in any other section of this Constitution shall contravene this entitlement.

Section 7. [5:] NEA State Directors. The NEA State Directors for New Jersey shall designate annually from among themselves one person who will serve as a voting member of the Delegate Assembly.

This person shall not simultaneously serve as a member of the Executive Committee nor otherwise as a member of the ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. nor as a D.A. ~~[Delegate Assembly]~~ Alternate. If no person is eligible or willing to serve in this position, it shall not be filled.

This designation shall take place after completion of any regularly scheduled elections for the position of NEA State Director for New Jersey for terms commencing or continuing through the following Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 and, if this designation takes place prior to Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1, the NEA State Directors for New Jersey shall ~~[be deemed to]~~ include only those persons serving in terms continuing through Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1 or elected to terms commencing Sept.~~[ember]~~ 1.

The term of office for this NEA State Director designee shall commence on Sept,[ember] 1 or upon designation to this position, whichever is later, and shall expire the following Aug.[ust] 31. There shall be no limit on the number of consecutive terms a person may serve in this capacity nor shall there be any alternate for this position. The NEA State Directors for New Jersey shall fill any vacancy which may occur in this NEA State Director designee position with an eligible person who shall serve for the remainder of the term, eligibility being subject to all the conditions of this paragraph.

Article VII – Elections

Section 1. Nominations for Officers.

Nominations for the offices of President, Vice[-]President, and Secretary-Treasurer shall be made only by petition on forms prescribed by the Elections Committee. Petitions for nomination for President, Vice[-]President, and Secretary-Treasurer shall contain at least [three hundred] 300 signatures of active members of the Association, with at least [ten] 10 such signatures from each of [eleven] 11 counties.

Section 2. Elections Committee. The President of the Association, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, shall appoint an Elections Committee. This committee shall consist of one member from each county and one member from each unit of representation not confined within one county that has representation [in] on the Delegate Assembly.

No officer of the Association, member of the Executive Committee, or member of the D.A. [Delegate Assembly] shall be a member of this committee.

The committee shall set up standards and procedures for all elections under this Constitution and standards and procedures governing the conduct and eligibility of candidates for elective office, subject to such general policies as the D.A. [Delegate Assembly] shall adopt.

The Elections Committee shall provide for a secret ballot, provided that, in any election where there is but one candidate for any office or position, the chairperson of the Elections Committee shall declare that candidate elected.

No person shall simultaneously seek election as an Officer of the Association, member of the Executive Committee, member of the D.A. [Delegate Assembly], or D.A. [Delegate Assembly] Alternate.

An elective position shall be declared vacant when a person holding such elective position assumes another elective position.

Section 3. County (or Unit) Constituencies. Active members shall be entitled to vote in the county (or other unit of representation) in which they maintain membership.

Section 4. Retired Members. Upon [furnishing] providing the Association with the [relevant] information relevant to their membership, those retired members who enjoy the right to vote shall be entitled to vote in that county (or other unit of representation) in which they were active members at the time of their retirement.

Section 5. Vacancies. Vacancies in county (or other unit of representation) elective positions shall be filled in accordance with such procedures as may be provided in the Bylaws.

Section 6. Unit Size & Vote Assignment. In the event the number of members representing a unit of representation on the Executive Committee or Delegate Assembly is decreased pursuant to Articles V or VI under circumstances where other provisions of the Constitution do not provide a method for determining the person or persons who shall vacate their positions, the Elections Committee shall make the determination by lot, unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

This Section shall also apply to determinations pursuant to Article V, Section 1, with respect to dividing a unit of representation's Executive Committee vote allocation among the unit of representation's Executive

Committee positions, under circumstances where the vote allocation cannot be equally divided among the positions involved.

Section 7. Composition of Elective Bodies as to Places of Employment.

The determination of the number of members eligible to serve on the Executive Committee, Delegate Assembly, or as Delegate Assembly Alternates, from the various school districts, colleges, universities, institutions, and agencies for each unit of representation shall be in accordance with such procedures as may be provided by the Elections Committee, subject to the general policies of the [Delegate Assembly] D.A.

The provisions of the Constitution which place a limit on the number of persons who may serve as Executive Committee members, [Delegate Assembly] D.A. members, or [Delegate Assembly] D.A. Alternates from the same place of employment for each unit of representation shall not be construed to require any duly elected members of these elective bodies to vacate their positions prior to the expiration of the terms of office for which they have been elected.

Persons appointed to fill vacancies in elective positions, however, shall be required to vacate their positions, if necessary to comply with such provisions of the Constitution.

Section 8. Provisional Elections for At-Large Members and Alternates of the Executive Committee and Delegate Assembly. In [here-of] conjunction with the provisions in Article V, Section 5 [†] and Article VI, Section 3 [†] concerning the election of at-large members of the Executive Committee and [Delegate Assembly] D.A. (and their alternates), the [Delegate Assembly] D.A. may provide in its rules for the conduct of provisional elections to fill such at-large positions.

(NOTE: The Article V and VI section numbers referenced above and below in subsections b. and h. in this section are based on the new numbering system contingent on approval of editorial changes earlier in this document being voted on in Constitutional Amendment Question 3.)

Such rules may provide for the conduct of provisional elections for at-large members or at-large alternates of the Executive Committee or [Delegate Assembly] D.A. [or their alternates] or any combination thereof.

Such provisional elections shall be conducted in advance of Sept,[ember] 1 each year to fill an anticipated number of at-large positions, as follows:

- a. The number of positions to be filled in the provisional elections shall be equal to the greatest number of at-large Executive Committee and [Delegate Assembly] D.A. positions, respectively, actually filled in any of the preceding five years (including the year in which the provisional elections are held) or such other reasonable number as the [Delegate Assembly] D.A. shall determine.
- b. When the determination as to the number of actual at-large positions which need to be filled pursuant to the provisions of Article V, Section 5 [†] and Article VI, Section 3 [†], has been finalized based on the actual composition of the Executive Committee and [Delegate Assembly] D.A. as of Sept,[ember] 1, persons elected in the provisional elections shall fill these positions in order of votes received, or, if uncontested, in an order determined either by lot or by a balloting of the [Delegate Assembly] D.A., or by a combination thereof, whichever procedure the [Delegate Assembly] D.A. selects.
- c. No person shall take office until the determination as to the number of at-large positions to be filled is rendered on or after Sept,[ember] 1.
- d. Terms of office shall take effect immediately upon filling the positions and shall expire the following Aug.[ust] 31.
- e. If an insufficient number of persons has been provisionally elected to fill the required number of positions, the respective alternates shall fill the positions, and the [Delegate Assembly] D.A. shall then fill any remaining positions by election.
- f. In the event the number of at-large positions to be filled is less than the number of persons provisionally elected to such positions, alternate

positions shall be filled first by the excess persons elected to the regular positions with the remaining alternate positions filled by those persons elected as alternates.

- g. Persons may be provisionally elected to more than one position provided, however, that[;] upon assumption of an actual at-large position, all rights to any other at-large position shall be relinquished.
- h. The determination of the number of at-large positions to be filled, vote allocations for the at-large Executive Committee members, and the filling of vacancies in at-large positions shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article V, Section 5 [1] and Article VI, Section 3 [1], relating to at-large members of the Executive Committee and the [Delegate Assembly] D.A. [1] and their alternates[)].

Article VIII – Executive Director

Section 1. Executive Director. An Executive Director shall be employed by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Duties. The Executive Director shall advise and assist the Officers, Executive Committee, the Delegate Assembly, and ~~the~~ NJEA committees ~~[of the Association to execute]~~ in executing the program of the Association. This shall be carried out in cooperation with the Officers, as prescribed by the Executive Committee, and under the policies established by the ~~Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A.

The Executive Director shall have the right to be present and to be heard, but not to vote, at all meetings of the Executive Committee and the ~~Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A.

Article IX – Committees

Standing Committees, as authorized by the Bylaws, and Special Committees shall be appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. Members of Standing Committees shall hold office until their successors are appointed.

At least one member of each Standing Committee shall be chosen from the membership of the Delegate Assembly

Article X – Affiliates and Affiliated Groups

This Association shall include such local and county association affiliates and content-area or job-related, special-interest affiliated groups as shall be authorized and recognized by the Delegate Assembly, ~~provided, however that]~~

[t]There shall be no more than one affiliated county association of active members in any county.

Associations and [G]groups once affiliated may later be disaffiliated by the ~~Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A. based on standards recommended by the Affiliation Committee and approved by the ~~Delegate Assembly]~~ D.A.

Article XI – Annual Convention

The Association shall hold an Annual Convention at such time and place as the Executive Committee may determine, provided, however, that due to war or other conditions relating to the public welfare, the Executive Committee may determine whether the Annual Convention shall be held.

If it is decided that the Convention shall not be held, the Executive Committee shall fix a place, and the time between Nov, ~~ember]~~ 1 and Nov, ~~ember]~~ 15 when the Delegate Assembly shall meet in lieu of the Convention meeting, and such D.A. meeting ~~[of the Delegate Assembly]~~ shall constitute an Annual Convention insofar as the Annual Convention affects any of the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Article XII – Association Records

The records and accounts of the Association and of its officers and committees shall be kept in books provided by the Association which shall be the property of the Association and open at all times to the inspection of

any active member.

Every officer, member or employee of the Association having funds, papers, books, records or property of any description belonging to the Association shall give up the same on demand to the next successor in office or to the person authorized by the Delegate Assembly or the Executive Committee to receive same.

Article XIII – Quorum

A majority of all the members of the Delegate Assembly shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

A quorum exists on the Executive Committee when both the members present and the totality of their allocated votes – as specified in Article V, Section 4 – constitute a majority.

[A majority of all the members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum, provided, however, that such majority shall have been allocated a majority of the total votes allocated to all of the members of the Executive Committee as specified in Article V, Section 1;]

Any committee shall have a quorum if a majority of its members are present.

Article XIV – Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed for consideration by a majority vote of the Delegate Assembly[;] or may be proposed by a petition signed by not less than 500 active members of the Association.

Amendments so proposed shall be published in full in the Official Publication of the Association and shall then be submitted by ballot to the active members of the Association under the provisions governing the election of officers (Article VII).

Voting on amendments may take place regardless of whether the election of officers is also taking place.

A two-thirds vote of all the ballots cast on the amendment shall be necessary for its adoption.

[As amended, May 2007]
(Effective as amended, Sept. 1, 2021)

STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA congratulates **GARY MELTON** on his promotion to manager of the newly created Office of Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance in the NJEA Executive Office. Melton will manage staff assigned to the new office to develop and implement programs designed to carry out NJEA's social, racial and economic justice initiatives. (See Page 19 for more about the creation of the new office.)

Melton initially joined NJEA staff in 2018 as an associate director in the Executive Office. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Melton was a teacher at the Pennsylvania Avenue School in Atlantic City. Melton served in various capacities for the Atlantic City Education Association, including senior vice president, treasurer, negotiations chair, legislative chair and building representative. He was president of the Atlantic County Council of Education Associations. Nationally, he had been an NEA Director and chairperson of the NEA Black Caucus.

Melton holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Africana Studies from Rutgers University. He lives in Mays Landing with his wife, Vicky, and sons, Gary Jr., Bo and Malachi.



NJEA welcomed **RYAN MCCARTY** to full-time staff on Jan. 4 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 3 office in Voorhees. McCarty had been employed by the Camden County Technical School as a 10th grade English and AP literature and composition teacher since 2008. As a member of the Camden Vocational Association (CVA), McCarty served as local president, vice president and chair of the Negotiations Team. He also served as the CVA representative on the District Evaluation Advisory Committee and School Leadership Committee. Since 2016, he served as a part-time NJEA Consultant in Region 3.

McCarty holds a master's degree in instructional technology from Stockton University and a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University. He lives in Washington Township, Gloucester County, with his wife, Jane, and their two children, Harper and Jack.

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Saturday, April 10, 2021 – 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

WORKSHOPS

Members may register to attend multiple workshops from the list below over the course of the day. Online registration will include time slots indicating when each workshop is presented.

1. Build Your Political Power to Move Higher Education Even Higher
2. Building an Intentionally Inclusive Local
3. Contract Enforcement
4. COVID-Related Employment Issues
5. Developing a Member Engagement Program: New-Hire Recruitment and Membership Retention
6. Keep Calm and Prepare for Retirement: Get the Most Out of the Alternate Benefit Program (ABP)
7. Negotiations 101: The Basics
8. Stress Management for College Support and Administrative Staff
9. You and Your Pension (PERS)

Registration Deadline: April 1, 2021



To register, go to **njea.org/2021higheredconf**

Members will need their NJEA PIN to register. For more info, email highered@njea.org
The Higher Education Conference will be virtual this year. There will be no cost to participate.

for more information go to NJEA.org

FEBRUARY & beyond

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings and events are virtual.

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**

4/10

Saturday

**NJEA Preservice
General
Membership
meeting**

4/14

Wednesday

**NJEA Executive
Committee
meeting**

4/15

Thursday

**NJEA PAC
Operating
Committee
meeting**

4/17

Saturday

**NJEA T.E.A.CH.
Conference**

deadlines

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

2/24 Winter Leadership
Conference-Centrale
Event date: March 6

4/1 Higher Education
Conference
Event date: April 10

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ADVOCACY FOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH MUST REMAIN A PRIORITY

Survey enumerates the stress and workload everyone feels

A career in public education is a noble and fulfilling calling, but it's also challenging and stressful under the best of conditions. Throw in a deadly global pandemic, social and political unrest, and economic uncertainty and you have the conditions for a system failure. Fortunately, our system has held up even during what has to be the most unusual and trying school year in recent memory. We have adapted to new ways of working. We have guided students into new modes of learning. We've erected physical barriers to protect ourselves and others, while using technology to lower barriers to learning when business as usual is not an option.

The efforts of New Jersey educators over the last 10+ months have been praiseworthy, whether or not that praise has actually been offered. We've never stopped working and innovating to keep our students safe, healthy and learning. As a result, we've salvaged what could have been a lost year. We have learned, we have grown, and we have discovered new ways of working that will benefit our students and schools once the pandemic has passed.

But that success did not come without cost. That cost was made clear in the results of a December survey of NJEA members regarding their experiences of living and working through the last year. Nearly 25,000 members completed the survey and while there were enlightening results throughout, the response to the questions about work and life stress jumped out. Overall,

members rated their work stress as a 7.9 on a 10-point scale. Overall life stress was even higher: 8.1. Those numbers stand in stark contrast to the stress levels those same members reported they felt before the pandemic: 4.7 and 4.4, respectively.

Those numbers are eye-opening, but not surprising for anyone who has been paying attention. Educating students during a pandemic is hard work, whether that work takes place in person or remotely. In the same survey, a plurality of educational support professionals reported an increased workload, as the job of keeping students safe and buildings functional has grown more difficult.

The same is true for classroom teachers, who reported a greater than 20% workload increase, from 44 to 53 hours weekly. That is the equivalent of adding an entire extra day of work without an extra day of the week in which to do it.

Most notably, it was teachers working in hybrid or all-remote settings who reported the heaviest workloads, with nearly 2 in 3 working more than 50 hours per week. This counters ill-informed criticism from some quarters that many educators have resisted a return to fully in-person instruction because "they don't want to work." Teachers providing fully remote instruction are working 8 hours per week more than their fully in-person colleagues.

The desire of many to remain remote is not about shirking work. It's about accepting a heavier workload to ensure that students and

staff alike remain safe. Well over half of educators who currently report to a worksite say they feel unsafe there, while two-thirds of those working remotely say they would not feel safe if required to report. Those concerns are even more pronounced among members of color and those who work in economically distressed communities. No one should feel unsafe at work.

The economic effects of the pandemic have been felt by NJEA members as well. Nearly half report some financial impact, from loss of household income to increased worry about affording housing and food. On top of that, many reported spending money out of pocket to be able to work effectively under these conditions. Expenses included not only classroom materials and supplies for students but personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning supplies and technology upgrades. Three-quarters of members made such expenditures, with nearly half spending more than \$250, and 1 in 9 spending in excess of \$1,000.

A survey like this cannot offer solutions to challenges as complex as those we have endured this school year. But it does highlight those challenges, as well as the commitment of NJEA members to overcome them and help our children succeed. And it calls for all of us to continue our advocacy—day by day and district by district—for practices and policies that prioritize the physical and mental health of students and staff during this pandemic and once we emerge from it. 🌱



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