

REVIEW



an education and advocacy resource

REVIEW
OCTOBER 2021

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CONVENTION
2021

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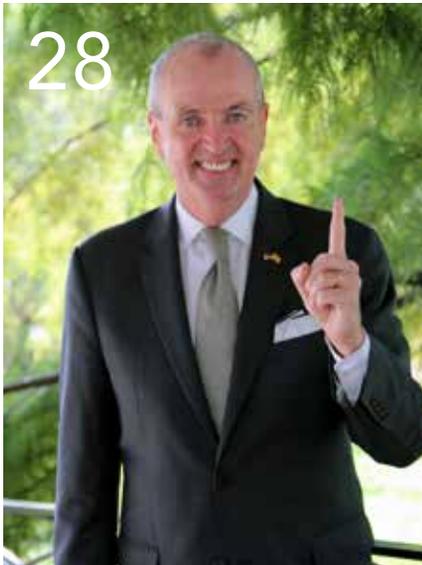


The Sept. 18, 2021 DA meeting was the first in-person DA meeting since Jan. 4, 2020. To attend, members presented their vaccination cards or had with them the results of a negative PCR test within the three days prior to the meeting. At the meeting, masks were required, and seats and tables were arranged farther apart than before COVID. See Page 14 for the story on the induction ceremony held at the DA meeting for NJEA's officers: President Sean M. Spiller, Vice President Steve Beatty, and Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson.



At the Sept. 18 NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) meeting, Monmouth County delegates Kathy Quinn of Freehold Regional and Mary Scott of Neptune Township, proudly show off their new lawn signs supporting Gov. Phil Murphy and Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver for reelection. See Page 9 for details on the options for voting in this year's General Election and Page 28 for an interview with Gov. Murphy. Join the Members for Murphy campaign at murphy.njea.org.

FEATURES



28 | GOV. MURPHY IN HIS OWN WORDS

Gov. Phil Murphy has earned NJEA's endorsement for reelection as governor because he is the pro-public education candidate. On Aug. 31, Gov. Murphy met with NJEA Review editor Patrick Rumaker outdoors at Veterans Memorial Park in Newark to have a conversation about the issues that matter to teachers and ESPs.



48 | LABOR-MANAGEMENT COLLABORATIVE

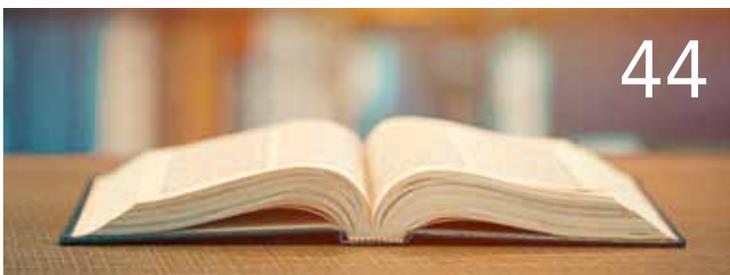
U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and NEA President Becky Pringle visited Delran High School in Burlington County on Sept. 8 for a closer look at a program they hope will take root nationwide. Delran Superintendent Dr. Brian Brotschul and Delran Education Association Secretary Kathleen McHugh led a socially distanced panel discussion to present their experience as part of the New Jersey Public School Labor-Management Collaborative.

BY PATRICK RUMAKER



32 | UNDERSTANDING NJEA'S PAC ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

Every endorsed legislative candidate submitted a brief statement to NJEA members. Check out what those in your legislative district had to say. On Page 32 you will also learn how NJEA members determine who will be endorsed.



44 | ASIAN AMERICANS' LITERARY HERITAGE

While all teachers are responsible for supporting the social and emotional development of students, language arts teachers have an added responsibility because our subject matter is the human condition: through our study of literature we explore and analyze human fallibility and the capacity for love and forgiveness. By showing our students of Asian heritage representations of themselves beyond cultural stereotypes or family expectations we are telling them their lives are part of the American literary imagination.

BY SIMA KUMAR



52 | LET'S GO TO CAMP!

Why limit themed days just to spirit weeks? Why not make school like camp? The author of "Welcome to Camp!" offers ideas and resources take make it feel like summer all year long in your classroom.

BY SAMANTHA SELIKOFF

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\$2.3 million



The total amount of grant funding distributed by the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education since it was established in 1993. See Page 21 to see who was awarded grants this year.

Source: NJEA. Visit njea.org/hipp.

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JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Find details and contact information for the professional organization in your field.

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NJEA BUDGET SUMMARY

Fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2022

On the cover

Gov. Phil Murphy is the NJEA PAC-endorsed candidate for reelection as governor on Nov. 2, 2021. In August, he sat for an outdoor, socially distanced interview with the editor of the Review. See Page 28.



PHOTO BY Jennifer C. Marsh

GOOD NEWS

Math Scores Are Among the Nation's Best: Compared to New Jersey, no one other state in the nation has a statistically higher proportion of public school 8th graders scoring at the highest two levels in math in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Source: National Center for Education Statistics. 2019 NAEP Mathematics: Nation's Report Card. 2019.



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PRESIDENT'S *Message*

Hitting our stride

At this point in the school year, we all feel like we are hitting our stride: we're getting to know our students, new colleagues and schedules. We're setting the tone and establishing the routines that will successfully carry us through the year.

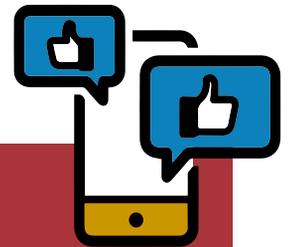
We're also gearing up for a very busy season. One of the most important parts of our year at NJEA is the annual NJEA Convention, which we hope you will attend, either in-person or virtually. The convention helps you stay current with your professional development, network with educators who share your job titles or your areas of interest, and provides an opportunity to connect with people who understand and value the work you do and are committed to helping you make the most of your career.

Additionally, NJEA is extremely focused on one of the most important elections for educators and their families and the students we serve: the reelection of Gov. Phil Murphy. Despite all the challenges that we have faced, Gov. Murphy has been a staunch ally for educators and our students. In an unpredictable time, we have benefited from having a calm, reasonable, seasoned and strong ally in the governor. We may not always agree, but Gov. Murphy has always been willing to listen to our point of view.

The goal of our union is to provide members with the resources, information, advocacy, and support you need to succeed in all areas of your life. Our union is strong because of you and the work you do every day. We are very proud to represent your interests at the bargaining table, in the Statehouse, the classroom, and worksites across the state.

Thank you for the work that you do; let's keep the momentum going!

In solidarity,



SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: As educators, we bear a deep responsibility to our future. On the 20-year anniversary of 9/11, as we renew our commitment to always remember those we tragically lost, let us also honor the bravery and heroics of the thousands of first responders, who gave so much to save so many. The selflessness of those brave courageous women and men is the true embodiment of the American spirit. As educators, we will continue to make sure all students—including those too young to remember—will #NeverForget the importance of this day. #WEareNJEA

On Sept. 11, Spiller reflected on the role that educators play in ensuring our students understand the historic significance of the tragic events of that day in 2001. Spiller acknowledged the sacrifice of those who gave their lives to helping others in the midst of 9/11 attacks and called on all educators to make sure our students never forget the day's events.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Phrases such as "an ecosystem of collaboration," "We won't let each other fail," "If we're all in the same boat, no one will let it sink," & "is it good for the kids?" were used today to describe the deep and successful partnerships that have developed with the New Jersey Public School Labor Management Collaborative ... now buoyed nationally with tremendous support from the NEA and the US Department of Education, as both NEA President Becky Pringle and Education Secretary Miguel Cardona were on hand to congratulate and commit to moving the work forward—not only here in NJ—but nationally. The facts are clear—this is good work that pays tremendous dividends.

On Sept. 8, Steve Beatty and his fellow officers attended a program at Delran High School recognizing the importance of the NJ Public School Labor Management Collaborative. He shared photos and his thoughts on the day with his Facebook followers. See Page 48 of this edition of the *Review* for a story about the event.

PETAL ROBERTSON

Facebook

@petal.robertson.7: Hey NJ fam/friends, let me know you're safe and sound.

On Sept. 2, just as her term as NJEA secretary-treasurer officially began, Robertson called on her New Jersey family and friends to share whether they were safe in the wake of Hurricane Ida. NJEA members from around the state responded to the post with most declaring they were safe, but some talked about damage to their property or that of neighbors. In the aftermath of the storm, NJEA sent an email to local and county association presidents, reminding them about the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund.

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KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

THREE WAYS TO VOTE IN THE NOV. 2 ELECTION

This Nov. 2, the governor and the entire state Legislature is on the ballot. If you are not yet registered to vote, you can do so online at vote.nj.gov. The voter registration deadline for the General Election is Oct. 12.

There are three ways registered voters can exercise their right to vote to vote in this year's election.

Vote by mail

Registered voters can apply for a vote-by-mail ballot by following the instructions found at vote.nj.gov or by contacting their county clerk's offices. Applications to vote-by-mail must be received at your county clerk's office by Oct. 26. The application forms found at vote.nj.gov include the appropriate address for your county.

Once you receive and vote your mail-in-ballot, you have three options for how to return it.

- **By mail:** Your vote-by-mail ballot must be postmarked on or before Nov. 2 and be received by your county's board of elections on or before Nov. 8.
- **Secure ballot drop box:** Place your vote-by-mail ballot in one of your county's secure ballot drop boxes no later than 8 p.m. on Nov. 2. Drop box locations can be found at vote.nj.gov.
- **Board of Elections office:** Deliver your vote-by-mail ballot in person to your county board of elections office by no later than 8 p.m. on Nov. 2. County election officials contact information can be found at vote.nj.gov.

Not sure if you're already enrolled to receive your ballot by mail? You can check your status at vote.nj.gov under "Track My Ballot."

In-person early voting

This new option enables all registered voters to cast their ballot in person, using a voting machine, during a nine-day period prior to Nov. 2. You can now choose to vote, in person, when it's most convenient for your schedule.

No matter where you live in the county, you can vote your specific ballot at any of your county's designated in-person early voting locations. Find your county's locations at vote.nj.gov.

In-person early voting locations will be open Saturday, Oct. 23 through Sunday, Oct. 31. Hours will be Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Accommodations will be made for voters with disabilities.

Vote-by-mail ballots cannot be returned to your early voting location or polling place.

At your polling place on Election Day

Vote in person at your polling place, from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 2. Accommodations will be made for voters with disabilities.

Go to vote.nj.gov for your polling place, listed on the Polling Locations page.

Vote-by-mail ballots cannot be returned to your early voting location or polling place.

CLEARING THE RECORD

A member's name and the name of the son of NJEA's president were incorrect in the September edition of the *NJEA Review*. The editor apologizes for these errors. The correct information is below.



In an article listing the 2021-22 New Jersey County Teachers of the Year, the name and school of the Mercer County Teacher of the Year were misspelled. The Mercer County Teacher of the Year is **Brittany Thomas**. She works at **Robbins Elementary School in Trenton**.



Two photos in the article "From Mentors to Members: Meet NJEA President Sean M. Spiller" included Spiller's 3-year-old son. Unfortunately, he was identified as "Tyler" rather than "Tyson." Below is the caption from one of the photos as it should have read.

Spiller with his family: Tyson, Sean, Lauren, and Brody Spiller.

SISP CORNER

For the 2021-22 school year, Shelia Caldwell a school nurse in Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District is serving as an NEA Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) Fellow. Caldwell is writing a monthly online column that will go live the first of each month at njea.org/sisp. Be sure to check it out.

COOL STUFF



GET READY TO ROCK THE MOCK!

Registration to enter the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's (NJSBF) High School Mock Trial Competition is open until Oct. 22.

County competitions will take place in January, with regional, semifinal and final contests in February and March.

Entries of original, student-written mock trial cases in NJSBF's Law Fair Competition for grades 3 to 6 and Law Adventure Competition for grades 7 and 8 are due Jan. 31.

There is no charge to enter the competitions. For details and updates, visit njsbf.org or contact Sheila Boro at sboro@njsbf.org.



GRANTS FOR SCHOOL SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS AVAILABLE

Have a project that needs funding? The 2021-22 Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Program cycle, funded by NJEA will award ten \$10,000 grants to

school districts or schools and forty \$2,000 grants to support school green teams. By emphasizing the value of sustainability, we also help ensure that we leave a better world for our students.

Applicants must be registered in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program, which is free and voluntary. For more information about the Grants Program and details on how to apply, visit sustainablejerseyschools.com, click on "Grants" and look for "NJEA Grant Cycle" in the left menu.

Applications are due on Oct. 29, 2021, for this cycle of the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Program.



AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK IS NOV. 15-19

American Education Week happens the week prior to the week of Thanksgiving. The National Education Association has resources available to help you with your association's celebration of the week including ideas and artwork. Each day of the week has its own theme, during which we celebrate our public school community.

Festivities honor the team of people who work in our nation's public schools, everyone from the bus driver and classroom teacher to the cafeteria worker and administrative staff, plus countless others.

NEA also has official American Education Week artwork that is ready for sharing social media.

For details go to nea.org and search American Education Week 2021.



RUTGERS FOOTBALL DISCOUNTS FOR NJEA MEMBERS

NJEA members can access exclusive discount offers to Rutgers Scarlet Knights home games this season. On average, tickets are discounted 30-50%. Additionally, \$2 from each ticket purchased will benefit the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education. The Hipp Foundation provides grants of up to \$10,000 to NJEA members who want to bring their innovative ideas to life. To learn more about the Hipp Foundation visit njea.org/hipp.

To access the Rutgers football offer, visit fevo.me/njea Rutgers.

Employment Opportunities at NJEA



Questions? Call the NJEA Human Resources office at 609-599-4561. NJEA is an equal opportunity employer.

Visit njea.org/jobs.

How to *write* for the NJEA Review

WHAT CAN I SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION?

Feature article

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

Letter to the editor

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

Speak out

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

I Am NJEA

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

Proud moments

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

Toolbox

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

HOW DO I SUBMIT FOR PUBLICATION?

Submitting content

Email submissions to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to include your name and contact information, the name of your district and what you do there, the name of your local association, as well as the name and contact information of your local association president.

The review process

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

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

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PS Form 3526-R, July 2014 [Page 1 of 4 (See instructions page 4)] PSN: 7530-09-000-8855 **PRIVACY NOTICE:** See our privacy policy on www.usps.com.

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f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and e)	191738	183354
g. Copies not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4, (page #3))		
h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)	191738	183354
i. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by 15f times 100)	99.60%	99.66%
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LEAVE OPTIONS IN THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

BY KAITLYN DUNPHY, ESQ.

With the COVID-19 vaccine widely available, leave options for reasons related to COVID-19 will look different this school year. Changes to federal leave laws associated with the pandemic and the return to in-person instruction will also affect how, when and why a leave may be taken to accommodate a disability, an illness, a quarantine requirement, or child care or other caregiving obligations. While mandatory federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave expired at the end of 2020, other leave options remain, including expansions of the New Jersey Family Leave Act (NJFLA).

Members who have a disability as defined by federal and state anti-discrimination laws may request a reasonable accommodation from their employer, which may include remote work. But they will more likely include other accommodations, such as layered mitigation measures. Members can also request a disability leave of definite duration, for example a leave until they are able to be fully vaccinated. Whether the employer has an obligation to grant these requests will depend upon individual circumstances.

For members who become infected with COVID-19 or who need to quarantine because of exposure, use of accrued paid sick leave for

their own illness or to quarantine will be the most common option. If they are able to work, the member may first seek to arrange remote work with the employer to avoid using accrued time, but it is voluntary for the employer to agree. Such agreement may be harder to achieve than last year given the state's requirement that schools return to in-person instruction in September of 2021. Similarly, employers may voluntarily offer FFCRA leave, and may be entitled to certain tax credits for doing so. Locals may also seek to negotiate the use of sick leave bank days for quarantine purposes. If an individual has exhausted sick leave, or their employer is not permitting them to utilize accrued sick leave, and one of the options above has not been successful, they should seek assistance from their NJEA UniServ field representative.

Certain unpaid family leave options remain available under the NJFLA while the state of emergency continues to be in place¹. Family leave is available to those who need to care for their children if their child's school or daycare is unavailable because of COVID-related closures. For example, if the child's school is closed for in-person instruction and switched to remote because of the need to quarantine, this leave would be available if the individual needs to care for their child during the closure. It should be noted that this expansion of NJFLA does not afford members any additional leave time beyond the 12 weeks of leave allotted in a 24-month period. Depending upon the contract or past practice in the workplace,

some members may have already exhausted their 12 weeks if they have previously used leaves under FFCRA, FMLA, or NJFLA leave. Family leave insurance benefit payments are not available to people on this type of leave.

While the state of emergency continues, NJFLA has been expanded to cover leaves taken to care for a family member when the family member is either directed by a public health authority or advised by a health care provider to quarantine because of illness or known or suspected exposure. Family leave insurance benefits were expanded to cover leaves to care for a family member who is quarantining, so partial payment can be applied for during this leave through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. For more information on these benefits, you should visit myleavebenefits.nj.gov/worker/fli.

While leave options can seem daunting and subject to changes in applicable law, NJEA staff stand ready to assist members in navigating those options and advocating for members' needs. 🇺🇸

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.

¹At the time of publication, the state of emergency was still in effect in the state of New Jersey. Once the state of emergency is lifted, these expanded NJFLA leave options will no longer be available.

NJEA Report

NJEA inducts Spiller, Beatty and Robertson into office



NJEA officers place their hands on bound copies of the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws as NEA President Becky Pringle inducts them into office.

NJEA President Sean M. Spiller, Vice President Steve Beatty, and Secretary-Treasurer Petal were formally inducted as NJEA's officers in a ceremony at the Sept. 18 meeting of the Delegate Assembly (DA). NEA President Becky Pringle officiated the induction, which was led off with an inspirational message delivered by former NEA President Reg Weaver.

Singers Kristen Hoyt Dziuba, Rebecca Polynice, Terrence Thornhill, Stefon Gaines, and Daveda Browne led the DA in singing the "Star-Spangled Banner." Spiller's son, 3-year-old Tyson Spiller, led the DA in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Weaver shared an allegory of a boy whose father had to leave him for a time. The father gave the boy a light to hold until his return. He implored the boy to hold that light through darkness, wind, rain, ferocious animals and the jeers of others. Weaver connecting the story to the challenges that NJEA may face.

"NJEA, there are going to be times when the 'weather' is going to be ferocious, but you've got to hold that light," Weaver said. "You've got to hold that light for public education."

Pringle offered remarks on NJEA's future under its newest leaders.

"I have no doubt they will lead with integrity, they will advocate unabashedly, and they will inspire with action, centering their purpose and standing in their power," Pringle said. "I have no doubt, they will not just be worthy of our members, they will not just be worthy of our communities, they will not just be worthy of the New Jersey Education Association. These officers will be worthy of our students."

For the induction itself, the officers were joined by members of their families. They placed their hands on bound copies of the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws. Led by Pringle, they pledged to uphold the Constitution and Bylaws of NJEA; to endorse

the purposes of the association to protect the interests of its members, to strengthen public schools, and to advocate for justice for students their families and the communities in which they live; and to take responsibility to serve all NJEA members as advocates alongside them to advance the mission, vision, and goals of NJEA.

Each of the new officers in turn addressed the DA.

"Everything I learned about what a union is, I learned from the wonderful people in this room," Robertson said describing what she learned from her family, her friends, and her colleagues and fellow NJEA members. "Leadership is not always in the front, but sometimes the most powerful leaders lead from behind. Positions do not matter, titles do not matter, it is the passion that you bring and the work that you are able to do."

"Our work is interconnected and requires each of us in it to be able to live up to the true call of

our creed and the tenets of true justice,” Beatty said. “As we pursue our advocacy and training we recognize the need to involve our communities in the spirit of true collaboration. Engagement on all levels – becoming a more just union working toward a more just society as we imbue our students with a true sense of their worth. Going forward, we recommit ourselves towards the notion of a ‘more perfect Union,’ one that pledges itself to the truths that for too long were anything but ‘self-evident.’”

“Over the last 18 months we’ve all come to understand just how connected we all really are,” Spiller said. “The decisions we make—the decisions anyone of us make—impact so many others and have far reaching effects. It’s important not to think of ourselves not as individuals, but as a union—and in that union lies strengths. It’s the strengths of each and every one of you that makes us all stronger.

“Our success as a union is tied to the success of our schools” Spiller added. “The success of our schools is tied to the success of our communities. The success of our communities is tied to the opportunities and resources available to our students, their families and everyone else in New Jersey who is working hard to build a better life. We can’t be effective advocates for NJEA members if we aren’t also advocating for our students and our communities. We are all connected, and we can only succeed together.”

Spiller noted that the association focusing on learning, equity and justice is not a new aim.

“When I talk about NJEA being a justice-centered union, that is no radical departure,” Spiller said. “It’s a reaffirmation of values we have held for a long time. It’s a pledge that we are going to take a big picture view of the challenges faced by our schools and our communities, and we are going to pursue big, bold ways to tackle those challenges, to break down barriers that hold anyone back, and to build a future where liberty and justice for all is a statement of fact, and not just a dream we are chasing.”

Spiller expressed his enthusiasm for the future as New Jersey and its schools rebuild in the wake of the pandemic.

“I’m proud to have the opportunity to lead NJEA in this critical, exciting, challenging work,” he said. “I’m thrilled to have a great team around me as we begin. I’m thankful for so many friends, family, mentors and colleagues who I know I will be calling on often. And I’m humbled to have the responsibility of both leading and working side-by-side with 200,000 talented, passionate NJEA members.”

Led again by Hoyt, Polynice, Thornhill, Gaines, and Browne, the induction ceremony concluded with DA members and guests singing “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing.”



Leaders from all levels of the NJEA family. From left: NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty, NJEA Preservice President Brian Reilly, NJREA President Joan Wright, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson.



A brief reception was held following the induction ceremony.



A quintet performed the “Star-Spangled Banner” and “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing.” From left: Stefon Gaines, Terrence Thornhill, Kristen Hoyt Dziuba, Daveda Browne, and Rebecca Polynice.

NJEA Convention offered in-person with remote components

CONVENTION PROGRAM BEGINS ON PAGE 83 OF THIS NJEA REVIEW

The NJEA Convention Program is typically mailed to members as a separate publication. This year, you'll find that it is included as part of this edition of the NJEA Review. Separate stand-alone copies will be available at the Atlantic City Convention Center, but you may want to bring this NJEA Review along with you in case we run out in Atlantic City.

Both in-person and remotely, members will have access to what has become the convention's signature feature—professional and career development workshops and programs for every member. While keynote speaker Bill Nye will appear remotely both for in-person attendees and those attending remotely, the convention's three in-person keynotes—Henry Louis Gates, Sonia Manzano and Eric Liu—can also be attended remotely.

The massive exhibit hall, featuring Main Street NJEA, education vendors, publishers, field trip opportunities, colleges and universities, NJEA Member Benefits sponsored vendors, the Member Showcase, the Nicky Fifth series author Lisa Funari-Willever, and so much more will return for the in-person convention only.

Workshops that are presented remotely will be optimized for the virtual environment and will generally not be broadcasts of the in-person workshops.

BOARDWALK RUN RETURNS

The very popular George M. Adams Boardwalk Run and Fun Walk, a 5K event, is scheduled to return to this year's convention. This year, registration for the run will be electronic. More details concerning registration and safety protocols will appear on njeaconvention.org as soon as available.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR THE 2021 NJEA CONVENTION

All attendees at NJEA events, including the 2021 NJEA Convention at the Atlantic City Convention Center, are required to show proof that they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have had a negative result on a PCR test within 72 hours prior to the beginning of the convention.

Rapid tests are not permissible. Photo identification, such as a school ID or a driver's license, will also be required.

Acceptable proof of vaccination includes your fully completed vaccine card, a photo of your card, or online verification on Docket, an app that verifies vaccination status for those who were vaccinated in New Jersey.

Acceptable proof of testing includes a printed or online test result with your name that shows a negative result a PCR test administered no earlier than Monday, Nov. 1.

In addition, to protect the health and safety of all persons attending the 2021 NJEA Convention, the practices will be in place for all attendees, regardless of vaccination status.

- Every attendee must wear a mask.
- No one under 18 years of age will be admitted. Childcare is suspended for the 2021 NJEA Convention.
- Food and beverages will be available but must be consumed in designated areas. No food or beverages will be permitted in any other area of the convention center. There will be an expanded area for dining adjacent to the Exhibit Hall.
- Capacity in workshops and meeting rooms will be reduced from previous years to enable social distancing. As currently envisioned, workshop presenters will be permitted to unmask at the beginning of their presentation but must remain at the front of the room and maintain an appropriate distance from the audience.

NJEA will adhere to the safety protocols established by the New Jersey Department of Health, which may add to or modify the above practices.

Visit njeaconvention.org regularly for more information.

Higher Education at the NJEA Convention

Friday, Nov. 5

9-10:30 a.m.

NJEA Higher Education Members Breakfast & Brainstorming
Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel
Pearl Ballroom

New policies have dramatically changed life on campus. Let's discuss the hot topics for student, faculty, and staff success in this brave new world. Breakfast is served at 9 a.m. Brainstorming begins at 9:30 a.m.

Advance registration is required. Join us virtually or in person. Seating is limited. To register, please contact NJEA's Higher Education office at HigherEd@NJEA.org or 609-689-9580 by Oct. 22.

1-2:30 p.m.

NJEA Higher Education Members Convention Luncheon
Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel
Crown Ballroom
Cost: \$29

Let's celebrate, socialize, and network together. Please join your fellow higher education members for our annual convention luncheon.

Advance registration is required. Seating is limited. To make a reservation, send a check for \$29 payable to NJEA/HE, c/o Beneficial Bank, P.O. Box 13661, Philadelphia, PA 19101-3661.

For information regarding the breakfast and brainstorming or luncheon, please contact NJEA's Higher Education office at HigherEd@NJEA.org or 609-689-9580 by Oct. 22.

Push to Walk is the 2021 NJEA Convention charity

By Push to Walk staff



Push to Walk (PTW) was founded in 2007 by a family who had been directly impacted by paralysis. That family understands the physical, psychological, emotional, and financial effects it can have on those who experience such trauma.

Our founder, Darren Templeton, sustained a C5 spinal cord injury after diving into shallow water in July 2004. He was 18 years old at the time. Upon completing traditional in-patient and out-patient rehabilitation therapy, he was looking for a way to improve and increase his abilities. Both his work with a personal trainer and participation in an intensive exercise program in California inspired him to create a similar program in New Jersey.

The mission of PTW is to provide individualized workouts and resources to people with spinal cord injuries and other forms of paralysis to optimize their current quality of life and to prepare them for future medical advancements. Our vision is that all members of the paralysis community achieve their highest level of physical fitness.

Americans living with paralysis are among the most underserved populations in our society, particularly after they complete traditional rehabilitation therapy. When that ends, they must find other means to continue physical exercise on their own and at their own cost. Traditional gyms typically lack sufficient accessible space, specialized equipment and trainers who are experienced in

working with individuals who have various forms of paralysis. PTW has been filling this void since 2007.

Our services help our clients with their mobility issues and enable them to develop the strength, flexibility and skills needed to perform everyday tasks most of us take for granted—from brushing one's teeth, to dressing independently, to driving a car, to grocery shopping, and even caring for children. As the number of individuals with paralysis continues to increase because of traumatic injuries and conditions such as strokes and multiple sclerosis, more and more individuals are in need of exercise and wellness programs that are targeted to their unique needs.

Since our beginning, PTW has established itself as a highly regarded option for people with paralysis to exercise and regain strength, function, and independence. We have grown steadily and are housed in a state-of-the-art facility in Oakland, New Jersey that is accessible, inviting, upbeat and challenging. PTW is proud to describe itself as offering the highest quality specialized exercise program in the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania region.

Our program staff meet stringent educational and professional requirements and continually learn new and novel techniques in order to help the clients reach their personal goals. Administrative staff support the program through grant writing, fundraising events, marketing activities and human resources. The entire board and staff support and carry out the mission of PTW every day.

There is pride and confidence in how the organization is run, and it is important that others view us having those qualities. Clients and their families trust us to treat them safely, kindly and with dignity.

High expectations are set for all staff members; program quality is never compromised. The atmosphere is one that encourages hard work, challenges and determination. Positive attitudes are obvious in every area of the gym.

PTW, like many smaller nonprofits struggled during the pandemic. We have not only survived but have flourished. We are currently serving more than 85 clients and have served over 750 individuals, their family members and caregivers since opening in 2007. A year celebrating our 15th Anniversary is planned for 2022.

Darren Templeton continues to work out at PTW twice a week. After sustaining his spinal cord injury one month after his high school graduation, Darren attended Ramapo College for his undergraduate degree in finance and continued at Rutgers Newark for his MBA in Supply Chain Management. After working at Ashland Chemical for several years, he has been working with the family business, now running operations for Millennium Technologies.

Darren is married, owns his own home, is an avid sports fan and plays wheelchair rugby. He enjoys traveling with his wife, Keirsten, time with his dog, Steve, and swimming in his pool. Darren believes that regular exercise has helped him stay strong and healthy, enabling him to work full time, drive independently and live a full and happy life. Darren's story is a common one for PTW clients, and he is always available to speak with other people who have experienced similar injuries to help them on their journeys.

Every year, NJEA selects an official NJEA Convention charity. This year, Push to Walk is that charity. You'll find them on the Exhibit Hall floor at Booth 826.

If you wish to make a donation to Push to Walk, visit pushtowalknj.org. Push to Walk is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible.



New Jersey leads the nation in education for the third year in a row

Education Week once again has named New Jersey's public schools the best in the nation, calculating that achievement based on K-12 achievement, school finance and the chance for success.

New Jersey has been neck-and-neck with Massachusetts for several years, but has topped them once again in the race to be number one.

"New Jersey's public schools are the best in the nation thanks to the hard work, commitment, creativity, and expertise of public school employees," said NJEA President Sean M. Spiller. "It's important for students and staff to take great pride in this designation from *Education Week*. They've worked hard to achieve it and clearly we all plan to hold on to the top spot! We want to thank our partners in education, including other stakeholders and elected leaders who have put public school students first and made decisions based on their best interests. And, of course, we thank the parents and the communities that support our students and school at the individual and local level. We have a shared vision for student opportunity and success, and when we work together, that vision becomes reality."

"For our public schools to be named the best in the nation for the third year in a row is a fantastic achievement," said NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty. "To earn it after nearly two years of a global pandemic demonstrates

that public school employees will never stop innovating in order to address our students' unique needs. I'm so proud of my colleagues in education and so proud to share this achievement with our students and their parents."

"It's important to note that school finance is a major part of *Education Week's* report," said NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson. "States and communities that invest in their students and schools invest in the future. New Jersey has been at the top for public education for many years and that investment is going to lead to enormous rewards for our state now and well into the future. Our next challenge is to ensure that the students we educate are able to continue their educations in the state by making college affordable for New Jersey families."

In March 2021, New Jersey's pre-K through 12th grade public schools were named the best in the nation by U.S. News and World Report in their annual survey which analyzed preschool enrollment, high school graduation rates and college tuition cost. New Jersey's public high school graduation rate is 90 percent.

Learn more about *Education Week's* rankings at bit.ly/3nM9GAR.

NEA Foundation honors New Jersey educators

Even in these challenging times, and in response to them, New Jersey educators are taking advantage of the grant and fellowship opportunities offered by the NEA Foundation.

One of the key means through which the NEA Foundation fulfills its mission to promote the absolute best in public education is by developing and extending grant resources to support individual educators' innovation, problem-solving, and leadership development.

The foundation currently offers three grant programs to individual educators: Student Success Grants for classroom projects focused on project-based learning and critical thinking; Learning & Leadership Grants, which support professional development opportunities; and Envision Equity Grants, which support classroom projects directly focused on equity. The first two grant programs are currently offered in amounts of \$2,000 or \$5,000. The Envision Equity program invites proposals between \$1,500 and \$5,000.

With all of these grant programs, educators have one year to use awarded funds. This funding is competitive, and all proposals are reviewed by educators. Grants for these programs are typically made three times per year.

So far in 2021, the NEA Foundation has awarded five grants to individual educators in New Jersey:

- A \$5,000 Student Success grant to Kristy Agresta, a school nurse at Palisades Park High School.
- A \$5,000 Student Success grant to Tara Aviles, a special education educator at Phifer Middle School in Pennsauken.
- A \$2,000 Student Success grant to Alexandra Darwin, a language arts educator at Bound Brook Community Middle School.
- A \$5,000 Learning & Leadership grant to Kathleen Benton, a science educator at South Plainfield High School.
- A \$5,000 Learning & Leadership grant to Mimma-Marie Cammarata, a world languages educator at Sterling High School in Somerdale.

GLOBAL LEARNING FELLOWS

The NEA Foundation invests in educators' learning, collaboration and leadership through its Global Learning Fellowship (GLF), a yearlong program designed to enhance educators' knowledge and skills to integrate global competency into daily classroom instruction, advocate for global competencies in their schools and districts, and help students thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Fellows are engaged in online coursework, webinars, reading and reflection, a two-day professional development workshop, and an international field study.

Upon completion of the program, the Fellows become members of an active, 400-person alumni group that supports continued growth and leadership. The fellowship is a competitive program, and all applications are reviewed by educators.

Two New Jersey educators have been named 2022 Global Learning Fellows:

- Jonathan Lancaster, a social studies educator at Bergen County Technical High School in Teterboro.
- Kimberly Dickstein Hughes, an English language arts educator at Haddonfield Memorial High School. Dickstein Hughes was the 2019-20 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year.

For more information about the NEA Foundation, visit neafoundation.org.

NEA Safe and Just Schools Grant is awarded to Union Township Education Association

By Angel Boose

The Union Township Education Association (UTEA) was awarded \$75,000 as an NEA Safe and Just Schools grant recipient for the 2021-22 school year. The NEA Safe and Just Schools grants set aside money to fund efforts to improve the relationships between school districts and their local communities.

During the 2020-21 school year, 56 grants were awarded to state and local affiliates across the country. The grants were awarded to fund projects to address indoor air quality and supplemental mental health services; to utilize the pillars of community schools to drive student, family, and community change; and to support affiliates in leading the charge on reopening issues surrounding health and safety.

During July 2020, UTEA started a social justice committee and sought funding from NEA for training to support its initiative. Through the process, trainees learned about the new grants.

For UTEA, the initial stage of its plan includes having one-on-one conversations to get to know more about UTEA members. It will be a self-assessment of who UTEA is, who the members are, and how members are involved in the community. A more complete understanding of the many ways members are working in the community will help the association's members to work together more cohesively. Their plan also includes recruiting strong leaders in each school building, while simultaneously building relationships with members of the community, including parents and the PTA.

Funding from the NEA Safe and Just Schools grant will support the long-term goal of UTEA to have an allied health program for the community.

"We know parents struggle to keep up with their kids' preventative care," says UTEA President Ann Margaret Shannon. "The goal is to have a relationship with Atlantic Health to provide a medical clinic that offers late hours for parents whose jobs make it hard for them to get to preventative care appointments."

Local education associations have begun thinking intentionally about what can be negotiated into contracts that benefits students for safer and more just schools. The UTEA hopes to work with their school board to implement their goals. The association hopes to foster a stronger relationship with its board through the work they will be doing with members and the community, for the greater good.

Members of UTEA have been engaging in formalized trainings with the NEA Institute to prepare to do the work associated with the funding. NJEA has assigned UTEA two consultants to assist them in handling all the grant encompasses, Maryann Woods-Murphy and Katherine Clark. Their work will be supported by Amanda Adams, an associate director in NJEA's Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division, and Maryanne Rodriguez, a UniServ field representative in NJEA's Region 15.

Trainees are learning how to assess the strength of their association as well as how to have conversations with members to gauge what they want. Most of the wants are currently focused on temperatures in classrooms, health care, and health and safety issues surrounding COVID-19.

"Anyone can participate in the NEA Institute," says Amanda Adams, NJEA

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

“

Their plan also includes recruiting strong leaders in each school building, while simultaneously building relationships with members of the community, including parents and the PTA.

Associate Director, Professional Development and Instructional Issues. "It allows locals to build power and collaborate. It's moving people away from doing things the way they've done them unsuccessfully, and it is definitely worth exploring. Coaching sessions are offered through the Institute, and NJEA will offer consultants to support any NJEA affiliates that want to get involved."

Funds for the NEA Safe and Just Schools grants are no longer available for the 2021-22 school year, but NEA affiliates interested in applying for the 2022-23 school year should contact their UniServ field rep.



BECOME A MEMBER BENEFITS COORDINATOR

If you are interested in saving money and helping your peers do the same, your local can assign you the role of Member Benefits Coordinator. Once assigned by your local president, you'll be recorded as a Member Benefits Coordinator in NJEA's membership database. As coordinator, you'll receive emails detailing savings opportunities and event discounts that you can decide to share with your local's members.



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NJEA Hipp Foundation awards more than \$31,000 in new grants



NJEA believes that educators' ingenuity should not be stifled by lack of funds. That's why the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education has awarded another six grants totaling \$31,185, including one continuation grant, to support creative projects by public school educators.

Established in 1993, the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education is dedicated to supporting projects that will enhance and improve the learning environment in our schools. Since its creation, the foundation has cumulatively awarded over \$2.3 million in grants in support of 435 innovative educational projects that represent a bold, fresh approach by public school employees.

You can meet these grant recipients at this year's Celebration of Excellence at the 2021 NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. The program is scheduled for Thursday Nov. 4 at 1:30 p.m. in Hall A.

2021-2022 NJEA HIPP RECIPIENTS

Bergen

Honoring Our Veterans – \$2,500

Jack Bertolino Grant

Pascack Valley Regional Education Association

Camden

A Virtual Community Garden – \$8,273

Visions Grant for Social Justice

LEAP Academy Teachers Association

Mercer

Read, Lead, Succeed Book Club – \$5,000

Princeton Regional Education Association

Somerset

The Race and Ethnicity Podcast Program – \$3,833

Hillsborough Education Association

Sussex

Sensory Garden and Mindful Peace Garden – \$10,000

Continuation Grant

Vernon Township Education Association

Warren

Family Literacy Night – Bingo for Books – \$1,579

Washington Education Association

Nine New Jersey schools named 2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona on Sept. 21 recognized 325 schools as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2021, including nine schools in New Jersey. The recognition is based on a school's overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Secretary Cardona made the announcement during his Return to School Road Trip, while visiting an awardee school, Walter R. Sundling Jr. High School, in Palatine, Illinois.

The New Jersey schools named as National Blue Ribbon Schools were:

- Cedar Grove – North End School, Cedar Grove Township
- Closter – Hillside Elementary School, Closter Public School District
- Dorothy – Weymouth Township Elementary School, Weymouth Township School District
- Jackson – Lucy N. Holman Elementary School, Jackson School District
- Jamesburg – John F. Kennedy Elementary School, Jamesburg Public School District
- Madison – Torey J. Sabatini Elementary School, Madison Public School District
- Manalapan – Wemrock Brook School, Manalapan-Englishtown Regional School District
- Old Bridge – Walter M Schirra Elementary School, Old Bridge Township
- Scotch Plains – Academy for Information Technology, Union County Vocational-Technical School District

“This year's cohort of honorees demonstrates what is possible when committed educators and school leaders create vibrant, welcoming, and affirming school cultures where rich teaching and learning can flourish,” said Secretary Cardona. “I commend all our Blue Ribbon honorees for working to keep students healthy and safe while meeting their academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. In the face of unprecedented circumstances, you found creative ways to engage, care for, protect, and teach our children.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools award affirms the hard work of educators, families and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content. Now in its 39th year, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has bestowed approximately 10,000 awards to more than 9,000 schools. Up to 420 schools may be nominated each year.

The department recognizes all schools in one of two performance categories, based on all student scores, subgroup student scores and graduation rates:

- **Exemplary High-Performing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests.
- **Exemplary Achievement Gap-Closing Schools** are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's student groups and all students.

Brief descriptions of the 2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools are available at nationalblueribbonsschools.ed.gov.

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Join the 2021 NJEA Members for Murphy campaign

Find a Members for Murphy event near you



Gov. Phil Murphy has earned NJEA's endorsement for reelection as governor because he's the pro-public education candidate. After his endorsement, NJEA leaders came together to form the 2021 Members for Murphy campaign, a statewide, member-driven effort to reelect Gov. Murphy this November.

Members who sign up to be volunteers with the Members for Murphy campaign will have the opportunity to work with their colleagues from around the state to make a tangible difference in this year's election cycle. Phone banks, door-to-door canvassing, sending emails and texting messages are just a few of the activities that Members for Murphy will engage in this fall. If you're interested in becoming a 2021 Member for Murphy, visit murphy.njea.org today!

To look for Members for Murphy events and activities hosted by your county association visit murphy.njea.org/events.

Turn to Page 28 for the *NJEA Review's* interview with Gov. Murphy.

Sarah Adamo becomes NJEA Preservice secretary



Sarah Adamo is the 2021-22 secretary of NJEA Preservice, the organization that represents college students preparing to become educators. She will also serve as political action co-chair. Adamo will join NJEA Preservice President Brian Reilly and NJEA Preservice Vice President Olivia Haas on the preservice leadership team.

In her new roles for NJEA Preservice, Adamo looks forward to growing membership, raising awareness about the issues that affect current and future educators and their students, and acting as a catalyst for change in alignment with NJEA Preservice's goals and ambitions. To ensure equity in

education for all students, she especially hopes to eliminate edTPA in New Jersey with the rest of the team. She also hopes to promote higher literacy rates in our public schools, address the rising trends of school faculty cuts in the state, and foster stronger parent-teacher relationships throughout the state's school districts.

Adamo is a junior at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), where she is studying history and secondary education. Prior to serving as NJEA Preservice secretary and political action co-chair, Adamo served as an NJEA Preservice ambassador during the 2020-21 academic year. In that role, Adamo helped increase awareness of Preservice events and initiatives across her college campus, augmented membership and built connections between on-campus leadership and statewide associates. Adamo also attended the 2020 NJEA Convention and the Aspiring Educators Conference this past summer.

At TCNJ, Adamo is a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, the Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society, the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society, and the university's honors program. Adamo has worked in the Tutoring Center at TCNJ since the fall of 2020. She volunteers as an online tutor for ESL students in the Ukraine through the ENGIN program and for children of low-income households in the Washington, D.C. area with Northstar Tutoring.

Adamo has also worked as an oral proficiency leader teaching French to her fellow college students since spring 2020. Additionally, Adamo served as TCNJ's French Club president from 2020-21 and is a current Health and Wellness Peer Educator. Adamo has also been an active correspondent to TCNJ's student newspaper, *The Signal*, since fall 2019.

Beyond campus, Adamo is an assistant taekwondo instructor in Northern New Jersey with a second-degree black belt. She has worked at summer camps over the past five years, including Limitless in Denville, a program that embraces neurodiversity and the Developmental, Individual-differences, and Relationship-based model.

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Teaching the truth about systemic oppression, implicit bias, and racism

By Sundjata Sekou

“There’s a war goin’ on outside no man is safe from/You could run, but you can’t hide forever.”

Those are apt and appropriate words from the great Prodigy of the legendary rap group Mobb Deep. This struggle that is taking place is a cultural tussle to teach public school students that systemic oppression, implicit bias, and racism have been and continue to be sewn into the fabric of America.

This latest exchange centers on a how the collective lived experience of Black people/African Americans is memorialized in America’s history, asking a question. That question asks, “What if, however, we were to tell you that ... the country’s true birth date ... was in late August of 1619?” The question is taken from the New York Times 1619 Project.

To reposition the American experiment timeline to 1619 is provocative to some and elicits an amen from others. What exactly happened in 1619 that led to this polarizing debate? It is the story of captives from the Ndongo Kingdom, in modern day Angola, who were chained and bound in the hold of a ship crossing the Atlantic headed towards Veracruz, Mexico. English pirates seized the ship and its captives near Mexico. They then sailed to Jamestown where they “unloaded” “20 and odd” of the healthiest Africans at the colony in August 1619.

Most people do not contest that this happened. But the American problem is how it is framed, remembered, and taught. The 1619 project states that the arrival of Africans is America’s origin story. The enslavement and the subsequent anti-Black racism, Black codes, Jim Crow, lynchings, numerous Tulsa-type massacres by white mobs, redlining, mass incarceration, and other injustices are part of American history. To many, it is blasphemous to teach this aspect of American history and to analyze the country through the prism of critical race theory.

Since this question was raised by the 1619 Project to center acts of racial intolerance as defining moments in American history, there are now at least 28 states attempting to pass legislation that would require teachers to whitewash, omit, or lie about the effects of racism in this country. These laws, which use the phrase “critical race theory” without explaining that it is a 40-year-old academic pursuit to examine how racism and law intersect,

are intended to restrict teachers and honest classroom conversations about systematic oppression, implicit bias and racism.

Since the story of Africans in America is filled with instances of injustices, these laws will limit conversations about Black people’s over 400-year sojourn in America. It will also not tell the story of one of the captives who was on the ship of oppression that landed on the shores of Jamestown in August 1619. The name of this shero is recorded in history as Angela.

Angela was kidnapped from the Ndongo Kingdom, forced to walk miles to the coast, was put on a slave ship, transferred to a pirate ship, and landed in Jamestown in 1619, where her African name, language, and culture were stripped from her. In 1625, she was listed as living in the household of an Englishman named Captain William Pierce.

I want you to imagine the pain, horror, and trauma that Angela had to endure. Instead of remembering her and the numerous incidents of injustice that Black people have faced, do you think these stories should be forgotten because some people think they divide us or make us uncomfortable? If you think in that manner, my response is that you should get comfortable with being uncomfortable because teachers should NEVER stop teaching stories about the oppressed and marginalized in the United States!

I don’t care who is offended by the truth. I will never stop teaching about racism and the struggle for Black liberation in my classroom. I am “putting that on” Carter G. Woodson, the honorable Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, Anna Julia Cooper, Ida B. Wells and all the other ancestors who taught us about the corrosive effects of racism.

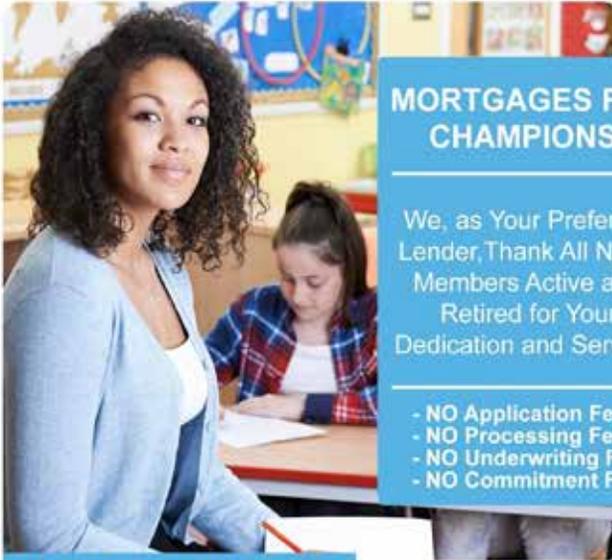
Teachers, in your pedagogy when teaching about the oppressed, be bold and uncompromising! Use tried and truthful lesson plans to infuse historical truths, issues of injustices, and examples of triumphs in the face of adversity in your lessons. To assist in that regard, a dedicated group of NJEA members, staff, and consultants were assembled in summer 2021 to write Black/African-American/African history curriculum. The curriculum and its name, the performance tasks, and much more about this curriculum will be unveiled at the 2021 NJEA Convention.

When it comes to teaching all children about racism, you should do as Bob Marley sang:

*Tell the children the truth;
Tell the children the truth right now!
Come on and tell the children the truth.* 🗣️

Sundjata Sekou is a third-grade math and science teacher at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School in Irvington. He can be reached at sundjata.sekou@gmail.com.

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SGOs for another unusual year

By Elisabeth Yucis

The word “unprecedented” has been used so frequently since March 2020 that it seems to have lost all meaning. Yet, we remain in an era that continues to embody its definition: “never done or known before.” It’s been 19 months since the pandemic ended life as we knew it, and now we’ve begun a third “unprecedented” school year. There’s the familiar sense of hope in a new school year, tempered once again by undercurrents of fear and anxiety. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Many have used the term “learning loss” to describe what has happened to students academically since COVID-19 shut down school buildings. However, NJEA believes this term doesn’t accurately capture the nuances of our kids’ learning journeys over the past two school years. Accordingly, the New Jersey Department of Education has adopted the approach of “learning acceleration” to help guide educators forward. The first principle is to “provide conditions of learning that will foster social and emotional well-being of students, families, and educators.” In other words, human needs in the school community must be addressed prior to academic matters. Across the state, school leaders have accordingly pledged to emphasize social-emotional learning (SEL) this year.

After attending to the SEL needs in your classroom, your focus as a teacher will naturally

shift to academics and the annual requirement of student growth objectives (SGOs). Some parts of the SGO process might feel like they have in other years, but you will have some new opportunities for innovation in light of the last two school years.

First, some background about SGOs: for the 2021-22 school year, SGOs will comprise 15% of teacher summative scores. As there is no median student growth percentile (mSGP) this year because of the cancellation of the 2021 NJSLA, every teacher will submit two SGOs by Oct. 31.

State regulations allow local practices to vary from district to district, but all districts are required to distribute all evaluation policies and procedures in writing by Oct. 1 annually. If you believe your district policies contradict the regulations, or if you do not believe your district has communicated them in accordance with the regulations, your local leadership will seek clarification from an NJEA UniServ field representative.

With so many interruptions to learning over the past two school years, this year’s students will undeniably perform differently than previous cohorts when it comes time to set your goals and establish student baselines. The lack of two years of available standardized assessment data, the variety of educational experiences your students have had over the past two school years, and the changes in your classroom routines are just a few examples of possible challenges.

In the face of these challenges, identify what existing data you can access, such as prior year grades or other local assessments. Next, consider what additional data you already plan to gather in the early fall that might be able to inform student baselines. Start Strong Assessments, benchmarks, and routine diagnostic assessments are just a few options. Finally, fill in any other details with quick formative assessments that do not require grading time, using these quick snapshots to efficiently pinpoint strengths and growth opportunities.

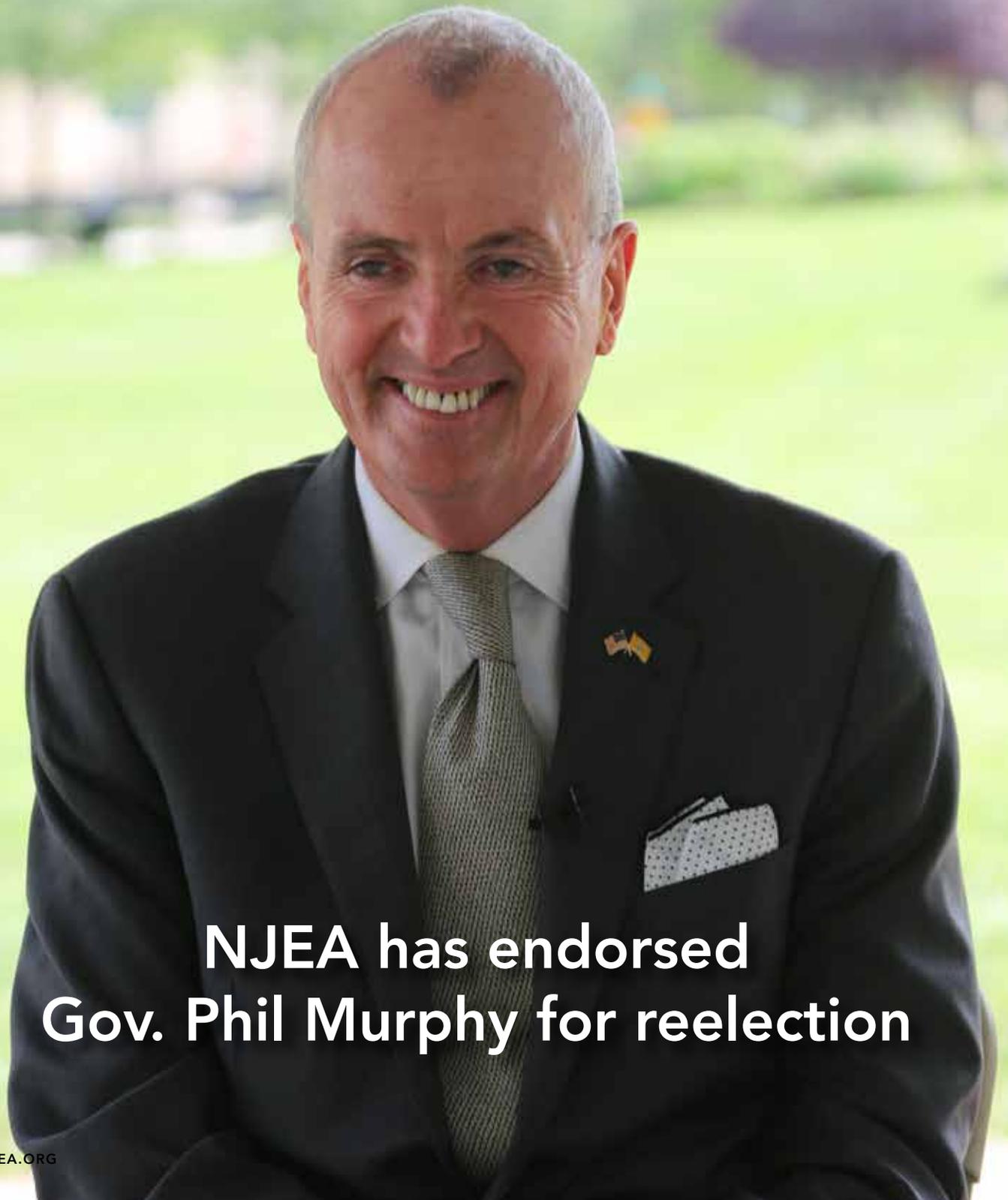
From there, it’s time to plan your students’ journey. This year’s students have strengths other groups of students might not have had, so seize opportunities to capitalize on what your students do well. This is a great opportunity to brainstorm with colleagues, informally or in your professional learning community (PLC), and harness your collective brainpower.

Remember that no matter what, you are the educator best equipped to set goals for your students and guide them towards success. You, as the teacher, will have a great deal of impact on your students this year. No journey goes as planned, so expect the unexpected this year. When hiccups occur, remember that nobody is better equipped than you to bring your students across the finish line. Frequent reflection about your own practice and your students’ performance will serve you well through the rest of your career. 🍀



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

Gov. Murphy **in his own words**



**NJEA has endorsed
Gov. Phil Murphy for reelection**

Gov. Phil Murphy has earned NJEA's endorsement for reelection as governor because he is the pro-public education candidate. He has made education a top priority four years in a row, funding New Jersey's public schools at record levels. He's increased access to preschool for working families. Through the Community College Opportunity Grant and the Garden State Guarantee, has made a college education an attainable reality for New Jersey residents.

Murphy, with support from his pro-public education partners in the state Senate and Assembly, has reduced the high cost of health care for NJEA members through Ch. 78 relief. He has provided job security to educational support professionals (ESP) through two ESP Job Justice bills. The new laws provide just-cause protections and limitations around a district's ability to privatize the work of ESPs. These two laws give ESPs in New Jersey the strongest job protections in the nation for public school support staff.

Gov. Murphy has paid more into the pension funds than any governor in history, making the first full actuarially required state contribution into the pension system since 1996. In fact, the payment was more than was required for Fiscal Year 2021—and a year ahead of schedule.

Gov. Murphy stands for honesty in education, supporting and strengthening the work of the Amistad Commission and signing into law inclusive curricular requirements about the history and contributions of the disabled and the LGBTQ+ communities.

And Gov. Murphy has kept us safe. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, he has followed the science and the advice of health care professionals. He has consistently prioritized science over politics and has focused on keeping students and staff safer during this global pandemic.

On Aug. 31, Gov. Murphy met with *NJEA Review* editor Patrick Rumaker outdoors at Veterans Memorial Park in Newark to have a conversation about the issues that matter to teachers and ESPs. The questions and answers follow.

You've accomplished quite a bit for public schools and the people who work in them over the last four years: school funding, preschool expansion, access to higher education, full pension funding, cutting the burden of health care costs and more. Could you talk about these accomplishments and what they say about your approach to public education?

At the core of New Jersey's future is an outstanding education. People ask me all the time, "Quick, tell us about New Jersey." The first two words out of my mouth are talent and location. Our state's location is second-to-none, and to take advantage of that we need to continue to invest in our infrastructure.

As it relates to talent, it's everything from pre-k right up through higher education. We have the best educators in America, and we have the best public education system in America. We want to expand that. We want to make higher education more accessible and more affordable.

And we want to make sure that a career as an educator is one that's on a pedestal so, as young people are getting educated themselves they'll be saying, "You know what? I look up and I see educators as my role models. I want to be one too."

We have the best education anywhere in this country, if not anywhere in this world, and that's why families move here and stay here; it's why businesses move here, start here, and grow here.

Thank you for signing the ESP Job Justice bills. From your perspective, how have these laws changed public education?

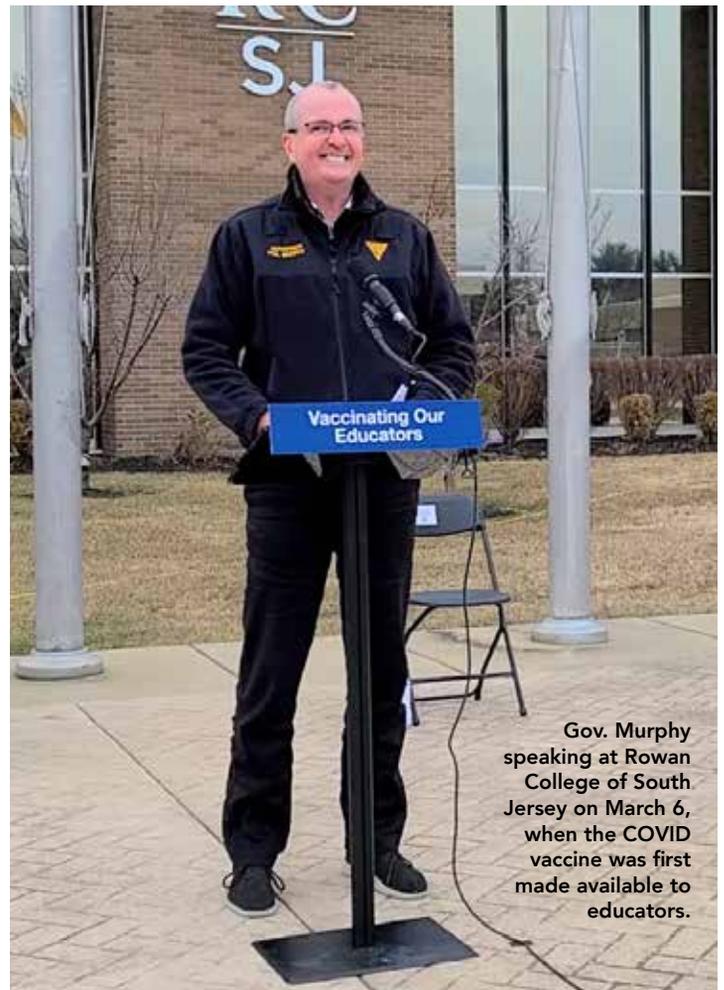
I think for far too long, under my predecessor particularly, there was a lot of name calling—I don't have to tell educators that—and there was a lot of "us versus them." And there was an unnecessary distinction between classroom teachers and everybody else who is part of a child's life during the day.

The fact of the matter is that they're all educators. I learned that from Marie Blistan. Everybody who works with a child throughout the day, whether they're the bus driver, the custodian, the cafeteria worker, whoever it might be, is in their own way an educator. So I was proud, at long last, to make sure our educational support professionals (ESPs) have due-process rights and job security. It should have been there from the get-go. They deserve it. They do an enormous amount of work, they impact our kids' lives, and they're the unsung heroes of public education. I put ESPs, as I do all educators, on a pedestal.

What do you hope our students will see and hear when they hear our state's elected leaders talking about public schools, teachers and ESPs?

Well, I hope that they hear governmental leaders putting public schools first, and educators and kids first, because that is the formula for success. I hope they hear nothing but complete respect from everyone in our communities. I hope that they hear that folks are committed to telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth as it relates to our country's history.

That's why there's an Amistad Commission, and I'm proud to say that today I'm signing a bill that establishes the Amistad Commission Exemplary Award program (S-3654). We need to tell the whole story about slavery in our country. We need to teach about climate change. We need to teach about the LGBTQ community. We need to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth as it relates to how we teach our kids. And I hope that they hear that from governmental leaders like myself and others up and down the state for years to come.



Gov. Murphy speaking at Rowan College of South Jersey on March 6, when the COVID vaccine was first made available to educators.



What will you do to ensure that full actuarially required payments and other priorities, such as school funding, are sustainable over the next four years and beyond?

I'm incredibly proud of the record funding into public education under all of the budgets that we have presented. I'm incredibly proud that we've at long last made more than 100% of the actuarial pension payment—\$6.905 billion.

And that's important to win back the trust of educators and retirees, for sure, but also to win the trust of rating agencies and anybody else who does business with the state—that we're good for it. Our word means something. That's important.

Each year, though, all of that is subject to appropriation. What we have to do as a state is to make sure our economy continues to grow. And that's why education is so important to that objective as well. We want to make sure that families and businesses want to continue to come here, live here, grow here and stay here. We need to encourage that economic activity that allows us the financial latitude to make those investments in public education, in funding the school funding formula—a formula, by the way, that was underfunded by my predecessor to the tune of \$9 billion—to make that full pension payment, to work constructively on health care and the costs associated with that.

We have to continue to run the state in an efficient, smart manner so that where we can save money we don't do it on the backs of public employees but do it with them in a mutually constructive way.

We must keep growing the economy, running the state smart, and prioritizing both education and our obligations. Those are our guiding principles, and they will continue to be.



What steps are you supporting to lead to a more diverse teaching force in New Jersey?

We are the most diverse state in America, and we wear that as a badge of honor. NJEA has been really terrific on this and has been a great partner. We each respectively have or support recruitment programs for educators of color, and we try to find as many opportunities as possible to work together.

We must have educators who reflect the diversity of our state. We must make sure that our kids, when they look up at their role models—educators, coaches, police officers, firefighters, elected officials and other members of the community—that those role models are as diverse as the kids who are looking up to them.

Again, NJEA has done a great job. I think we've helped in our own right. I'd say we need to do more. We celebrate that diversity. It strengthens us.



How will you ensure our schools have the resources they need to support educators in their work around racial justice? What has your administration done to support school districts and educators in their commitment to honesty in education?

I am incredibly proud that we are committed to implementing the Amistad Commission, that we will teach about climate change, that we will teach about the LGBTQ+ community, among other initiatives. No other state in America can say that.

In my view, when it comes to teaching those histories, our job as educators is to tell it like it is: the good, the bad and the ugly.

I think America is the world's greatest nation, period. But, as my former boss, President Barack Obama used to say, we wake up every day trying to perfect that nation. We are on a journey. And we have to look ourselves in the mirror. We have to make sure we see the entirety of our state and country—the entirety of our history.

The Department of Education sets some incredibly important guidelines and parameters, and through them we work with our districts.

We'll continue to teach our kids the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Top: Gov. Murphy with Trenton EA leaders on Oct. 22, 2019. From left: Marlana Ventura, Vondalyn Fannin, Murphy, Twanda Taylor, Talithe Duncan, and Kathryn Graf.
 Middle: Gov. Murphy with then NIEA Preservice officer Anthony Elia at the NIEA Legislative Conference in 2017.
 Bottom: Gov. Murphy greeting educators receiving their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at Rowan College of South Jersey on March 6.

As you consider what needs to be done to ensure schools are safe in the midst of the pandemic, what do you take into consideration?

We're guided by two principles as we turn the corner here to head back to school over the next few days. The first is that we have to ensure a safe environment. That means—and I do not come to this with necessarily a lot of joy—but it's the right thing: everybody's got to be masked, at least at the beginning of the school year.

The Delta variant is all over the state. We're probably dealing with it better than any other state in the nation. I'm proud to say that we have the lowest percentage of the beds in our intensive care units occupied by COVID patients of any state in America. That's the good news. The bad news is the still over 1,000 people in the hospital. This variant is real, and it's highly transmittable. We've got to take this seriously, so everybody has got to be masked.

And we've asked educators and all school staff to be fully vaccinated by the middle of October. Educators are already at a high level of vaccination, which is great. And if you're not able to get vaccinated, we're going to have to ask you to get tested, probably multiple times a week.

We think that package accomplishes the objective of having a safe environment to bring everybody back into school.

The second principle is to get in school, face to face. Over the past year and half, educators were heroic. Moms and dads were heroic. Kids themselves were heroic. Everybody deserves a lot of credit. I'm incredibly proud of the fact we've shrunk the digital divide to zero. We did that together. But the fact of the matter is that there's nothing like the richness of education that you receive when you're in a room together—when you're face to face and you're able to communicate.

Those are the principles that are guiding us. And we watch this like a hawk, as you can imagine. Every single day, probably every hour of every day, we're monitoring the data and monitoring the environment as it relates to health and safety. We'll get through this, and we'll get through this together.

What role do standardized tests such as the NJSLA play in a student's education? Do they have a role in teacher evaluation?

Standardized tests play a role, but I'm not a fan of high-stakes, high-stress, standardized tests. I'm not a big fan of taking a lot of classroom time to teach to the test. My sister's a retired Boston city educator. She got to me many, many decades ago on that, and she's right.

By the way, I want our kids assessed. I've got four kids; I want to know how my kids are doing. But let's do it in a way that makes sense, consistent with the classroom experience. And nobody knows that better than educators.

And so, I'm not a big fan of, "Oh my god! A month from Tuesday, everything's going to be on the line." I think that goes for kids, most importantly, but I think it goes for educators as well.

I'm always looking for data points. Who isn't? But I'm a fan of a lower stakes, more frequent, more nimble assessments with classroom educators who are actually in front of students in terms of that process. Educators want to know how they're doing. Everybody wants to know for themselves if they are doing a good job. Myself, I want to know how I'm doing in my own job.

But I don't like this notion that all the chips are on one particular test.

What do you see as the role of community colleges in New Jersey, and what do you think about their future?

Community colleges in New Jersey are incredibly important. I used to talk all the time about a McKinsey study that's now about four or five years old. It talked about New Jersey recapturing the innovation economy. We're doing most, if not all, of what was recommended in there. It's a playbook that we've used.

One of the big conclusions in the study was that if we develop our economy right, there will be a skills gap, and it would not be at the Ph.D. or master's or bachelor's level. It would be at the associates level.

So from the start we said that we're going to invest in our community colleges, and we've been doing that. Community colleges will continue to play the incredibly powerful role they already play today.

But it's also important that more students are able to access a community college education, which is why the Community College Opportunity Grant is such a game changer. And it's not just kids. You go to a community college campus, and yes, you'll see 18-year-olds, but also folks at various points in life, even up to their 60s and 70s.

The Community College Opportunity Grant, which is now going into its fourth year, allows anybody from a family up to a certain level of income to go to a community college free of charge. We've now extended that to the Garden State Guarantee: if you do use the Community College Opportunity Grant for the first two years in a community college and you transfer to a state college or university, your last two years can be free of charge if you are still under that level of income.

It is an investment in our community colleges and other institutions of higher education, but it's also an investment in our residents to enable them to afford to go to those institutions. And I think they're making a huge impact on our economy. 🇺🇸



Gov. Murphy after the interview lauding New Jersey's Number 1 status in education.



UNDERSTANDING NJEA PAC'S ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

On Nov. 2—and earlier for those who vote by mail—New Jersey voters will elect a new governor and 120 state legislators. State government has a profound impact on what happens in New Jersey's schools. That's why the NJEA Political Action Committee (PAC) carefully screens all candidates for statewide public office.

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

THE SCREENING PROCESS

ESTABLISHING A SCREENING COMMITTEE

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

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

EVALUATING THE CANDIDATES

For November elections, screening committees generally invite candidates for an interview in late spring or summer. Prior to meeting the candidate, the committee reviews completed NJEA questionnaires submitted by the candidate and if he or she is an incumbent, the candidate's voting record.

Each candidate screening session lasts up to an hour, allowing time for candidates to make a presentation and answer screening committee questions. Questions are based upon issues relevant to public education and advocacy for the people who work in public schools as well as issues and concerns within the membership of the counties within the legislative districts involved.

When evaluating the candidates, screening

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

ENDORING THE CANDIDATES

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

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

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

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

On the pages that follow are photos and statements from the legislative candidates who upon completion of the process were endorsed by NJEA PAC.

No endorsements were made in legislative districts 8, 9, 23, 24, and 29. Senate endorsements were not made in districts 1, 12, 30, and 33. In districts 10, 25, 26, and 31 only one Assembly endorsement was made.

LD 1

Assembly

JOHN CAPIZOLA JR. (D)

As a proud member of the NJEA and a product of our New Jersey public schools, I hope for legislative partnerships to create meaningful legislation to advance NJEA initiatives post-pandemic and more. Our public schools are a shining star in our nation, and as an Assemblyman partnering with our outstanding educators, our future is bright.



ERIK SIMONSEN (R)

As both an educator and administrator with over 30 years of experience, I understand the positive impact passionate professionals make in our children's lives. I look forward to working with our partners in the education community to ensure a safe and healthy reopening of our schools this year and for years to come.



LD 2

Senate

VINCE MAZZEO (D)

NJEA and its Atlantic County chapter are fierce advocates for our children and New Jersey's top-in-the-nation education system. I am honored to receive their endorsement and to continue working with their members to ensure Atlantic County schools receive their fair share of funding and that their input is included as schools plan for reopening in the fall.



Assembly

JOHN ARMATO (D)

It is an honor to again be endorsed by NJEA. As a union member while an HVAC technician, I understand the importance and strength of NJEA and its Atlantic County chapter as they work together with their school communities to plan safe reopenings this fall so our children can return to in-person education.



CAREN FITZPATRICK (D)

New Jersey has one of the top education systems in the nation thanks to the hardworking teachers and educational support professionals in NJEA, and I am proud to have earned their endorsement. I look forward to working in the General Assembly with NJEA and its membership to ensure Atlantic County receives its fair share of school funding and that we continue to equip our children with the tools needed for success.



LD 3

Senate

STEPHEN SWEENEY (D)

Senate President Steve Sweeney would like to thank New Jersey's educators for their steadfast dedication to keeping our students engaged in learning during this most challenging time. I am proud that we were able to work together to cut healthcare costs for both teachers and taxpayers, and to protect non-teaching jobs from being outsourced.



Assembly

JOHN BURZICHELLI (D)

Assemblyman Burzichelli would like to thank the NJEA and its members for their hard work and resolve as they faced unprecedented challenges in the past school year. I look forward to continuing to collaborate and ensure that our educators and their families can rely on affordable healthcare.



ADAM TALIAFERRO (D)

Assemblyman Taliaferro extends his gratitude to New Jersey's educators as they persevered and created new ways to keep our children educationally engaged during this challenging school year. Thank you for the support. Together we will continue to find ways to preserve more critically needed non-teaching jobs.



LD 4

Senate

FRED MADDEN (D)

Public education is the cornerstone of strong communities and vital to the success of future generations. I offer my deepest thanks to teachers and educational support professionals who have worked tirelessly during this pandemic and helped in immeasurable ways. I look forward to continuing to support public education in this state. Once again, thank you for your support.



LD 4

Assembly

PAUL D. MORIARTY (D)

In the face of unprecedented obstacles, New Jersey's educators and educational support professionals have adjusted to the circumstances of the pandemic to provide an unrivaled education for our students. I am proud of the work we have done this legislative session, and I look forward to continuing to work with New Jersey's teachers.



GABRIELA MOSQUERA (D)

Our state's education system is a large reason that people move to New Jersey, and that is something we should be very proud of. Over the last year, our state's educators have been met with tremendous challenges, but have found creative ways to still educate the young people in our state. Working together, we can continue to find innovative ways to keep our students and faculty safe, while maintaining our high level of education.



LD 5

Senate

NILSA CRUZ-PEREZ (D)

These unprecedented times highlighted the importance of implementing a safe and secure plan that addresses the needs of our education community. Educators play a vital role in the lives of children and families. We must do all we can to continue to ensure that New Jersey schools and families are provided with quality education.



Assembly

WILLIAM SPEARMAN (D)

Thank you NJEA for endorsing me for the Assembly. My brother was first a counsellor and then a vice principal. My sister was a history teacher and as band-boosters my wife and I work closely with other support staff. I appreciate what your members do for our children. Thank you.



WILLIAM MOEN (D)

Thanks to the NJEA for their endorsement of my state Assembly reelection campaign. I look forward to working with our state's teachers and educational support professionals to ensure their priorities remain in the forefront of our work in the State House, as our educators are responsible for growing our country's greatest natural resource: our children.



LD 6

Senate

JAMES BEACH (D)

As a retired teacher who worked for over 25 years in the Camden and Black Horse Pike school districts, I have boundless appreciation for the tireless dedication New Jersey teachers and educational support professionals have shown our children in the face of unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we begin yet another school year facing these challenges, providing districts with resources to protect everyone's health and safety will be paramount.



Assembly

LOUIS GREENWALD (D)

Thank you for your endorsement. I look forward to continuing to work with NJEA and its members to ensure our children continue to benefit from the best education in the nation. To do that we must make sure teachers and educational support professionals have access to all necessary resources and that we continue to attract the highest quality individuals.



PAMELA R. LAMPITT (D)

Year after year, New Jersey public schools rank top in the nation and this distinction is due largely to the hard work and commitment of our educators and educational support professionals. To ensure that the children of New Jersey continue to receive the highest quality education, it is vital that our educators and support staff have the resources they need, and I remain committed to being a strong advocate for our public schools. I am proud to stand with the NJEA to fight for our public schools, educational support staff, and teachers.



LD 7

Senate

TROY SINGLETON (D)

The pandemic's remote learning has demonstrated just how hard educators, administrators, and support staff work to teach our children. Many of us knew it wasn't an easy job; some parents learned firsthand how hard it is. I will continue to support legislation that recognizes the value of our educators.



Assembly

HERB CONAWAY (D)

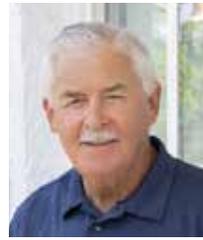
I'd like to thank the NJEA for their endorsement. As the son of a public school teacher, I've seen the passion and desire to prepare our students all my life. I look forward to working together to prepare New Jersey students for the careers of tomorrow.





CAROL MURPHY (D)

It is an honor to receive the endorsement from NJEA, representing more than 200,000 teachers and educational support professionals. It is my belief that education is the essence of opportunity, a good education levels the playing field, and I'm proud to support public education throughout our state.



ERIC HOUGHTALING (D)

Assemblyman Houghtaling is the chair of the Agriculture Committee, the vice chair of the Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committee, member of the Tourism, Gaming and the Arts Committee, member of the Labor Committee and serves as the Deputy Majority Leader. Eric has always strived to give back to the community.

LD 10

Senate



EMMA L. MAMMANO (D)

I have three children in the Brick Public schools, so I am keenly aware of the fact that teachers and staff are overworked and undervalued, now more than ever. It will be my priority to increase funding for mental health services for students and staff and to protect your health care benefits. I also will fight to recover funding for the Brick and Toms River school districts.

Assembly



GREGORY P. MCGUCKIN (R)

I am extremely honored to receive the NJEA PAC endorsement for the 2021 New Jersey General Assembly Election. The education of our children and the support of our teachers and educational support professionals has always been a top priority. My wife is a Toms River teacher, so I see firsthand the time and effort our teachers put into their daily lesson plans, especially after the last school year teachers and staff endured. Thank you for this honor.

LD 12

Assembly



ROBERT D. CLIFTON (R)

I believe that the recovery from the pandemic is going to be a long-term effort and New Jersey educators will be at the forefront of that recovery. I look forward to continuing to work with teachers, support staff, and administrators to come up with the best policies for our children.



RONALD S. DANCER (R)

I am pleased and humbled to again receive the endorsement of NJEA. Working together on educational quality, fair funding, and good working conditions for teachers and educational support professionals, we will continue to make a difference.

LD 11

Senate



VIN GOPAL (D)

It is an honor to be endorsed by the NJEA. In these difficult times, I am proud to stand with teachers and educational support professionals, who have been frontline heroes throughout the pandemic. I pledge to continue to work in partnership with you all to create a stronger New Jersey.

Assembly



JOANN DOWNEY (D)

Assemblywoman Joann Downey is the chair of the Human Services Committee, member of the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee, and serves as the General Assembly Parliamentarian. Through her work in the General Assembly, Joann fights to provide real property tax relief to residents and advocate for our most vulnerable communities.

LD 13

Senate



VINCENT SOLOMEMO III (D)

The first time I fought for change I was 13. I organized students and fought for a contract for Union Beach teachers and educational support professionals. I'm an Army veteran who deployed overseas and served at home during Superstorm Sandy and COVID-19. In Trenton, I will fight for you.

Assembly



ALLISON FRIEDMAN (D)

Education has always been important to me. As a parent and a member of the board of education, I respect and understand the importance of each and every one who ensures our students' safety and education. Teachers, guidance, custodians, bus drivers and instructional assistants are all crucial to our school community and the community at large. Through being on the board of education and running for Assembly, I honor those teachers who helped me become the person I am today.

LD 13



Assembly

ERIN HOWARD (D)

I have three children who attend public elementary school, and I am the daughter of a public school teacher. I am running for Assembly to ensure that the values I'm raising my children with are reflected in our government. Fighting for teachers, administrators, support staff and education will be a top priority when I'm in Trenton.

LD 14



Senate

LINDA GREENSTEIN (D)

I am honored to receive the support of NJEA. I want to thank our teachers and educational support professionals for continuing to provide a high-quality education to our children during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. New Jersey's best in the nation public schools are possible because of our educators.



Assembly

DANIEL BENSON (D)

I am proud of our best in the nation public schools. I am humbled to have the support of our teachers and educational support professionals who help make them a reality. This past year has presented unprecedented difficulties. I thank the NJEA and its members for meeting them head on.



WAYNE DEANGELO (D)

As a legislator and labor leader it is an honor to receive NJEA's endorsement. Our teachers and educational support professionals are a core part of the high-quality public education we have come to expect in New Jersey. I look forward to continuing to support your hard work.

LD 15



Senate

SHIRLEY K. TURNER (D)

As a career educator, I am proud to have the opportunity to serve in the New Jersey Legislature and advance the policies that support our educational professionals as they shape the development of our students and help them prepare for their future. I applaud our educators who are tireless advocates of our children.

Assembly

VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON (D)

I am truly honored to be endorsed by NJEA, which works on behalf of teachers and educational support professionals (ESPs). Supporting teachers and ESPs has been and will continue to be a priority of mine during my time in the New Jersey General Assembly. I will always be a staunch ally of NJEA and will continue to fight for them every day.



ANTHONY S. VERRELLI (D)

I thank NJEA wholeheartedly for endorsing my candidacy for reelection to the Assembly. NJEA's endorsement sends a clear message to my constituents that I support our public school teachers and educational support professionals. I oppose high-stakes standardized testing for students and burdensome evaluation regimes required of teacher candidates, including the edTPA.

LD 16

Senate

ANDREW ZWICKER (D)

As the son and spouse of public school educators, I am acutely aware of how our teachers and educational support staff are critical to the success of our children and communities. Our innovative educators tackled the unprecedented challenges of remote and hybrid learning during the past year with exceptional creativity and dedication in the face of their own personal challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am grateful for the endorsement from NJEA as we work together to ensure that our students and staff have the resources they need so that we continue to have the best public schools in the U.S.



Assembly

ROY FREIMAN (D)

As the spouse of a retired teacher, I know firsthand that investing in our schools means investing in our future. I am committed to continuing my fierce advocacy for educational professionals as they work to overcome the unprecedented adversity they have faced over the past year. Our education professionals, students, and their families have my voice in Trenton fighting for what they need to come back to the classroom more successful than ever.



SADAF JAFFER (D)

As an educator, academic, and mother, I have the utmost respect and admiration for teachers and educational support professionals who work tirelessly to inspire children and equip them with the knowledge needed to be successful. I look forward to working with NJEA to ensure New Jersey's public education system remains the best in the nation.



LD 17

Senate

BOB SMITH (D)

It is an honor to be endorsed by the NJEA alongside my 17th District running mates Assemblymen Joe Egan and Joe Danielsen. Together, we will continue work to increase educational funding for our public schools, support teachers, staff and students and help facilitate a safe and healthy learning environment in these challenging times.



Assembly

JOE DANIELSEN (D)

As the son of a teacher in the Franklin School district in Somerset County, I saw how hard-working and dedicated my mother was. Since early childhood, I have revered the work that educational employees provide our students daily. Your dedication has been enhanced through the trials and tribulations of this pandemic. Thank you for your service. I am honored to receive your endorsement.



JOSEPH V. EGAN (D)

Working to increase educational funding for our public schools continues to be a priority for me and my legislative colleagues, Senator Bob Smith and Assemblyman Joe Danielsen in the 17th District. I appreciate the endorsement from the hard-working NJEA members especially in these challenging times.



LD 18

Senate

PATRICK DIEGNAN JR. (D)

As the father and brother of teachers, and as a former teacher myself, I know firsthand the dedication and determination of teachers and staff. In these times of COVID, we as legislators must support and protect those in the classroom who risk their personal safety to provide an education for our children. I am proud to have the support of NJEA.



Assembly

ROBERT KARABINCHAK (D)

New Jersey is fortunate to have the country's finest educators and educational support professionals. Despite this past year's unforeseen challenges, NJEA members have persevered and continue providing the best education to our students. They are among the many pandemic heroes, and I am truly humbled to have received their endorsement.



STERLEY S. STANLEY (D)

I am a proud supporter of those who have dedicated their lives to education and public service. We continue to send our children to the best schools in the country and that is a testament to your members. Over the last year, unforeseen challenges and obstacles have been thrown at your members, but they have continued to provide the top-notch education to our children.



LD 19

Senate

JOSEPH VITALE (D)

Thank you to the NJEA for your endorsement! Our educators and support professionals have been nothing short of heroic during these extremely trying times. If granted another term as District 19's senator, I will continue to support your steadfast efforts to ensure that our children receive the highest quality education in the safest possible environments.



Assembly

CRAIG J. COUGHLIN (D)

As a product of public schools, I am a staunch believer that public education is the "great equalizer." Our system provides an efficient, free and thorough education to all students regardless of any demographic and our society has the moral obligation to provide and protect this aim at all costs.



YVONNE LOPEZ (D)

Now more than ever, we continue to realize the dedication and immense contributions of our teachers, school support staff and educational professionals who have ensured that a global pandemic did not interrupt the education of our students. I look forward to continuing to support NJEA and being a strong advocate for our school heroes.



LD 20

Senate

JOSEPH P. CRYAN (D)

NJEA has stood up for its members through every fight. As a partner with NJEA, we have fought to secure funding and resources for teachers that dedicate their lives to educate our youth and continue to fight to ensure the pension continues to be fully funded.



Assembly

ANNETTE QUIJANO (D)

I'd like to thank the teachers and education support professionals of the NJEA for their endorsement. Together, we can ensure that teachers and education support professionals are treated fairly, so that they continue to deliver a great education to all students.



LD 20



Assembly

REGINALD ATKINS (D)

Over the last year and a half, the critical importance of our teachers and educational support professionals has never been clearer. We owe a debt of gratitude to all those on the front line and those who found creative ways to continue engaging our children. In the Assembly, I will be proud to be a voice for better, safer school environments across all of New Jersey.

LD 21



Senate

JON BRAMNICK (R)

The pandemic presented once-in-a-lifetime challenges for educators and support staff. I stand with the NJEA and their membership as we continue working together through these problems to provide world class education to the students of New Jersey. I thank the NJEA for endorsing my campaign and look forward to our ongoing partnership.

Assembly

ANJALI MEHROTRA (D)

As a long-time parent volunteer, I am honored to receive the endorsement of the NJEA. Once elected, I look forward to working with the NJEA to uphold our status as the nation's top-ranked public school system. One of my top priorities is funding computer science for all, so our next generation will have the skills necessary to compete in the digital economy.



NANCY MUÑOZ (R)

I look forward to continuing my relationship with the NJEA and educational professionals. I believe schools are the foundation of our communities. We need to work together to ensure a safe and productive environment for our children, teachers, and educational support staff.



LD 22



Senate

NICHOLAS P. SCUTARI (D)

I have spent my entire legislative career as an advocate for our state's teachers. They are the backbone of our educational system and the pathway in which students succeed. As a former teacher I am committed to the betterment of our schools, equity in funding, and I will always have our teachers' backs.

Assembly

LINDA CARTER (D)

As a teacher I know firsthand the needs of our state's education professionals. I will do all I can to make sure teachers have EVERYTHING they need to help cement the future of our state: our students. I have not stopped fighting and will be our union's largest advocate to help our state's educators.



JAMES J. KENNEDY (D)

As the spouse of a former Rahway Public Schools kindergarten teacher and a long-time supporter of NJEA, one of my top priorities is to ensure that a New Jersey education remains among the best in the nation. I will continue to be an advocate in the Legislature for school funding, pensions/health benefits, and ensuring we provide the proper support for teachers, educational support professionals, and students at all public schools during these unprecedented times.



LD 25

Senate

ANTHONY BUCCO (R)

I was proud to be prime sponsor of the bipartisan Chapter 44 legislation recently signed into law. I am honored to have the endorsement of the NJEA and look forward to continuing to support the teaching profession and maintaining one of the best public education systems in the country.



Assembly

AURA DUNN (R)

As a teacher, I know firsthand the needs of our state's education professionals. The dedication of NJEA in helping our children navigate through the hard-hitting pandemic greatly impressed me and showcased the vital role that teachers and staff play in our society. I am grateful for this endorsement and look forward to continuing to empower the education community.



LD 26

Senate

CHRISTINE CLARKE (D)

I am an environmental advocate, a grassroots organizer and a mother-of-four running for state Senate to build the job-creating clean energy economy, advance a green recovery from COVID-19, protect clean air and water, improve health care and lead with empathy and fiscal sense. Learn more at clarkeforsenate.com.





Assembly

PAMELA FADDEN (D)

As a parent, teacher, and local association president, I will work in Trenton to make sure our children (and educators) have a safe learning (and working) environment, genuine mental health services, necessary special education and less high-stakes testing. I look forward to a New Jersey where the American Dream is a reality for all regardless of their identities!

LD 27

Senate

RICHARD CODEY (D)

I've always been proud to stand with NJEA. I'm also proud of my wife, an NJEA member for over 30 years. Teachers and ESPs are the backbone of New Jersey's public schools. We owe it to them to live up to our obligations and provide the tools needed to succeed.



Assembly

MILA JASEY (D)

The knowledge and wisdom New Jersey's teachers and educational support professionals impart is the cornerstone of our individual and collective accomplishments. They support us, challenge us, celebrate us, unleash our potential to achieve and hold the key to securing our future. They have made our public schools the best in the nation, and I am gratified to have earned the NJEA's endorsement.



JOHN F. MCKEON (D)

As all eyes are upon New Jersey's public schools, I am proud to have worked to ensure that the FY22 state budget included a record-high pension payment, a \$624 million increase in state school aid and COVID protocols to protect the health and safety of our students and the teachers and education support professionals who so ably serve them. I thank the NJEA for endorsing me.



LD 28

Senate

RONALD RICE (D)

I'm honored by NJEA's endorsement and grateful for our continued partnership. I'm especially proud of our commitment to nurture New Jersey's students in a diverse, inclusive environment and of establishing civics and Amistad curricula. Combined, they foster greater understanding of America's living, evolving history and our individual responsibility for justice.



Assembly

RALPH R. CAPUTO (D)

I have supported public schools as a teacher, administrator and legislator. My record reflects these principles: full SFRA funding, collective bargaining, and sensible—rather than over-the-top—testing that is not the only tool used to evaluate teachers. I will continue to support full pension funding. My bill (A-5886), which is now law, Alyssa's Law, requires panic alarms in all public schools. I am committed to promoting educational initiatives that improve public education.



CLEOPATRA G. TUCKER (D)

Thank you for your continued support. While I am elected to serve residents of the 28th district, the legislation I support has a statewide reach. I will continue to do what is right for not only the teachers in our state but also the Education Support Staff that make educating our children possible. Thank you for your service.



LD 30

Assembly

SEAN T. KEAN (R)

I am pleased to be an NJEA-endorsed candidate for the General Assembly in District 30! Thank you to all the teachers and school staff that make New Jersey's schools the best in the nation. I greatly appreciate your support and all the hard work you put in to help our students learn and grow.



EDWARD "NED" THOMSON (R)

I am honored to have the support of the NJEA and the education professionals who make our public schools the best in the country. Our economic success is dependent on a high-quality education system and I look forward to continuing to advocate for our hard-working public school employees.



LD 31

Senate

SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM (D)

I look forward to continuing a productive relationship with the NJEA. As chairperson of the Senate Higher Education Committee, I am aware of the necessity to support our teachers and our educational support professionals. We all need to work together to provide a solid education for our New Jersey students.



Assembly

WILLIAM SAMPSON (D)

As a product of Bayonne's public schools and a fellow union member, this endorsement by NJEA means so much to me. I know how hard your members work especially in these challenging times. If elected, I hope to hear more about the issues that matter to you.



LD 32

Senate

NICHOLAS J. SACCO (D)



As a former teacher and school administrator and longtime NJEA member, I'm proud to be an advocate for public education, fair school funding and keeping our promises to public employees. I have always stood up for teachers and voted to increase school funding and fully fund the state pension system. I will always continue to be a voice for public schools and against vouchers and against for-profit schools.

Assembly

ANGELICA JIMENEZ (D)



Thank you to NJEA members for their endorsement. It is my pleasure to work alongside NJEA and continue to advocate for all of our teachers, education support professionals, and students. I am committed to continue to advocate for all those in education who positively impact the lives of our youth and whose efforts are the foundation on which this state's future rests.

PEDRO MEJIA (D)



As we struggle through the COVID-19 pandemic together, I have made it a top priority of my office to serve every and all constituents, especially the educational support professionals, support staff and teachers of the NJEA. I would like to thank you and your 200,000 plus members for your endorsement.

LD 33

Assembly

ANNETTE CHAPARRO (D)



Now more than ever, I recognize that educators are working harder and managing an even more complex workload. I'm incredibly thankful for NJEA's endorsement in my election and am grateful for our partnership since I've been in office. I'm always happy to see New Jersey's union of educators and school support staff members with an important seat at the table.

RAJ MUKHERJI (D)



I am deeply appreciative and humbled to receive the endorsement of our state's dedicated educators and am committed to working with them as an advocate for our public schools.

LD 34

Senate

NIA H. GILL (D)



As we continue to navigate the pandemic, we must support our teachers and educational support staff by providing them the resources they need to protect themselves and their students. We must fully fund our schools and pension system. We must safeguard and strengthen the right to collective bargaining. I am committed to standing with NJEA for our teachers, our communities, and the future of our children.

Assembly

THOMAS P. GIBLIN (D)



I am first generation American born. I, my children and grandchildren have been the beneficiaries of all this great country and state have to offer. New Jersey's education system has always provided a superior opportunity to those who wish to learn. I will continue to be a supporter of New Jersey's teachers, educational support professionals and NJEA.

BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE (D)



I would like to take this opportunity to express my most sincere gratitude for NJEA's endorsement. As the proud daughter and niece of public school educators, I look forward to working with my colleagues in the Legislature to ensure that New Jersey remains at the forefront of the strongest public school systems in the country.

LD 35

Senate

NELLIE POU (D)



During 24-plus years in the Legislature, I've focused on improving our youth's education, addressed the the dropout rate, advocated for STEM and robotic courses, and funded apprenticeship programs and mental health services among other resources for students, ESPs, and teachers. Recently, I sponsored 50 NJEA supported bills and voted in favor of all 60 NJEA supported bills on the Senate agenda.

Assembly

SHAVONDA SUMTER (D)



Educators and educational support professionals play an essential role in the lives of our students and our ever-changing society. It is imperative that we continue to ensure that educators and support professionals have adequate resources to continue to transform the lives of our youth.



BENJIE WIMBERLY (D)

My wife and I are long-time educators in Paterson Public Schools. The pandemic showed the inequities in our urban school districts when it came to technology and access to basic Wi-Fi services. However, I am proud to say that most students were able to keep up and push forward to excel. You can count on me to fight for the teachers and ESPs, who have taken on the position to make a child's life better through education.

LD 36

Senate

PAUL SARLO (D)

Words cannot express my appreciation for the hard work that our teachers and educational support professionals have done over the past year to keep our children educated during these unprecedented times. I will continue to advocate for providing funding to maintain a safe school environment and supplying the tools needed to educate our children.



Assembly

CLINTON CALABRESE (D)

NJ teachers and educational support professionals continue to demonstrate their profound impact. Through virtual, hybrid, and in-person learning, our educational professionals have shown steadfast dedication, resilience, and adaptability during these incredibly challenging times. Thank you for all you do and thank you for the much-appreciated endorsement.



GARY SCHAER (D)

I am once again honored and humbled to receive the endorsement of NJEA. I hope to continue working towards the betterment of our educational system, for our children and our educators.



LD 37

Senate

GORDON M. JOHNSON (D)

This November, I am asking you to support my candidacy for the state Senate. If elected, I will continue to fight for our public schools, ensuring that every child can receive a quality education. New Jersey's future is bright, and I hope to continue my part in shaping it.



Assembly

SHAMA A. HAIDER (D)

I am beyond grateful for the educators and educational support professionals who work so hard to equip their students with the knowledge and skills they need for successful careers and fulfilling lives. As a proud supporter of public education, I'll always fight for the men and women who inspire our children and make a real difference for our communities.



ELLEN J. PARK (D)

Educators and educational support professionals are the backbone of Bergen County's outstanding public schools. In the Assembly, I'll always stand with our educators and educational support professionals and support the great work they do to ensure every child in our state receives the world-class education they deserve.



LD 38

Senate

JOSEPH A. LAGANA (D)

As the father of children who attend the public schools in Paramus, I see firsthand the incredible work our educators and support staff do. Thank you so much to the NJEA members for your support of my candidacy. I look forward to working with you on behalf of our shared values.



Assembly

LISA SWAIN (D)

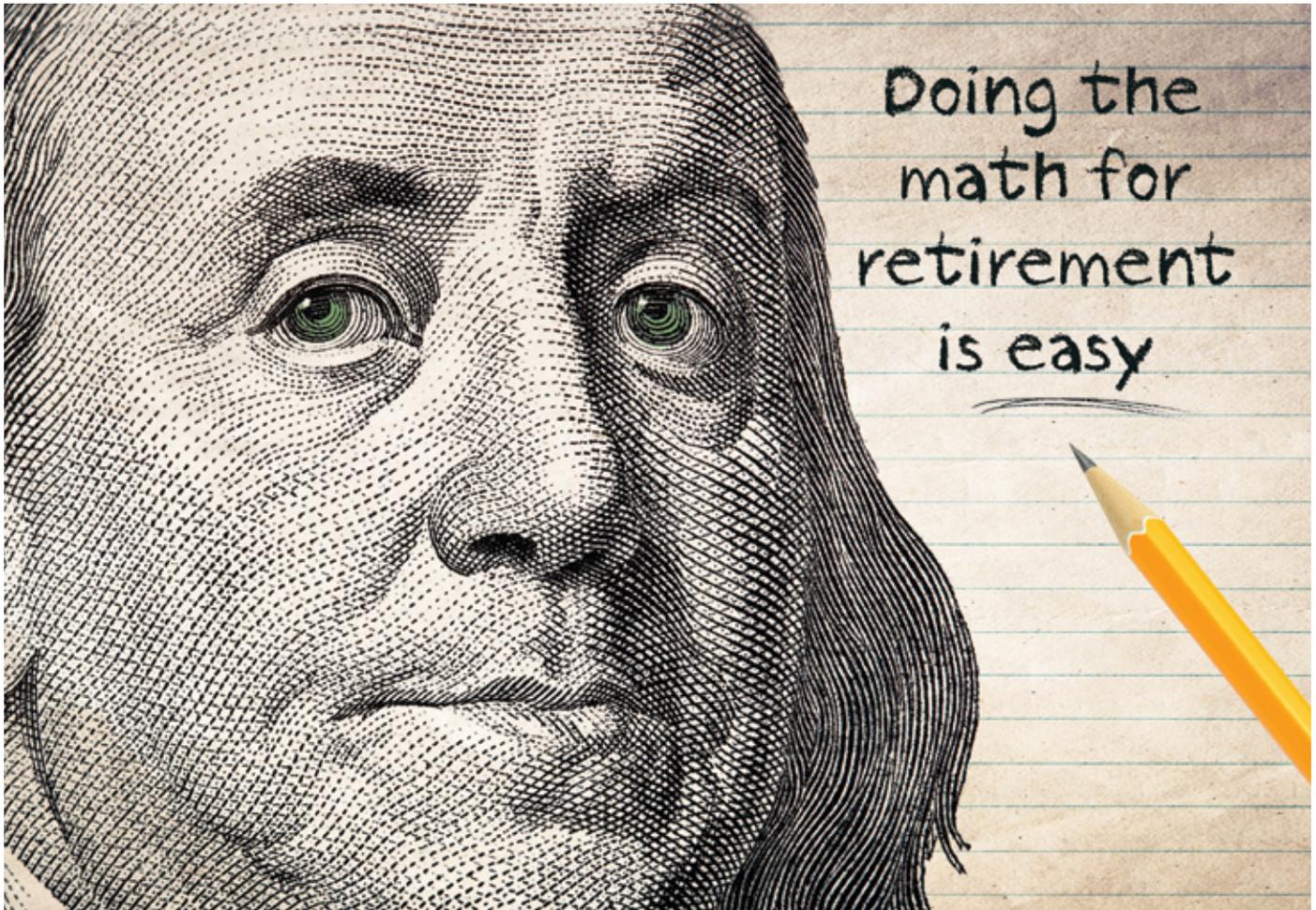
I have deep gratitude for this endorsement and look forward to working with NJEA. I have always been one of the strongest advocates for our educators and educational support staff, from my time as a parent of two children in the public schools and member of the PTA, to my time as a local councilwoman who worked closely with the local education association.



P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY (D)

Every time I look at my son, who will soon be entering the public school system, I am reminded that we need to make investments today for the education system of tomorrow. I will always have the backs of New Jersey's educators and educational support staff, and I thank you for having mine.





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LD 39

Senate



RUTH DUGAN (D)

I am a lifelong problem solver. Throughout my career, my advocacy-driven work has led me to serve in leadership roles in a number of different sectors, including health care, cancer support, and education. I am running for Senate to bring a fresh perspective to Trenton and to usher in a new day in District 39.

Assembly



KARLITO ALMEDA (D)

As a product of the Mahwah public school system, I know what makes our education system the best—our teachers and staff. If elected, I will fight for additional state funding, protect our educational staff's benefits, and ensure that the safety for faculty and students is paramount as schools reopen.



MELINDA IANNUZZI (D)

The public school teachers of New Jersey are an asset for the Garden State. I am pleased to have received the endorsement of NJEA and look forward to working together to support public education in the state of New Jersey.

LD 40

Senate



KRISTIN M. CORRADO (R)

It is an honor to receive the endorsement of the New Jersey Education Association. Our schools are stronger when we support our teachers. I will continue to advocate for educators across our state, fighting to ensure our public school employees have the tools they need to provide the best education for all New Jersey students.

Assembly



CHRISTOPHER DEPHILLIPS (R)

I am honored to have received the endorsement of NJEA. As a state legislator, I have consistently supported our teachers and educational support professionals. With your support, I will continue to do so in my next term.



KEVIN ROONEY (R)

It is important that we pay attention to the unique needs of all our schools in our communities, especially during these trying times. The essentials of good education are the same everywhere: a rigorous curriculum, effective instruction, adequate resources, willing students, and a social and cultural climate in which education is encouraged and respected.

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ASIAN AMERICANS IN AMERICA'S LITERARY HERITAGE

By Sima Kumar

In the summer of 2020, as a response to the George Floyd protests, the toppling of confederate statues, and the necessary and timely conversations about antiracism placed at center stage by Ibram X. Kendi's books (among others), many language arts departments across the nation made a push to not only include more Black voices in the American literature curriculum, which can often be token gestures, but to actually teach these works as mentor texts in the classroom.

But the rise in anti-Asian racism in the spring of 2021 did not have a similar fervent response from language arts departments in most districts.

As a New Jersey educator, I find this alarming given the demographics of our state.

The Asian American population is the fastest growing racial group in the state and comprises 10.4% of the population. Six school districts in New Jersey have tipped to more than 50% of students of Asian heritage, as reported by *NJ Spotlight* for the 2016-17 school year. (See njspotlight.com/tables/schoolsegregation/.) As a friend pointed out, this means that the reality of some Asian American students is that they may live in communities where the majority of the population looks like them, but their school curriculum does not represent their experience in the American literature classroom.

This becomes additionally problematic because nationally, according to the 2020 census data, this

generation of young people is the "most racially and ethnically diverse generation" this country has ever produced, according to a 2018 article by the Pew Research Center. (See [pewrsr.ch/3jvjH2w/](https://www.pewresearch.org/3jvjH2w/).)

According to a recent report by Jersey Promise, a nonprofit policy education and advocacy organization, "The face of education is rapidly changing in NJ. The majority of our 1.37 million students enrolled (56%) in academic year 2017-18 are students of color. There is no longer a racial group that makes up a majority of the enrollment in public schools." (See bit.ly/3l9qcb7.)

PERPETUAL FOREIGNER AND MODEL MINORITY STEREOTYPES

As educators, we are forward-thinking. But when it comes to educational practices, reflecting on past actions becomes essential for productive decision-making in order to move forward. This is especially true since we have an impact on the development and self-conception of young people. So, as educators, we must ask ourselves the question: What is the ecosystem that has allowed for this persistent neglect of the Asian American experience in the high school American literature classroom?

Part of the reason for this oversight is the historical invisibility of Asian Americans that has been informed by the stereotypes of Asian

Americans as perpetual foreigners and as model minorities.

Asian Americans experience the perpetual foreigner stereotype in day-to-day interactions in comments such as, "You speak English so well," or when they tell someone they grew up in this country, they are frequently asked the bombshell question, "Where are you really from?"

Here are a couple of anecdotes I've heard from teachers and students. One teacher who works in a school district that has tipped majority students of Asian heritage recounted a story of a colleague who, looking through her student rosters at the beginning of the school year, said, "God, how about some normal names."

A student recounted a story of a friend who was having a writing conference and the teacher said to the young man she could tell from his writing that he was an ESL student—the young man was born and raised in this country.

The perpetual foreigner stereotype has its origins in the historical exclusion of Asians in America. When Chinese Americans began arriving on the West Coast in the 1850s during the gold rush and then later to help build the transcontinental railroad, they were often labeled by the press with the offensive term "Yellow Peril."

In addition, a series of immigration laws asserted the exclusion of Asians in America. The 1875 Page

Act prohibited the immigration of Chinese women for “immoral purposes.” Many people attribute this law as the seed to the idea of Asian women as sexualized, exotic, expendable objects, an idea many journalists referenced after the Atlanta shooting of six women of Asian heritage.

In her March article in *The Nation*, “The Roots of the Atlanta Shooting Go Back to the First Law Restricting Immigration,” Mari Uyehara describes the alarmingly sympathetic and humanizing description by the captain of the Cherokee County sheriff’s office of the white male murderer, saying the murderer claimed “it’s not racially motivated” and that he had a “sexual addiction” and that he had come to the spas to “eliminate” that addiction. The sheriff, however, said nothing about the humanity of the women who had lost their lives.

The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, the first law that restricted the immigration of people from a specific ethnic background, made Chinese immigrants ineligible for citizenship. Other legislation such as the Immigration Act of 1917 demarcated a “barred zone” from the Middle East to Southeast Asia.

Two Supreme Court rulings the 1922 *Ozawa v. United States* and the 1923 *Thind v. United States* defined Japanese and Indians as being nonwhite and thus not eligible for citizenship.

The 1924 Johnson-Reed Act further restricted immigration. From 1942 to 1945, President Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 interned Japanese Americans.

Not until the 1942 Luce-Celler Act did naturalization rights extend to Asians. In 1965, with the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act, Asian immigrants arrived in large numbers to the United States. Because this law made preference for immigrants with professional degrees, the majority of Asians who immigrated around this time were professionals—scientists, doctors, and engineers.

This act not only changed the demographics of America, but it also laid the foundation for the model minority stereotype.

Because of the 1965 Immigration Act, the children of these immigrants were assumed to have the same skill set and life goals as their parents. The model minority stereotype assumes students of Asian heritage are good at school, particularly excelling in math and science, and that they are quiet, well-behaved and don’t make trouble by questioning the status quo.

A teacher friend recounted a conversation with a colleague who was writing college recommendation letters. Both my friend and her

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While all teachers are responsible for supporting the social and emotional development of students, language arts teachers have an added responsibility because our subject matter is the human condition.

colleague work in a district where students of Asian heritage are the majority. The colleague said it's nearly impossible to write unique letters for students who are quiet, straight A students, but don't stand out in any other way.

On the other hand, there are teachers who are cognizant of their implicit bias. A math teacher recounted how he was getting frustrated with a student of Asian heritage who was struggling with math and he admitted that part of his frustration came from the assumption that the boy must be good at math, like Asians are “supposed” to be.

The model minority stereotype harms teacher relationships with students of Asian origin. The perpetual foreigner stereotype is played out in a curriculum that excludes the Asian American experience.

CULTURAL LITERACY

Part of the roadblock in recognizing the need to represent the Asian American experiences in an American literature course has to do with how administrators and teachers understand the word “diversity.” The word “diversity” is conventionally understood to mean taking into account Black, Latinx, and, maybe, Native American and LGBTQ+ experiences, and, possibly, people with disabilities.

Experiences of these groups are better understood by supervisors, administrators and teachers involved with policy and curriculum development, according to the Jersey Promise report. Perhaps not surprisingly, most supervisors, administrators, and teachers are overwhelmingly white. In New Jersey, 84% of teachers are white, according to Colleen O’Dea in an article in *NJ Spotlight*. (See bit.ly/2X5ep5N.)

The necessity of teaching Asian American literature is further sidelined in the classroom because of the assumption that Asian immigrant families and students don't really care about language arts; they place more value on the STEM fields—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This is another example of the model minority stereotype. From my perspective, it is for this very reason we need to pay more attention to courses such as language arts, and Asian American literature in particular.

While all teachers are responsible for supporting the social and emotional development of students, language arts teachers have an added responsibility because our subject matter is the human condition: through our study of literature we explore and analyze human fallibility and the capacity for love and forgiveness.

By showing our students of Asian heritage representations of themselves beyond cultural stereotypes or family expectations in the literature we read in the classroom, we are caring for their psychological health: we are telling them their lives are part of the American literary imagination, they are part of the story of this country. In districts that have a high immigrant population, reading stories of the immigrant experience in America with students helps with their identity formation and social-emotional learning. Immigrant students see that Asian American protagonists are flawed, struggling with family expectations and the process of becoming American, such as Jhumpa Lahiri's book *The Namesake*, which I will discuss below.

If students of Asian heritage stray from family expectations of entering a STEM field, they will have alternative models to forge other paths. A teacher who taught into her 70s said to me that

literature is a stage on which students are given imaginative space to practice and think critically about real-life situations.

Asian and Asian Americans are IT professionals, scientists, doctors, professors *and they are also* poets, painters, filmmakers, novelists, musicians, critics, historians, journalists, actors, chefs, and so much more. Some are both.

In my American literature class I include Amit Majmudar's poem “Dothead,” a poem in which a middle schooler makes the eponymous racial epithet a mark—with the help of a dollop of cafeteria ketchup—of self-empowerment. I make sure students know that the writer is a poet and practicing physician.

A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, MULTICULTURAL APPROACH

There is a pedagogical approach that addresses the needs of students of this generation across the country: culturally responsive teaching. This pedagogy had an earlier incarnation and was originally called multicultural education. This method is essential for teachers to implement for this generation of students—Generation Z or zoomers—because, as mentioned earlier, this generation is part of the most racially and ethnically diverse generation in our nation.

Multicultural education has its origins in the hard work of the Civil Rights Movement. Civil rights activists and educators recognized that educational institutions were “among the most oppressive and hostile to the ideals of racial equality,” according to Paul C. Gorski of Hamline University. (See bit.ly/2WC5zvW.)

Essential to culturally responsive education is teacher training, and there is no better way than through what language arts teachers love the most: literature. Rudine Sims Bishop, who is considered the mother of multicultural children's literature, says that books are like windows that allow us a glimpse into the lives of others. Books can also become sliding doors that allow us to imaginatively step into lives different from our own. And when the light is right, Bishop notes, the window can become a mirror.

In that reflection, “we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience,” Bishop said in an article by Robin Chenoweth on Ohio State University’s website. (See bit.ly/2WBJ7T8.)

Pamela Mason, senior lecturer in Education at Harvard University, explains, “When you add in the fact that teacher training hasn’t always included work about race and identity, or even about addressing cultural assumptions, it becomes easy to see how adding diverse books to the curriculum can seem like treacherous territory.” (See bit.ly/3zwUevd.)

Professional development workshops where teachers read and unpack diverse texts using an anti-racist lens will allow teachers to see Asian students as neither invisible nor as quiet and obedient model minorities nor in the racial language and stereotypes the teacher grew up with and never examined.

Only from a well-trained, conscientious teacher will students be able to develop in the classroom the educational groundwork to understand their history and how they can create space for themselves in the story of this country.

You might find it surprising that this way of thinking about education predates even the Civil Rights Movement and, according to Lawrence Blum, professor emeritus of philosophy at Boston University, was expressed in a 1933 book called *The Mis-Education of the Negro* by Carter Woodson, who planted the seed that flourished into what we know today as African American History Month.

Woodson’s educational philosophy shows us that there have always been conscientious educators in this country, but their influence has often been relegated to academic conversations. It is time teachers change this and implement these American ideals directly in the classroom.

“

It is time for high school students to see the stories of Asian Americans as part of America’s multicultural literary heritage.

INTERSECTIONS OF IDENTITY WITHIN DISTRICTS

The solution for any American literature curriculum revision is to start with the needs of your own district. Look at your demography and choose literature that represents the students you teach—this is not hard in American literature.

In my teaching, it is important to make sure I include the South Asian and Chinese experiences. This also means that since there is a small percentage of students whose parents recently immigrated from Kenya, Uganda, and other parts of Africa, as well as students whose parents recently immigrated from the Caribbean, the Black American experience needs to take into account this added complexity to Black identity. Teachers need to also recognize that white identity, too, is complex. For example, there is a small population of students from Ukraine, Romania, Germany and other European countries in my classroom. A question worth exploring with students is: What happens to cultural identity when students of European background enter the white mainstream?

High school students want to talk about identity. And wouldn’t it be remarkable if we could bring in works by multiracial Americans? This inevitable mixing in our nation of immigrants was recorded in an early book of the republic, *Letters from an American Farmer*. In the book, America’s first bestseller, the author Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur describes the intermarriage among European settler colonizers. He goes on to say, “The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas and form new opinions.” As American teachers, we too must form new ideas and opinions because the student population in our classroom is changing.

Finally, once the demography of students is recognized, bring in voices not represented by the student body so that the young minds in your classroom gain a fuller picture of a multicultural America.

TEACHING LITERATURE THEMATICALLY

Teach American literature thematically rather than chronologically because the blooming of multicultural literature begins post-1970s. Avoid inadvertently teaching American literature in a segregated manner: a unit on the Black American experience, a second unit on the Native American experience, a third unit on the Latinx experience. Instead, bring multiple perspectives together around a central theme.

A wonderful combination to explore the theme of ignominy would be Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* with Zora Neale Hurston’s *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and the first chapter from Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*, “No Name Woman.”

Another wonderful combination would be F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby* with

Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* to expand the conversation about the American dream.

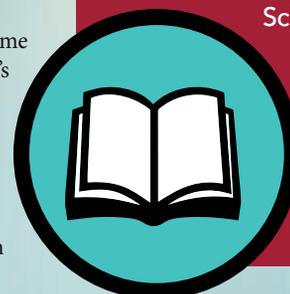
Include images that dignify early Americans. That means in addition to including images of Crèvecoeur, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and Nathaniel Hawthorne, include images of Phyllis Wheatley, William Apess, Tecumseh, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois. I am only now beginning to find images of early Asian Americans that give them dignity—the images are there but finding them takes some digging.

Teach American literature by reminding students of the context in which the material was written. For example, when my students were comparing Booker T. Washington’s 1895 “Atlanta Compromise” speech and W.E.B. Dubois’s “Of Our Spiritual Strivings,” the first chapter from his immensely influential 1903 book *The Souls of Black Folk*, I reminded them that at the beginning of the 20th century, there were immigrants arriving from Italy and Eastern Europe, there were Jews fleeing pogroms in Russia, there were Irish and Chinese immigrants helping build the transcontinental railroad and making lives for themselves, and Punjabis were beginning to arrive in California to work as farm laborers.

It is time for high school students to see the stories of Asian Americans as part of America’s multicultural literary heritage. The George Floyd protests and the rise in anti-Asian racism because of the ongoing COVID pandemic make a multicultural approach to teaching American literature more necessary than ever. Let’s make this our resolve for this second pandemic school year. 🌏

Recommended literature

For a list of titles in various genres recommended for high school students feel free to see my list titled “Ms. Kumar’s Curated List of Asian, Asian American, and Pacific Islander Literature for High School Language Arts Curricula.”



You’ll find it at <https://bit.ly/kumar-list>.

CARDONA, PRINGLE ELEVATE LABOR MANAGEMENT COLLABORATION IN DELRAN

New Jersey Public School Labor-Management Collaborative
gets national attention

By Patrick Rumaker, NJEA Review editor

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and NEA President Becky Pringle visited Delran High School in Burlington County on Sept. 8 for a closer look at a program they hope will take root nationwide. Delran Superintendent Dr. Brian Brotschul and Delran Education Association (DEA) Secretary Kathleen McHugh led a socially distanced panel discussion to present their experience as part of the New Jersey Public School Labor-Management Collaborative (NJPSLMC).

Demonstrating the breadth of that collaboration, the panel consisted of DEA leaders and Delran Public Schools administrators and school board members, and leaders from statewide education stakeholder groups including NJEA, the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, and the New Jersey Association of School Administrators.

Saul Rubinstein, a professor in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations who coordinates the state's collaborative, also spoke on the panel.

"What better way to discuss the potential of our country's education system than to find systems that do it well together," Cardona said. "The work that you are doing to collaborate, to engage with partners to pursue success is being noticed, and we want to replicate it because we know it works."

Pringle said that she had urged Cardona to come to Delran to see the program, insisting that what is happening in the New Jersey's collaborative program, as exemplified in this South Jersey

community, can be brought to scale nationwide. She emphasized the value of labor management collaboratives for student achievement and for building a culture of equity in schools for children and adults.

"When adults in the system work together, we can be worthy of our children," Pringle said.

But NEA is doing much more than showcasing the program to the U.S. secretary of education. NEA has provided NJEA with a \$500,000 grant to help expand the NJPSLMC in New Jersey and is offering additional funds to help other interested state and local associations across the nation plan and launch partnerships that foster labor-management collaboration practices in districts and worksites. NEA has committed to invest more than \$3 million over three years to fund and grow the initiative.

EDUCATOR VOICE AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Prior to the panel, DEA President Amy Yodis explained that Delran is in its sixth year participating in the NJPSLMC. Over the course of those six years, and especially in the last three years, they have figured out what works best for Delran, she said.

"We're seeing increased student achievement and people on the front lines are really feeling valued and that their voice matters," Yodis said.

In Delran, leadership teams in each school meet monthly. A district-level team also meets monthly. McHugh explained that DEA members voices have had a direct impact on the district at a practical level.

"We've had a lot of voice with professional development, for rollout of curricula, and we've

been able to be very intentional with what happens across grade spans—what makes an initiative a success with pre-k to second grade versus what makes an initiative successful in middle or high school," McHugh said. "We've been able to set up lab sites and pilots for things before we dig in and invest as a district—whether it be a new curriculum or something of that nature."

McHugh noted that the school leadership and district leadership teams have been able to look at the "collateral impact" of decisions so that they can ensure that members' and students' needs are being met. She said the collaboration enables schools to remove obstacles to teaching and learning that might not otherwise be easily noticed when the voices of teachers and educational support professionals are not put at the center of decision-making.

McHugh explained the roles of the school-level teams and the district-level team.

"The goal for the school teams is to be very independent decisionmakers for what works in their schools—they look at what their opportunities are, their goals for improvement and what that looks like for their particular school," McHugh said. "The district level team looks at ways to support the school teams. And the district leadership team is also looking at those umbrella issues that impact everyone."

Yodis added that each school leadership team may have the same processes, but each one works somewhat differently depending on what works best for them.

During the last two years, as the COVID-19 pandemic became the focus, Delran's participation in collaborative processes gave the association and the district a head-start in its response.

Patrick Rumaker is the editor of the NJEA Review. He can be reached at prumaker@njea.org.



Education Secretary Miguel Cardona and NEA President Becky Pringle at a press conference outside Delran High School following the event. Credit: Savaria Photography

“The structures were already there, the trust and relationships were already there, the transparency was already there, and that whole philosophy of being committed to each other’s success was there,” McHugh said. “We were committed to the success of our administrative team in that process, and they were on board to ensure that our association was successful—they positioned our leadership and our members to succeed for each of the things that we had to navigate during COVID.”

McHugh is quick to add that it was still a stressful year, but that the structures that existed through the labor management collaborative enabled the association and district to communicate effectively, troubleshoot concerns and have a unified message. She hopes that as the schools move into another year affected by COVID, the collaborative teams can move to a focus on academics rather than the operations focus required to respond to the pandemic.

“We have a real commitment to in-person instruction and our membership knows that their voice is being represented and heard,” McHugh said.

IS IT GOOD FOR KIDS?

As the formal panel began, Superintendent Dr. Brian Brotschul pointed out that in addition to the association members and administrators, the Delran Board of Education is part of the collaborative process.

“What we do on the front lines in our classrooms and in our schools has direct and immediate synergy in the way that the board functions,” Brotschul said. “And the board asked me one question about this process, the same one we administrators asked each other: ‘Is it good for

kids?’ And I’ll tell you, collaboration is good for kids—today you’re going to hear about how great it’s been on the achievement side and how great it’s been on the side of a culture of collaboration.”

Brotschul introduced Rubinstein to provide the data showing the benefit to students when collaboration among the adults in school buildings and school districts is intentional and sustainable. Rubinstein has helped coordinate the state’s collaborative, and with John McCarthy of Cornell University, has conducted research that reveals the positive impact of greater collaboration.

Rubinstein framed the “why” of partnerships between educator unions and administrations and school boards and what those partnerships mean in terms of student achievement and what they mean for teachers and staff.

“We live in a democracy, and in a democracy it’s important that all stakeholders have a voice,” Rubinstein said. “That means teachers, that means staff, that means administration, that means school boards, that means parents, that means students. This work is about giving voice to all the stakeholders in a democracy.”

The other question, he said, is whether such partnerships benefit students and teaching and learning.

Rubinstein presented three conclusions from a 2017 study of 450 schools across six states that included over 5,000 educators. The schools were surveyed to determine the level of collaboration among faculty and staff and administrators. The survey tracked student achievement on standardized tests. The study was controlled to balance out factors such as poverty to isolate the impact of collaboration among staff and administrators.

The study found that in schools where the level

of collaboration was high an additional 12.5% of students tested at or above standards in language arts. For math scores, an additional 4.5% of students performed at or above standards in schools with higher collaboration.

The study further found that when collaboration is low, teacher retention is 3.5 times lower in high-poverty schools than in low-poverty schools. But when collaboration is high, there is no statistical difference in teacher retention between high-poverty and low-poverty schools.

Through other studies conducted in 2011, 2012 and 2014, Rubinstein and McCarthy have found that formal labor-management partnerships help improve student performance, lead to more extensive communication between educators, more frequent informal communication between union representatives and school principals, and enhance learning among schools leading to the adoption of innovation from one school to another.

A SHIFT TO A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

Labor management collaboration is more than just a matter of getting together and talking. It requires intentional practices to sustain it. Speaking on the panel, McHugh noted that after about a year of enthusiastic participation with the foundational concepts of labor management collaboration, the Delran teams hit a plateau.

“Our association leadership and our district leadership came together and said, ‘it’s very important for us to have integrity in this work, and we need support from NJEA to help us over a little bit of a hump to establish structures and processes that could guide this work.’”

Assistance from NJEA, Rubinstein and other partners outside the district enabled DEA and administrators to build capacity in its schools—and even in their hallways—for a shift to a collaborative culture.

“When we first began with labor management collaboration, it was a collection of knowledge and learning how to do something, just like we do in our classrooms,” said panelist and elementary school teacher Tracey McGonigle. “Since then, we’ve been able to apply so much of what we’ve learned. We’ve become more of a culture rather than thinking of this as a strategy to ‘practice’ every day. The capacity that we’ve built upon we can see in more and more individuals across the building from our secretaries, the administration, teachers, even the students are starting to use the same language that we use—that shared language. The way that we operate on a daily basis has changed.”

Michael McHale, principal of Delran Middle School, noted that labor management collaboration had a practical impact on schedules in his building. He said that on the surface it appeared that teachers had time in the schedule for common planning and collaboration with teams of teachers on each grade level. But in reality, others, such as



From left: Pennsylvania State Education Association President Rich Askey, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona, NEA President Becky Pringle, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson, NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty, and Atlantic City Education Association Vice President and NEA Director Brenda Brathwaite.
Credit: Savaria Photography

“

The goal for the school teams is to be very independent decisionmakers for what works in their schools.

special education teachers, were left out. Labor management collaboration led to the creation of a new master schedule to address the realities of staff schedules.

“The process is just as important as the product, and Mike’s experience at the middle school illustrates that,” Brotschul said. “We’re really focusing on being intentional about every little nuance, and those nuances are informed by the front lines.”

Delran Intermediate School Principal Kimberly Clark-Hickson noted that labor management collaborative practices stress that she is not expected to have the answer to everything.

“The collaborative team that we have really provides a perspective that looks at what our students need—not only academically but also socially and emotionally,” Clark-Hickson said. “And it’s not just our certificated staff. It is everyone in the building. We value all of our voices.”

McHugh agrees.

“When we get together one of the questions that

we always ask is, ‘Who should be at the table? What lenses are missing?’” McHugh said. “Because there is value in every viewpoint—whether a custodian, a secretary, a paraprofessional, a teacher.”

STATEWIDE SUPPORT FOR DISTRICT COLLABORATION

Rubinstein asked the representatives from the statewide education stakeholder organizations to offer a headline that would tell the members of their individual associations the benefits of labor management collaboration.

“What I’m hearing today are the same messages telling me that every school board member—all 6,000 members here in this state—would benefit from this process,” said Vincent DeLucia, director/educator in residence at the New Jersey School Boards Association. “Some of those things we talk about are climate, culture, equity, social-emotional learning, relationships, and achievement for all kids and adults. That really is the foundation of the work that is happening here.”

DeLucia noted that the statewide steering committee for the NJPSLMC decided that it would model the behaviors and practices that they hope district and school level labor management teams would practice.

“We participate because we get better decisions with people who have the experience and perspective that those of us with titles might not have,” said Mark Stanwood, director of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators Residency Program. “The titles of superintendent, assistant superintendent, directors, principals—those folks with ranks and titles—can’t make the quality of decisions that we can when we ask others

who are close to the challenges at hand.”

“It takes a village, and the village likes to talk,” said Karen Bingert, executive director of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association. “Part of the benefit of the collaborative is recognizing that it is the investment of everyone in the space to accomplish what needs to be done. When it comes to the talking part of it, talk can be really negative and undermine a goal, or you can channel that energy so that the village is actually getting something accomplished.”

Bingert offered a second headline: “If you’re all in the same rowboat, no one will let it sink.”

Rubinstein noted that the NJPSLMC includes a facilitation team made up of about 15 members around the state who use the experiences in their own districts, with support from faculty at Rutgers and NJEA staff, to build capacity for labor management collaboration from district to district. He called on Karen Kevorkian, a member of the Montgomery Township Education Association to share the facilitation team’s headline.

“Educators spread the word, peer to peer, collaboration works,” Kevorkian said. She added a subhead: “We will not let each other fail.” That is our mantra. And it works from educator to educator, from educator to student, and student to student.”

She added that collaboration works because it engages the voices of everyone.

“The facilitation team moves from district to district, and we show that when educators partner with educators, when educators partner with their schools, when schools partner with one another, when the schools partner with the district, and the district with the community and beyond, we get results,” Kevorkian said.

“Collaboration works well—it’s simple, but it’s not easy,” said Glenn Kitley, president of the Delran Board of Education. “What makes it work here in Delran are three things: we all mutually respect each other, we all have confidence in each other, and the most important thing is that we all trust each other.”

NJEA Executive Director Steve Swetsky introduced NJEA President Sean M. Spiller. Swetsky noted former NJEA President Marie Blistan played a key role in the development of the NJPSLMC and was a moving force of the collaborative from its beginning. He also said that, for many years, advocacy for the things we all care about in education has often been adversarial.

“Here in New Jersey, the things that we’re doing as part of this work around labor management collaboration are about learning, re-learning, unlearning the things that many of us have been taught through years of experience,” Swetsky said. “We’re learning that there are other ways to do this work.”

Spiller continued the theme of sharing a headline around the work of labor management collaboratives.

“

*We live in a democracy,
and in democracy
it's important that all
stakeholders have a voice.*

“Educator voice positively impacting student outcomes,” was Spiller’s headline. “When we invest in this work, we know we are engaging in work that will continue after we are gone or when there are changes in the district. It’s part of who we are and what we create as part of a culture in a district. The work continues because we know the value of it. It’s built on respect. It’s built on relationships. It’s built on work that is constantly ongoing to make sure that this is successful for our students.”

SYSTEMS, NOT SUPERHEROES

Pringle recalled that when she first became a teacher in Pennsylvania she did not fully understand the broader responsibilities an educator held.

“I didn’t understand that as an educator it was my professional responsibility and my moral obligation to care about the kids beyond the confines of my own classroom, and to do that, I had to reach out to others,” Pringle said. “What you are demonstrating here is not only that you can’t do it alone, but that you don’t want to do it alone. It is that collective expertise and experience that builds your capacity and makes you so much smarter together.”

Pringle said that educators have a responsibility to take what is happening in the labor management collaborative beyond Delran and beyond New Jersey.

“I’ve been talking a lot about reclaiming public education as a common good and then transforming it into a racially and socially just and equitable system—something it was never actually designed to be—that prepares not one, not some, but every single student to live into their dreams,” Pringle said.

Pringle reiterated that the purpose of the NEA and NJEA partnership is to take quality labor management practices beyond New Jersey, based on the work being done in places such as Delran.

“That’s what you’re doing here,” Pringle said. “You are not just making a difference in the lives of the students here. You are making a difference in the lives of students whom you will never meet.”

Cardona noted that while he has seen examples of good collaboration, this NJPSLMC was the first time he had seen labor management collaboration connected to student achievement, teacher retention, teacher satisfaction, and teacher and principal efficacy.

Picking up on the idea of writing a headline to



Top: Delran Education Association leaders, from left: DEA Secretary Kathleen McHugh, DEA President Amy Yodis, former DEA President and NJREA member Marge Gessmann, DEA Vice President Ani McHugh, and DEA Treasurer Stephanie Segrest.

Bottom: NEA President Becky Pringle greets NJEA Executive Director Steve Swetsky. From left: Pringle, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller, Rutgers professor Saul Rubinstein, and Swetsky. Credit: Savaria Photography

summarize the experience of labor management collaboration, Cardona came up with two of his own.

“Systems, not superheroes,” was Cardona’s headline. “You are intentional in developing systems that will outlast you in your roles. The systems that are embedded in this district will continue over time. The beauty of it is that it will evolve over time based on who’s around the room.”

Cardona’s second headline was “Focus on the process, and the product will follow.”

Cardona said that good processes, built on trust, collaboration, and respect, lead to positive outcomes for students, teacher efficacy, a sense of belonging and a sense of shared purpose.

“When you systematize what works and you are intentional about investing resources of time and money, the outcomes improve,” Cardona said. “The resources of the American Rescue Plan are only going to go as far as the culture in which

they are embedded. If you have the same amount of money in two different districts with similar demographics, if you have a culture of continuous growth and collaboration with clear systems, you’re going to get more bang for your buck there than if you have it in a system where it’s disjointed. Intentional collaboration works, and intentional collaboration is needed in order to reach the potential that our schools have.”

Cardona concluded that it is the responsibility of districts such as Delran to memorialize the work they are doing around labor management collaboration, and it is the responsibility of the U.S. Department of Education to share it.

“You have something here that you can’t see when you walk in, but it’s critical to the success of the students in this district,” Cardona said. “Nurture that, share it and we’ll do our job to elevate it.” 📌

WELCOME TO CAMP

...WAIT I THOUGHT THIS WAS COMPUTER CLASS.

By Samantha Selikoff

Going to camp since I was 5 years old, I quickly adopted the themed days mentality when I became a teacher. “Why not make school like camp?” I thought. Let’s get rid of the “10 for 2” philosophy—that idea that you spend 10 months of the year counting down to the two months you’ll spend at camp—and make school camp themed!

Every school year I’ve looked forward to Computer Science Week. It features themed dress-up days. Why limit themed days just to spirit weeks?

Like every educator across the state, I try to make learning as fun and authentic as possible. I started by having a theme for my class each year. One year was sports themed while another was music themed. Last year, the theme was traveling around the world (virtually, that is).

THEMED DAYS

After going virtual in the spring of 2020, keeping students engaged was particularly challenging. I began doing themed days such as Disney Coding, which included block coding lessons from *Code.org*. Sports Themed Day with another sports coding lesson from *Code.org*.

I also started including prizes in the Daily Recap Form, which is my version of an exit ticket. The prizes were related to the theme or lesson during that learning cycle. You might think that prizes might get expensive, but you’d be mistaken.

FUNDING FOR PRIZES

There are many funding opportunities available. I often go to my Home School Association for grant ideas for class or event materials. Another place to try for funding is NJEA Pride Grants, We

Foundation/ Walgreens Grants, and KDP Grants. Donors Choose is another awesome resource that often provides match offers from corporations.

DONORS CHOOSE TIPS

There are many tips and tricks when starting a Donors Choose Project! First, start by creating an account with a referral link from a teacher who already uses Donors Choose. That can give your project a kickstart. My referral link can be found at the bottom of this article along with my contact information.

Keep your first project under \$600 or check out the match offers available. Print out flyers from the Donors Choose site with your link that you can post them in local coffee shops and other popular spots around your town. Add the link to your email signature to let people in your network know about upcoming projects. Always feel free to reach out to the Donors Choose team with any questions.

I’ve also created a document that offers more of those many tips and tricks about using Donors Choose. You’ll find it here: bit.ly/2W38Jsq.

Samantha Selikoff is a computer teacher at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in the Rockaway Borough School District. She can be reached at sselikoff@rockboro.org, found on LinkedIn, or followed on Twitter (@MsSelikoff).

OH! THE PLACES YOU GO AND THE PEOPLE YOU MEET

...virtually that is

Along with funding opportunities, there are many undiscovered virtual field trip opportunities for students. Within the last year we have visited New Jersey's own Yogi Berra Museum & Learning Center, the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Turtle Back Zoo, National Soccer Hall of Fame, and the Petersen Auto Museum. The Yogi Berra Museum was featured in last month's NJEA Review.

Don't forget about Pro Football of Fame, which offers free virtual programs all year long that can be accessed by emailing Jerry at Jerry.Csaki@profootballhof.com.

Along with many great virtual field trips, I have been fortunate to have had some great guest speakers who volunteered their time to come to my class, such as Luke Voit and Ken Danyeko. An NJEA Pride Grant funded our visit from Raakhee Mirchandani, who talked about her book *Super Sataya Saves the Day*.



A Shutterfly holiday greeting to thank classroom guests.

USING LINKEDIN AS AN EDUCATOR

Often people have the misconception that LinkedIn is only for people working in the corporate world. This is not the case. LinkedIn is one of my favorite resources. Though it, I get great ideas to help students have authentic learning experiences.

One of the best pieces of advice a professor once gave me was to always reach out to outside organizations. Many companies are more than willing to give back. Educators can use LinkedIn to message companies for donations or to see

if anyone would be interested in being a guest speaker. Don't just press the invite button. Instead personalize the invitation by telling the person why you want to connect with them. For instance, "Hi I'm a middle school teacher and we are currently covering the topic of graphic design. Would you be interested in being a guest speaker for 15 minutes over Zoom one class?" Remember to keep your invitation wording short because like Twitter, LinkedIn invites also have a character count and limit.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION WITH CONNECTIONS

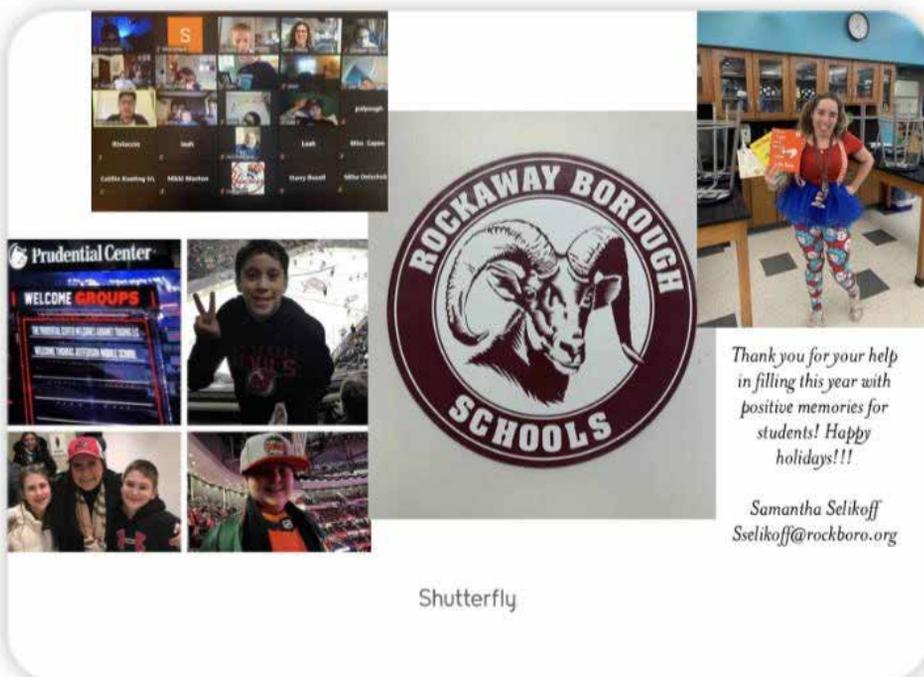
The same professor who taught me to never be afraid to ask, also taught me to always be thankful and show your gratitude. Seems like a no brainer, right? This year I created a holiday card with highlights from my class of pictures that I posted to Twitter. I used Shutterfly to have the card printed and sent them to the people with whom we connected as guest speakers and virtual field trip directors or coordinators. I have included a picture of the educator holiday card in the article.

Thank you for everything you do for your students. I continue learning every day and am often inspired by my fellow NJEA members. Toward the end of the last school year, for example, my students were able to connect with a class at Point Pleasant High School which was featured in an earlier issue of the *Review*. I really enjoyed learning about their app called DAWN in the feature article.

If there is any way we can collaborate, or if you have an idea feel free to reach to me at sselikoff@rockboro.org or connect with me on LinkedIn.

As promised here is the referral link for Donors Choose: share.donorschoose.org/37z2nW. As always feel free to follow our adventures on Twitter @MsSelikoff!

Lastly, welcome to camp! 🏕️



Shutterfly

A Shutterfly thank you to classroom guests.

Join your professional association

Connect with others in your job description

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

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

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

Find your professional organizations here.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. OF N.J. (AEANJ)

www.the-naea.org

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

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

Contact: Tim Morrow,
region2@the-naea.org

ART

ART EDUCATORS OF N.J. (AENJ)

aenj.org

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

AENJ provides quality professional development and advocates for visual

arts educators throughout the year. This includes an annual conference, lectures and workshops, publications, member and student exhibition opportunities, scholarships and grants to arts educators and their students.

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

Contact: Tamika Diaz, membership@aenj.org

BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY

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

njbtea.org

NJBTEA advocates for business/technology education and provides opportunities for professional growth leading to quality business/technology education programs.

NJBTEA offers many avenues to fulfill these purposes including, but not limited to a fall convention; conferences, workshops, tours and seminars; newsletters; award programs for students and professionals; and professional opportunities.

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

Contact: Robert Carson, njbtea@comcast.net

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

njaet.org

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

Dues: Membership is free.

Contact: Sharon Julien, sjulien@njaet.org

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

njteea.org

NJTEEA is a professional organization for K-12 design, technology, engineering, and other STEM educators that promotes the goals and objectives of technology education and technological literacy as well as STEM initiatives.

NJTEEA provides various high-impact, hands-on professional development opportunities at model schools as well as at supportive industry locations. It also provides email updates to members three to four times a month, a STEM Boot Camp in the beginning of the academic year and an annual conference and expo.

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

Contact: Frank Caccavale; Executive Director njteea@njteea.org

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS

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

atsnj.org

ATSNJ is dedicated to the advancement and improvement of the athletic training profession. It continually strives to ensure that physically active persons receive the best possible health care.

ATSNJ members receive discounted rates for the annual athletic training conference and have access to free CEU opportunities via regional meetings. ATSNJ continues to be active legislatively to ensure appropriate health care for active persons and to ensure proper protections for the profession of athletic training. Members also receive newsletters and electronic postings about athletic training and have membership only access to various areas of the ATSNJ website.

Dues: \$65; \$20 for students

Contact: Keir Livingston,
Livingstonk@atsnj.org

CLASSICAL STUDIES

NEW JERSEY CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION (NJCA)

njclassics.org

NJCA is an organization for educators working to advance the cause of classical studies, the Latin and Greek languages and the study of Greco-Roman mythology. Members are teachers from elementary grades through college in public, private and parochial schools.

Members benefits include fall and spring meetings, scholarship offerings, materials, resources, mentoring and a placement service.

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

Contact: Marlene Weiner, marweiner@aol.com

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

N.J. TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES/ N.J. BILINGUAL EDUCATORS (NJTESOL/ NJBE)

njtesol-njbe.org

NJTESOL/NJBE is the professional organization of English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education teachers for all levels. Membership is open to all educators interested in current information on educating bilingual and English language learners (ESL students).

NJTESOL/NJBE sponsors several conferences throughout the year and keeps members informed through newsletters and online discussion of hot topics in ESL/ bilingual education. The organization is very involved in advocacy/political action and collaborative activities with other professional organizations.

Dues: \$35/year; \$59/two years with the benefits of participating in the hotlist, receiving the current *Voices* newsletter and getting discounts on the conference payment. Retirees \$20/year; \$35/2 years.

Contacts: Alamelu Sundaram-Walters; asundaram22@gmail.com; Membership Chair Joan Pujol, mabbr@njtesol-njbe.org

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

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

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

Dues: \$25

Contacts: Stacey Dworzanski; njfccla@gmail.com (732) 512-7690 or (732)-452-2862 (school) or Carolyn Reynolds (609)-477-0801

GIFTED CHILDREN

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

njagc.org

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

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

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

GUIDANCE

N.J. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. (NJCEA)

www.njcea.org

NJCEA provides professional programs, services and opportunities to cooperative education coordinators and structured learning coordinators. NJCEA is at the forefront of workforce education issues, working in concert with the N.J. Department of Education, the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

NJCEA provides three membership meetings in various New Jersey locations annually, offering relevant presentations and professional development.

Dues: \$30

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

GUIDANCE

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

njceca.org

NJCECA is an organization for instructors involved in student job placement. NJCECA membership provides guidance, resources and outreach for teachers to enhance their work-study and transition programs and collaborate in program planning.

Meetings are held at sponsor sites the third Thursday of each month. Presentations are given by guest speakers to provide two hours of professional development. The meetings are fun and informative and offer an environment of camaraderie and professionalism.

Dues: \$25

Contact: Gerry Caroll, gercar@bergen.org, 201-343-6000, ext. 4603

NEW JERSEY SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSN., INC. (NJSCA)

njsca.org

NJCSA works to advance the school counseling profession in order to maximize the personal, social, educational, academic and college career readiness of each student, elementary through post secondary. It is a division of the American School Counselor Association.

NJCSA provides a bimonthly electronic newsletter, annual fall and spring professional development conferences, student and counselor recognition programs and advocacy for school counselors.

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

Contact: Jim Lukach, jimlukach@msn.com, 732-846-6468

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

THE COUNCIL OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATORS (CHE)

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

CHE provides opportunities for networking and professional development designed by teachers for teachers. On Facebook search for Council of Holocaust Educators.

Dues: None

Contact: Colleen Tambuscio, ctambuscio@aol.com, 609-292-9274

KINDERGARTEN

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

njake.net

NJAKE is an organization of kindergarten and early childhood educators. It promotes strategies to strengthen communication with the public regarding the intellectual, emotional, physical and social values achieved through developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs.

Membership provides opportunities for networking on issues and questions pertaining to early childhood education through newsletters and workshops.

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

Contact: Bonnie Gentesse, BGentesse@verizon.net, 908-377-4344.

LANGUAGE ARTS

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

njcte.org

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

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

Contacts: Denise Weintraut, Membership Chair, njctemembership@gmail.com or President Audrey Fisch, njctepresident@gmail.com.

N.J. LITERACY ASSOC. (NJLA) – (FORMERLY READING ASSN. (NJRA))

NJLA is a professional network of educators and individuals (prekindergarten to adult levels) interested in advancing literacy, promoting effective practices and encouraging appropriate assessment through advocacy, collaboration, and professional development.

NJLA provides annual conferences, workshops and opportunities for communication among educators who share common interests in literacy education.

Dues: Free

Contact: missnicolemancini@gmail.com

LIBRARY/MEDIA

N.J. ASSN OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (NJASL)

njasl.org

NJASL is a professional organization of school librarians teaching in public, private and parochial schools, prekindergarten to college level. It advocates high standards for librarianship and library programs to ensure that students and staff become effective users of information.

NJASL inspires excellence in the school library program by providing school librarians with educational opportunities and current information through workshops and a conference.

As allies and partners in teaching students, NJASL encourages teachers, administrators and other educational colleagues to join, with benefits including professional development and collegial networking.

Dues: \$65

Contact: Angela Delucci, njea@njasl.org

MATHEMATICS

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

njasl.org

For over 100 years, AMTNJ has promoted the learning and teaching of mathematics for all grade levels. AMTNJ encourages members' involvement in supporting and promoting mathematics and mathematics education. AMTNJ hosts conferences, including the Annual Two-Day Conference, New Cubed Conference, and Spring Conference, as well as additional PD opportunities, including full-day workshops, virtual PD, roundtable discussions, individualized professional development, and summer institutes. AMTNJ offers college scholarships for high school students who are interested in teaching math, facilitates middle school and high school contests, and publishes newsletters and journals to encourage, inform, and inspire mathematics educators and mathematics teacher educators.

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

Contact: Mark Russo; info@amtnj.org

MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

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

njamle.org

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

Dues: Individual annual membership is \$25. Institutional or school annual membership is \$125. Visit njamle.org for a membership application and more information.

Contact: Tina Monteleone; tmonteleone@njamle.org Follow NJAMLE on Twitter at [@njamle](https://twitter.com/njamle), and like NJAMLE at [facebook.com/njamle](https://www.facebook.com/njamle)

MUSIC

N.J. MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSN. (NJMEA)

nafme.org

NJMEA is an organization of general, choral, and instrumental music educators, prekindergarten through college in public, private and parochial schools.

The organization sponsors a variety of professional development opportunities and advocacy efforts that focus on emerging trends and issues in music education. Members' students may audition for region ensembles, as well as All-State Chorus, Orchestra, Band and Jazz Ensemble. Members may also choose to participate in other NJMEA-sponsored performance activities as applicable.

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

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

NURSES

N.J. STATE SCHOOL NURSES ASSOCIATION (NJSSNA)

njssna.org

NJSSNA provides direction for leadership and advocacy in the specialty practice of school nursing. It promotes professional and ethical standards and guidelines through research, education and communication. Members of NJSSNA include certified school nurses, faculty at New Jersey's universities charged with preparing certified school nurses, and registered nurses working in early childhood programs or in New Jersey's private and parochial schools.

NJSSNA communicates frequently with members; sponsors an annual statewide conference featuring nationally known speakers and provides timely educational programs at the NJEA Convention and throughout the year.

Dues: For a dues schedule go to www.NASN.org. Membership in NJSSNA is included

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

OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

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

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

Dues: \$20

Contact: Dawn M. Leek, President at leekd@hiltonschools.org or jeffdawnleek@gmail.com; Brigitte Walters, Vice President at bwalters@mullicschools.com

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

SHAPE NJ - SOCIETY OF HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATORS NEW JERSEY (FORMERLY NJAHPERD)

www.shapenj.org

SHAPE NJ promotes healthy active lifestyles for New Jersey's students, educators, and community members.

SHAPE NJ's annual events include a three-day convention covering all aspects of health, physical education, recreation, driver education, and dance. Annual, regional conferences include: Health Education, Physical Education, Adapted Physical Education, and Driver Education. These conferences are tailored for elementary, middle school, and high school educators. Future professionals are offered an annual conference to prepare them for entry into their profession. Members receive the FYI, a monthly e-newsletter, and may apply for mini-grants and awards.

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

Contact: Judy LoBianco; executive_director@shapenj.org; 732-918-9999

PRESERVICE EDUCATORS

N.J. PRESERVICE EDUCATORS. (NJEA)

njea.org/preservice

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

Dues: \$32

Contact: Marguerite Schroeder, mschroeder@njea.org

PSYCHOLOGISTS

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

njasp.org

NJASP is dedicated to serving and advocating for the mental health and educational growth and development of all children, the maintenance of high standards for school psychologists and the advancement of the profession.

NJASP offers two professional development conferences (winter and spring), regional workshops, a quarterly newsletter and updates on political and current trends.

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

Contact: NJASP.membership@gmail.com

RETIRED EDUCATORS

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

njea.org/njrea

NJREA, the state's largest and oldest—102 years old!—retiree organization, promotes the professional, economic and social well-being of retired educators and support professionals under a unified dues agreement with NJEA, NEA-Retired, and our 21 County Retired Education Associations (CREA) in New Jersey.

Annual events include fall and spring informational meetings/luncheons, a convention in Atlantic City in November, and CREA meetings and workshops throughout the year. Members receive up-to-date information on pension and health benefits through our award-winning quarterly newsletter, as well as county mailing, websites, webinars and emails. The NJEA/NEA Member Benefits program offers retirees numerous discounts on insurance, travel, and major appliance purchases. While in-person meetings are preferable, many committee and county meetings may be held virtually including the 2021 NJREA Convention. Check the NJREA website for updates: njea.org/njrea.

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

Contact: Joan Wright, NJREA President: jwright@njea.org or NJEA's Membership Division: 609-599-2352.

SPEECH/LANGUAGE

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

NJASLS advocates for students with communication disabilities that affect or have an impact upon their educational performance. Helps to secure conditions necessary for maximum efficacy of the speech language specialist. Advances the standards of the profession of speech language pathology in an educational setting. Actively promotes the interests of members. Provides professional development at the NJEA Convention.

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

Contact: Courtney Tacinelli, membership chair at njasls@yahoo.com

SCIENCE

N.J. SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSN. (NJSTA)

njsta.org

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

the NJEA Convention.

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

Contact: Guida Faria, njstapresident@gmail.com

SOCIAL STUDIES

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

njcss.org

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

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

Contact: Dayna Orlak, orlakd@waldwickschools.org

SOCIAL WORKERS

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

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

Contact: admin@njassw.org or natlcswhotmail.com

SPECIAL EDUCATION

N.J. ASSOCIATION OF LEARNING CONSULTANTS (NJALC)

newjerseyalc.org

NJALC is concerned with the continuing professional development and working conditions of learning consultants in public, private, and parochial schools, as well as in private practice.

NJALC provides two conferences, regional workshops, newsletters, a journal, the Main Book Summaries, grants and a registry for LDT-Cs in public and private practice.

In addition, NJALC advocates for special education issues at the state level in affiliation with NJEA.

Dues: \$75; \$40 for retirees and students.)

Contact: Maureen Mahon, president@newjerseyalc.org

N.J. COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (NJCEC)

njcec.org

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

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

Dues: Premier membership \$205; Full \$115;

Basic \$65 a year through International CEC.

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

SPEECH AND THEATER

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

stanj.org

STANJ is the voice of advocacy for the inclusion of speech and theatre arts in educational curricula. The association includes volunteer members from K-12, college and professional theatre who are passionate about theatre education. Members attend monthly PD workshops and presentations at the NJEA Convention. Their students may participate in the Governor's Awards Theatre competition in the areas of Monologues(*), Scenes(*), Improvisation(*), Musical Theatre, Stage Management, VPA(*), Character Analysis, Pantomime, Shakespeare, Communication Media Arts, Best Play & Musical. First-place winners in (*) categories are honored with a Governor's award at a ceremony held in Trenton. Two college theater scholarships are also offered.

Dues: \$65

Contacts: President Julianna Krawiecki stanjboard@gmail.com; President Elect Danielle Miller danielle.miller@hoboken.k12.nj.us; Vice President Dan Paolucci; dcpaolucci@gmail.com

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

ASSN. OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS OF N.J. (ASAP-NJ)

asapnj.org

ASAP-NJ is an organization of individuals employed in schools, agencies or school-based programs whose functions include advocating and developing a school-based student assistance/substance awareness program. The group meets the needs of youth in the education, prevention, intervention, and referral services for high-risk behaviors, including substance abuse and violence issues. A major portion of ASAP-NJ's work in schools involves mental health issues and substance

ASSN. OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROFESSIONALS OF N.J. (ASAP-NJ) (CONT)

abuse issues—emotional, psychological support services, crisis intervention and referrals to mental health facilities.

Members can attend a state conference, county monthly meetings and workshops. ASAP-NJ provides specialized training on student assistance programs, substance use prevention, mental health issues, bullying, and related topics.

Dues: \$50 yearly

Contacts: Pamela L. Felder, President;
asapnjboard@gmail.com

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

The mission of the CTEANJ is to provide educational leadership in developing a competitive global workforce by: 1. Fostering excellence in career and technical education; 2. Advocating national, state and local public policy to benefit career and technical education; 3. Acting as a clearinghouse for education and information relating to all aspects of career and technical education, while providing access for professional development through programs, workshops, conferences, services and opportunities that will ultimately benefit all students; 4. Creating public awareness of career and technical education and its importance in developing a competitive global workforce.

CTEANJ hosts an annual scholarship program and members may nominate deserving career and technical education students. Thanks to unification with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), members receive additional benefits, including trade publications, national advocacy for career and technical education, legislative updates and the opportunity to attend national CTE conventions.

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

Contact: John Neyhart, jneyhart@gmail.com or jneyhart@ctemc.org

WORLD LANGUAGES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATORS OF N.J. (FLENJ)

flenj.org

FLENJ represents world language teachers (kindergarten through college). It advances and promotes the teaching of world languages, literatures and cultures.

FLENJ offers professional development workshops as well as statewide meetings in the spring on topics of current interest to the profession and latest developments in methodology, materials and technology. It also offers mini-grants for teachers, a student video contest, an education abroad program scholarships, teacher and student award as well as senior scholarships.

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

Contact: membership@flenj.org or FLENJ, PO Box 385, Fanwood, NJ 07023-0385

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

njaatsp.org

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

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

Contact: Jay Duhl, webmaster@njaatsp.org, 973-263-7001, ext. 3359

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

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

WHY HANDLE TOUGH TIMES ALONE?

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



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To enroll, call your EIS account executive at 1-800-727-3414, Option 3, or visit www.educators-insurance.com.



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NJEA BUDGET SUMMARY

FISCAL YEAR
ENDING AUGUST 31

PROPOSED INCOME AND EXPENDITURES (EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
INCOME				
NJEA Membership Dues	\$ 123,207,053	\$ 120,308,385	\$ 122,774,185	2.05%
NEA Funds	5,712,114	7,237,500	6,924,600	-4.32%
General Income	8,323,567	1,521,215	1,874,715	23.24%
Publications	242,509	225,000	210,000	-6.67%
TOTAL INCOME	137,485,244	129,292,100	131,783,500	1.93%
EXPENDITURES				
PROGRAM SERVICES				
Governance	5,307,387	6,185,000	6,324,200	2.25%
Legal Services	12,996,632	14,283,600	14,311,700	0.20%
Organizational Activities	864,110	1,433,500	3,849,500	168.54%
Organizational Projects	12,066,320	18,500,000	6,000,000	-67.57%
Communications	6,398,949	6,760,500	6,861,200	1.49%
Government Relations	3,960,706	4,725,300	4,997,300	5.76%
UniServ Regional Offices	26,092,706	27,631,500	28,335,400	2.55%
UniServ Field Office	6,716,723	8,771,600	9,398,500	7.15%
Organizational Development	12,154,002	22,184,500	6,907,100	-68.87%
Prof Development	4,966,484	5,803,400	5,753,900	-0.85%
Research & Economic Services	5,897,623	6,772,700	7,029,200	3.79%
Conventions	2,153,817	2,963,000	3,537,000	19.37%
Organizational Mgmt	7,398,785	7,859,200	7,978,800	1.52%
ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL				
Executive Office	4,657,732	6,424,400	6,530,000	1.64%
Business and Finance	14,628,066	15,678,800	15,582,400	-0.61%
TOTAL PROGRAM, ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL EXPENDITURES	126,260,043	155,977,000	133,396,200	-14.48%
NET INCOME (EXPENSE) BEFORE USE OF FUNDS				
	11,225,200	(26,684,900)	(1,612,700)	-93.96%
USE OF FUNDS				
Current Postretirement	966,086	500,000	500,000	0.00%
Contribution - VEBA	8,368,188	7,715,100	7,387,300	-4.25%
Pension - Cash Funding Adj	(6,816,962)	(7,900,000)	(8,000,000)	1.27%
	2,517,311	315,100	(112,700)	-135.77%
NET INCOME (EXP) CASH BUDGET	8,707,889	(27,000,000)	(1,500,000)	-94.44%
ADJ BACK TO ACCR'L REPORTING				
VEBA - Cash Funding Adj	(8,368,188)	(7,715,100)	(7,387,300)	-4.25%
Contribution - VEBA	6,816,962	7,900,000	8,000,000	1.27%
	(1,551,226)	184,900	612,700	231.37%
NET INCOME (EXP) ACCR'L BASIS	10,259,115	(27,184,900)	(2,112,700)	-92.23%

NJEA OTHER FUNDS: PRIDE DUES

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
REVENUE				
Dues	\$ 12,290,045	\$ 12,078,600	\$ 12,348,500	2.23%
TOTAL REVENUE	12,290,045	12,078,600	12,348,500	2.23%
EXPENDITURES				
Communication 3650	8,114,365	8,281,300	8,348,500	0.81%
Organizing 3907	4,349,490	3,797,300	4,000,000	5.34%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	12,463,855	12,078,600	12,348,500	2.23%
INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS	(173,810)	0	0	0.00%

COMPARATIVE INCOME (EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
DUES INCOME				
Active Professional	\$ 105,815,594	\$ 103,540,800	\$ 105,639,600	2.03%
Active Supportive	16,581,073	16,037,900	16,404,900	2.29%
Retired Members	793,713	713,510	713,510	0.00%
General Members	4,250	2,500	2,500	0.00%
Subscribing Members	1,000	500	500	0.00%
Preservice Members	11,424	13,175	13,175	0.00%
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP DUES	123,207,053	120,308,385	122,774,185	2.05%
NEA FUNDS				
Uniserv Grant	2,804,988	3,128,500	3,085,600	-1.37%
Uniserv Option Program	382,199	404,600	399,000	-1.38%
Legal Defense (DuShane)	2,043,169	3,250,000	3,250,000	0.00%
Legal Fee Reimbursements	38,410	100,000	100,000	0.00%
Member Benefits Grant	82,691	90,000	90,000	0.00%
Cooperative Projects	358,000	264,400	0	-100.00%
Travel Expense Reimb	755	0	0	0.00%
Preservice Reimbursement	1,902	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL NEA FUNDS	5,712,114	7,237,500	6,924,600	-4.32%
GENERAL INCOME				
Convention Exhibits & Fees	498,405	482,000	341,500	-29.15%
Interest & Investments	7,140,649	0	500,000	0.00%
Conference & Workshop Fees	418,528	755,000	807,000	6.89%
Teacher Leader Academy	90,000	215,000	156,000	-27.44%
Member Benefits Income	101,136	30,000	30,000	0.00%
Miscellaneous	74,848	39,215	40,215	2.55%
TOTAL GENERAL INCOME	8,323,567	1,521,215	1,874,715	23.24%
PUBLICATIONS INCOME				
	242,509	225,000	210,000	-6.67%
TOTAL INCOME PROJECTION	137,485,244	129,292,100	131,783,500	1.93%

NJEA OTHER FUNDS: CAPITAL ASSETS

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
REVENUE				
Investment Income	\$ 4,087,836	\$ -	\$ 500,000	0.00%
TOTAL REVENUE	4,087,836	0	500,000	0.00%
EXPENDITURES				
Capital Assets	4,521,593	3,466,700	2,424,700	-30.06%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	4,521,593	3,466,700	2,424,700	-30.06%
INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS	(433,757)	(3,466,700)	(1,924,700)	-44.48%

NJEA OTHER FUNDS: DISASTER RELIEF FUND

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
REVENUE				
Contributions	\$ -	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	0.00%
Contrib from Member Benef Fund	15,000	0	0	0.00%
TOTAL REVENUE	15,000	325,000	325,000	0.00%
EXPENDITURES				
Relief Fund Expenditures	300	325,000	325,000	0.00%
Direct Financial Assistance	15,000			0.00%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	15,300	325,000	325,000	0.00%
INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS	(300)	0	0	0.00%

**PROPOSED EXPENDITURES
(EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)**

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
GOVERNANCE				
Executive Committee 0400	\$ 2,792,895	\$ 3,150,000	\$ 3,284,000	4.25%
Delegate Assembly 0410	176,693	283,500	283,500	0.00%
Elections 0430	299,185	335,000	335,000	0.00%
Officers 0440	1,768,753	1,952,600	1,969,000	0.84%
Committees 1400	269,860	463,900	452,700	-2.41%
TOTAL	5,307,387	6,185,000	6,324,200	2.25%
ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES				
Organizational Activities 0470	626,592	1,028,500	3,444,500	234.91%
Human/Civil Rights and Equity 0450		175,000	175,000	0.00%
Equity Alliance Conference 0455	237,518	230,000	230,000	0.00%
TOTAL	864,110	1,433,500	3,849,500	168.54%
ORGANIZATIONAL PROJ 0471	12,066,320	18,500,000	6,000,000	-67.57%
LEGAL SERVICES PROG 0465	12,996,632	14,283,600	14,311,700	0.20%
ORGANIZATIONAL MGMT 0565	7,398,785	7,859,200	7,978,800	1.52%
COMMUNICATIONS				
Communications Office 0600	4,599,535	4,925,100	5,024,000	2.01%
Other Services 0605	31,067	97,000	99,000	2.06%
A/V Programs 0610	4,606			0.00%
Consultants 0615	142,839	206,400	206,400	0.00%
Media Relations 0620	118,626	165,000	165,000	0.00%
Public Relations 0630	275,090	41,200	41,000	-0.49%
Electronic Communications 0645	1,099			0.00%
Review 0660	1,226,087	1,325,800	1,325,800	0.00%
TOTAL	6,398,949	6,760,500	6,861,200	1.49%
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS				
Gov Relations Office 0700	3,481,363	3,870,300	3,994,500	3.21%
Legislative Field Proj 0720	455,377	824,000	864,000	4.85%
Legislative Publications 0730	23,967	31,000	31,000	0.00%
Consultants 0740		0	107,800	
TOTAL	3,960,706	4,725,300	4,997,300	5.76%
UNISERV PROGRAM REGIONAL OFFICES				
Regional Offices 0899	23,918,426	25,190,900	25,923,300	2.91%
01 Galloway 0800	166,812	167,600	171,600	2.39%
02 Mullica Hill 0805	153,925	189,000	195,300	3.33%
03 Voorhees 0810	145,692	147,200	149,100	1.29%
05 Morrestown 0815	71,013	71,000	74,800	5.35%
07 Toms River 0820	135,875	128,700	129,700	0.78%
08 Trenton 0823	6,481	12,100	12,100	0.00%
09 Wall Twp 0825	164,061	166,600	157,600	-5.40%
11 Edison 0830	210,273	204,100	237,900	16.56%
13 Flemington 0835	127,534	129,100	132,200	2.40%
15 Cranford 0840	89,798	240,400	152,100	-36.73%
17 Parsippany 0845	57,343	67,300	69,700	3.57%
19 W. New York 0850	91,463	85,500	90,900	6.32%
20 Jersey City 0852	145,882	147,800	147,600	-0.14%
21 Livingston 0855	177,321	185,600	189,500	2.10%
23 Emerson 0860	69,812	36,000	33,000	-8.33%
25 Hasbrouk Hgts 0865	137,314	209,600	214,200	2.19%
27 Wayne 0870	104,004	119,100	118,400	-0.59%
28 Stanhope 0873	112,003	123,300	126,100	2.27%
29 Higher Ed 0875	7,675	10,600	10,300	-2.83%
TOTAL	26,092,706	27,631,500	28,335,400	2.55%
ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:				
Organizational Dev Office 0900	3,222,645	3,719,300	3,809,700	2.43%
Organizational Dev Program 0905	289,302	395,000	410,000	3.80%
Active Supportive 0910	318,810	349,500	358,200	2.49%
FAST Program 0915	37,792	80,000	80,000	0.00%
Conference Expenses 0920	281,409	353,800	362,700	2.52%
ESP & Inclusive Org 0930	5,611	51,200	51,200	0.00%
Strategic Organizing 0935	7,641,151	15,543,500		-100.00%
NJEA Preservice 0945	31,423	98,000	98,000	0.00%
Summer Leadership Conf 0955	12,725	961,200	1,018,800	5.99%
Leadership Operations 0965	4,481	37,000	37,000	0.00%
New Member Orientation 0975	150,643	205,000	256,500	25.12%
Membership Recruitment 0977	3,094	50,000	30,000	-40.00%
Membership Promotion 0980	154,917	231,000	235,000	1.73%
Members of Color Initiative 0985		110,000	160,000	45.45%
TOTAL	12,154,002	22,184,500	6,907,100	-68.87%

	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Prop Budget	Budget Variance
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT				
Prof Develop Office 1000	\$ 3,488,354	\$ 3,873,500	\$ 3,965,100	2.36%
PD Learning 1005	172,534	272,000	201,000	-26.10%
PD Capacity Bldg 1010	125,969	186,900	200,000	7.01%
Training Consultants 1075	895,676	786,000	393,000	-50.00%
ACCESS Program 1080	154,109	210,000	578,800	175.62%
Teacher Leader Academy 1085	121,939	215,000	156,000	-27.44%
Prof Development Conf 1097	7,903	260,000	260,000	0.00%
TOTAL	4,966,484	5,803,400	5,753,900	-0.85%
RESEARCH & ECONOMIC SERVICES				
Research Office 1100	5,479,160	5,980,700	6,022,200	0.69%
Research Services 1105	122,359	335,500	335,500	0.00%
Member Benefits 1110	285,591	441,000	481,000	9.07%
Research Conference 1115		0	175,000	
Research Library 1120	10,513	15,500	15,500	0.00%
TOTAL	5,897,623	6,772,700	7,029,200	3.79%
UNISERV FIELD				
Uniserv Field Directors 1200	2,761,598	2,991,000	3,916,100	30.93%
Uniserv - South 1201	5,487	9,200	11,000	19.57%
Uniserv - Central 1202	4,248	4,000	6,100	52.50%
Uniserv - Northwest 1203	5,076	10,900	13,000	19.27%
Uniserv - Northeast 1204	7,928	14,500	16,400	13.10%
Uniserv Field Program 1205	273,344	581,200	582,900	0.29%
Field Conferences 1220	166,030	175,000		-100.00%
Field Consultants 1240	2,458,835	2,590,600	2,590,600	0.00%
Strengthening Locals 1250	363,976	1,072,800	940,000	-12.38%
Higher Education 1260	31,012	102,400	102,400	0.00%
Leadership Operations 1265	639,188	1,220,000	1,220,000	0.00%
TOTAL	6,716,723	8,771,600	9,398,500	7.15%
CONVENTIONS				
NJEA 1095	1,781,833	1,901,000	2,350,000	23.62%
NEA 0475	371,984	1,062,000	1,187,000	11.77%
TOTAL	2,153,817	2,963,000	3,537,000	19.37%
ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL				
Executive Office 0435	3,281,390	4,636,400	4,681,500	0.97%
Administration 0460	1,286,561	1,588,500	1,646,000	3.62%
Personnel 0480	89,781	199,500	202,500	1.50%
TOTAL	4,657,732	6,424,400	6,530,000	1.64%
BUSINESS & FINANCE				
Business Office 0500	8,464,626	9,357,000	9,443,100	0.92%
Accounting 0510	6,203	6,000	6,000	0.00%
Contract Obligations 0515	1,519,198	800,000	800,000	0.00%
Computer Center 0520	1,781,007	2,294,000	2,091,000	-8.85%
Membership Processing 0530	257,391	309,800	309,800	0.00%
Headquarters Operation 0540	1,980,076	2,215,000	2,182,000	-1.49%
Mail Room & Production 0550	162,640	182,000	202,000	10.99%
Financial Admin Fees 0580	142,228	160,000	150,000	-6.25%
Insurances 0585	314,697	355,000	398,500	12.25%
TOTAL	14,628,066	15,678,800	15,582,400	-0.61%

Mercury-laced floors don't belong in schools

By Dorothy Wigmore

“One, two, three, four. We don’t want the mercury floor.”

That’s essentially the message more and more New Jersey school staff, their union and community-based advocates are delivering to school districts. They’re finally getting traction after beating the drum for at least four years.

The North Plainfield School District removed the middle school’s rubberized gym floor this summer, following a two-year campaign led by the North Plainfield Education Association (NPEA). That effort was buoyed by NPEA members remaining organized, engaged and focused.

NPEA President Theresa Fuller brought in the New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC), a constant NJEA partner, for assistance. Fuller, the NPEA Health and Safety Committee, WEC, and

then NJEA President Marie Blistan participated in a health and safety walk-through of the gym.

Ultimately, the flooring was tested and a plan to remove the flooring was developed.

“Our members’ advocacy really made the difference,” Fuller said. “We stood together, we spoke up, and we educated the community.”

NPEA and North Plainfield School District administration are now working together to make sure that students, staff and community members who use the middle school gym are safe.

The Garfield schools district is spending \$400,000 to remove flooring in one gym where mercury vapor levels were 16 times higher than the state’s maximum. New Jersey’s level of 0.8 µg/m³ (micrograms per cubic meter) is 13 times higher than California’s 0.06 µg/m³, undercutting

the state’s claim that their level protects young children and others. There is no national standard.

The New Jersey Schools Development Authority (SDA) mercury flooring initiative continues. It started last year with inspections of more than 140 SDA-delivered projects to find where the flooring was installed. Where they found poured rubberized floors, they did bulk sample testing. For a small percentage, the next step was air testing. Four floors were removed this summer. The SDA—which does not cover all schools in the state—also requires a written manufacturer’s statement that floors do not contain phenylmercuric acetate (PMA) before using a rubberized floor product in a project.

Mercury can affect

- The brain (starting with tremors, people appear drunk, leading to memory loss, and more; also affects behavior and personality)
- Kidneys
- Lungs
- Eyes
- Skin
- Heart rate and blood pressure
- The fetus
- Young children more than adults



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The hazards we dealt with before the pandemic haven't disappeared

Information about the floors still is hard to get. The health department document has only a partial list of manufacturers who “may also have included mercury catalysts” in their flooring. There is no inventory about how many such floors exist, where they are, or if they're still being installed. There is no information about their current state. There is little public information about where tests have been done and their results. Nor is there state or federal government help to remove them.

THE FLOORS NEED TO GO

“Mercury floors don't belong in schools—or anywhere else,” says Heather Sorge, HSN Organizer at WEC.

HSN has a petition demanding that Gov. Phil Murphy and state legislators take immediate action to protect school staff and students from the hazard.

“We continue to demand that the state of New Jersey identify, test, and fund the remediation and removal of rubberized floors contaminated with mercury in our schools,” she says. “We also need a ban on any future installation of polyurethane/rubberized floors with mercury catalysts.”

TAKING ON MERCURY-LACED FLOORS IN A PANDEMIC

It is hard for school staff to focus on hazards like this while confronting the realities and worries of work during a pandemic.

“The hazards we dealt with before the pandemic haven't disappeared,” says Allen Barkkume, a NJ WEC industrial hygienist. “They still need attention.

“East Rutherford has just done a huge mercury flooring remediation project after managing the hazard for two years while debating how, when and if they would remove the floor,” he says. “The East Rutherford Education Association instigated the process and became part of a task force with community members to discuss what needed to be done.”

Barkkume suggests local education associations (EAs):

- Use a health and safety committee or special committee to find out if their schools have this flooring and, if so, push for its removal—this leaves local EA leaders and other members free to deal with pandemic-related and other issues.
- Talk with other local EAs about their successes and lessons learned—WEC and the NJEA can help make the connections.
- Use WEC and NJEA resources to guide them through the steps needed and arguments they may face.
- Support the petition to state authorities. 🗳️

WHAT'S THE WORRY?

PMA was used to make the poured polyurethane floors more pliable. With use—especially if floors are damaged—the chemical can break down, releasing toxic mercury vapor. The chemical is invisible, odorless and comes off at room temperature; the warmer it is, the more it off-gasses. Poor ventilation (especially without outside air) increases the hazard.

Mercury has a long history in the toxics world. Brain and central nervous system damage is a key hazard. Think of the “mad hatter,” who got that way thanks to the use of mercury on felt for hats. Young children—whose bodies and brains are still developing—are more easily affected. (See the box for more details.)

The problem goes beyond the floors. Once PMA breaks down, it can contaminate the surfaces beneath them. In Freehold Township, that meant the concrete base had to be removed with gym flooring before installing a new floor last summer.

When NJEA and WEC issued an alert about the floors in 2017, it was the first time most school staff, parents and communities had heard about the hazard. Only in 2020—after intense pressure from NJEA, WEC and Healthy Schools Now (HSN)—did the state health department issue guidance about how to identify the floors in schools and next steps if mercury is found. It has specific requirements about testing but only says removing floors is an option, along with not using the space or providing increased ventilation.

Resources

NJEA Review, March 2019

“Get the Word Out: Check Those Gym Floors for Mercury,”
njea.org/get-the-word-out-check-those-gym-floors-for-mercury

New Jersey Department of Health

Evaluation and Management of Mercury-Containing Floors in New Jersey Schools: Guidance For School Districts And Their Environmental Consultants
bit.ly/3nIXYGZ

NJEA, WEC and HSN

Mercury Hazard to Staff and Students from Rubber-Like Floors In Schools
njea.org/download/14509

New Jersey School Boards Association with NJEA, WEC and HSN

Health and Safety Guide: Mercury Hazard In Schools From Rubber-Like Polyurethane Floors
njea.org/download/14515

Contact Heather Sorge to get involved in Healthy Schools Now at HSN@njwec.org.

Dorothy Wigmore is a long-time health and safety specialist, trained in occupational hygiene, ergonomics, and “stress.” She has worked in Canada, the U.S. and Mozambique, focusing on prevention and worker participation to solve job-related hazards.



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THE JOURNEY OF A PRESERVICE LEADER

BY BRIAN REILLY

If you told me in high school that I would be the NJEA Preservice president, I would have thought you were crazy. I did not know what NJEA Preservice was at the time. The idea of being president of a statewide preservice educator union was the furthest thing from my mind. Now I am proudly serving as the president of NJEA Preservice members throughout New Jersey. But while I did not perceive it at the time, my path to this leadership position started back in high school.

My first involvement in the union started in my senior year of high school when I noticed all my teachers wore red every Wednesday. After a few weeks of wondering, I decided to ask why this was the case. I found out this was a part of the Red for Ed movement NJEA was organizing to end Chapter 78.

As a future educator, I knew I had to step up and help them out. From that Wednesday forward, I wore red almost every Wednesday for the rest of the year. There was not much more I could have done at the time, but I knew once I graduated college, I was going to get more involved.

As a college freshman, I looked for various clubs to possibly join. I stumbled upon the Seton Hall chapter of NJEA Preservice. I barely even knew what preservice meant at the time, but I knew NJEA was the same union my high school teachers were a part of, so I knew I had to join.

After joining, I was given the opportunity to attend the NJEA Convention. What an experience that was! Walking through the convention floor and walking into the convention hall seeing Marie Blistan, who was NJEA's president at the time, fire up a crowd of members left me awestruck. I knew I had to get more involved, and I did.

I applied to be an ambassador for NJEA Preservice and was accepted. The following year I became the Preservice NJEA Relations chair, and now I am president. All it took for me to get involved was a desire to do so. Any NJEA Preservice member can do the same.

After telling people I am the president of NJEA Preservice, they usually ask what I do in that role. Being president includes collaboration among my fellow NJEA Preservice members as well as many NJEA members already employed in school districts. The preservice leadership team consists of a vice president and secretary, as well as six chair positions covering matters such as membership, NJEA relations, and political action. We have monthly meetings as a team and also serve on NJEA committees.

This past school year NJEA Preservice also held virtual workshops monthly on a wide range of topics. We also hosted several virtual game nights each semester. Events like these help us bring in new members to join NJEA Preservice. One of our goals is to grow leaders so once preservice members graduate college, they can make a big impact in their local teacher unions.

As president, I serve as the preservice voice to multiple committees, one of which is the NJEA PAC Operating Committee. This committee meets to vote on endorsement recommendations for elected office. This year the governor's seat as well as all seats in the Statehouse are up for election. This led to many recommendations being made for legislative districts, including Democrats and Republicans, as well as a unanimous endorsement of Gov. Phil Murphy for reelection.

The president of NJEA Preservice also has a

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It all started with just a red shirt and a desire to support my teachers.

seat on the NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA), the association's policy-making body. The DA meet five times per year to vote on various recommendations and to do official NJEA business including, but not limited to acting on committee recommendations. One example of this is the DA considering amendments to the NJEA Constitution following a lengthy review by members of the Constitution Review Committee. Those amendments then went on the ballot in last spring's election.

The NJEA Preservice president also serves on the NJEA Executive Committee as a nonvoting member. This committee meets monthly to discuss and decide on any recommendations put before it.

From a high school senior to the NJEA Preservice president, it all started with just a red shirt and a desire to support my teachers. All that is needed for anyone to get involved is a desire to. You could be the next NJEA Preservice president, if you put your heart into it and commit yourself to becoming a leader for all preservice members. 🙌

Brian Reilly is the president of NJEA Preservice and a student at Seton Hall University studying secondary education and mathematics.

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



Do you know that not all state-wide standardized testing was canceled last spring?

By Kristyn Corace

This past the April, the federal government agreed to New Jersey's plan for the spring of 2021 that, because of the pandemic, students should not have to endure the anxiety of standardized test taking and teachers should not have the burden of additional COVID protocols such as social distancing and use of shared materials that test administration would require.

But inexplicably, English language learners and the 1% most vulnerable population of students were STILL required to participate in testing this past May. All other students had their standardized testing postponed until the fall of 2021.

WHY? No one seems to be able to answer that question.

Despite my emails and queries to the federal and state departments of education, the governor's office, Sens. Menendez and Booker, and Legislative District 13 representatives Sen. O'Scanlon and Assembly members DiMaso and Scharfenberger, I received no response explaining why certain students with special needs were required to sit for the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment and their teachers were required to administer it.

WHAT IS THE DLM?

Students with intellectual disabilities are not excluded from state standardized testing. Section 300.160 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that "A state must ensure that all children with disabilities

are included in all general state and districtwide assessment programs."

Each district may allow up to 1% of its enrolled students to take an alternative assessment. In New Jersey, we use the DLM online assessment as that alternative.

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act that replaced No Child Left Behind, whenever a student takes a state administered standardized test, such as the NJSLA, the corresponding alternate assessment is administered to the students with intellectual disabilities. Although the tests were postponed for all other students in New Jersey, they were not for our most vulnerable students.

In April, a joint press release from statewide leaders Dr. Richard Bozza, executive director of the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, Patricia Wright, executive director of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association and Marie Blistan, then president of NJEA, stated, "New Jersey students will not have to see their instruction time interrupted to take tests that are not helpful or appropriate under current conditions." But our vulnerable students' education was disrupted in many classrooms.

Students with intellectual disabilities have the same test anxiety, worry, and concern that their general education peers do. Some of my students were visibly shaking as they took their tests. But they still had to take the test.

The DLM is administered one-on-one, seated

at a computer. The training for teachers did not change from previous years. There was very little concern for COVID safety protocols. With a picture illustrating the written instructions, the training directed the teacher to be seated immediately next to the student in front of the computer. Testing questions last from five to 15 minutes. This clearly violates the CDC recommendations for close contact as students would be given multiple test questions per day over several weeks.

Physical manipulatives are used in this testing. In years past, teachers would fill one box with these materials to use with the students during testing. I made four this year. Materials during COVID cannot be shared. So I tested four students until they completed their testing, each having their own box of materials. Afterwards, I sanitized all of the materials and let them sit out for 48 hours before using them with the next group of students. This lengthened my testing time and the testing time of the students.

While teachers are testing students one-on-one, the rest of the class must continue. We thank our paraprofessionals who kept learning going for all students as teachers worked one-on-one to administer these tests. Teachers had to write and prepare daily substitute plans for several weeks while testing took place.

It is reprehensible that the most vulnerable students, the 1% of our student population with the most complex intellectual disabilities, STILL had to participate in standardized testing during the spring of 2021 when their fellow nondisabled peers were given a reprieve because of the health and safety concerns of testing during a pandemic. It was unsafe and unfair to both students and teachers to have to complete standardized testing when it could have been postponed to the fall just like everyone else. 🙄

Kristyn Corace is a special education teacher in Middletown Township Public Schools. For the past 26 years there, she has taught a self-contained multiple disabilities class. This year she is also an in-class support science teacher for sixth grade. Currently, she is pursuing her doctorate in educational leadership with an emphasis in special education at Grand Canyon University. Corace earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in special education from Rutgers University. She can be reached through direct message on her Twitter account: @MrsCorace.

LGBTQIA + History Month

by Amy Moran, Ph. D. and Kate Okeson

WHY IS LGBTQIA+ HISTORY IMPORTANT IN SCHOOL?

October is LGBTQ History Month. This month-long observance was initiated by Rodney Wilson, a High School teacher from Missouri. Wilson, who was 29 at the time, spoke candidly to his history class and “came out” to them during a lesson on the Holocaust. This was in 1994. In the last 27 years, LGBTQ History Month has become more widely observed internationally, and those observances serve to broaden visibility of role models, opportunities to build community, and use the more widely accessible information to formally represent, and accurately reflect, the contributions of the LGBTQ+ community.

New Jersey has taken historic strides that have a positive impact on educators and students, acknowledging the specific needs of LGBTQIA+ students and identifying ways to make and keep students safer. Among the most significant are our harassment, intimidation and bullying (HIB) legislation, amendments to the Law Against Discrimination, New Jersey Department of Education transgender guidance for schools, and LGBTQ inclusive curriculum mandates.

LGBTQIA+ HISTORY IN THE CLASSROOM

LGBTQ History Month is a great time to brush up on our knowledge of LGBTQIA+ folks who have lived incredible lives, made notable contributions to society, and made our culture more interesting with their creations. Celebrating these individuals by sharing information about them in schools is one way to observe this month. We’ve included links to amazing lists of such people on our resource page for October.

But what about some ways to incorporate the idea of making history into our classes? Can we connect LGBTQ History Month with a classroom creation or lesson?

One of the critical challenges faced when introducing LGBTQIA+ history is the lack of documentation around some of our historic figures. Persecution based on an individual’s real or perceived gender identity or sexual orientation

silenced many throughout history and stands as one of the greatest barriers to identifying texts and resources that broaden the historical record.

We offer this idea: What if your classes or gender-sexuality alliances (GSAs) created and collected oral histories of their own? What if we help our students develop critical literacy skills by discovering the ways in which parts of their culture or identities aren’t (yet) being recorded? What would they like history to record about 2021-22?

For reference, Eric Marcus, creator of the “Making Gay History” podcast and book (see our resource page) has a plethora of interviews and discussions with those who witnessed and made LGBTQIA+ history. Especially for middle and high school students, excerpts or whole interviews from “Making Gay History” are a wonderful way to demonstrate that “regular people” make history, while creating inroads to discuss with your students why these stories are collected here ... and not in their textbooks.

National Coming Out Day is celebrated annually on Oct. 11. First observed in 1988, it centers on how the personal is political. “Coming out of the closet,” or living openly as an LGBTQIA+ person, is not only a courageous act to live authentically among their friends, family members, and colleagues, but also a form of activism that supports LGBTQIA+ visibility and celebration. Anti-LGBTQIA+ sentiment thrives in an atmosphere of ignorance and silence, but straight/cisgender people who know LGBTQIA+ community members are less likely to maintain oppressive views.

NJEA members considering “coming out” this year may be weighing risks and benefits, but those of us LGBTQIA+ educators who already are “out” at work can attest that there are many, many more benefits than risks.

What about job security? New Jersey’s Legislators passed the Law Against Discrimination in 1964, later adding sexual orientation (1992) and gender expression (2006). Prior to June 2020, it was legal in half of the nation to fire someone for being gay or transgender. However, last year the U.S. Supreme Court determined that protections

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“In our classrooms, we talk about being inclusive of everyone.

LGBTQ+ history is an important part of that!”
Cett Gonzalez, 3rd grade teacher, Jackson Avenue School, Hackensack Public Schools

related to sex under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 extended to sexual orientation and gender identity nationwide. Local board of education policies should reflect these laws as well.

What are some benefits of being “out” at work?

It’s common for our straight/cisgender colleagues to wear a wedding ring or have visible photos of their families on their desks at work. These small acts help demonstrate important aspects of their identities and encourage conversation about lives outside of the classroom.

LGBTQIA+ educators have not always had the same experience with affirmation, but more of us are openly identifying as members of the LGBTQIA+ community—sometimes with wedding rings and family photos—and it feels good to do so!

The energy of being closeted at work can be better directed in more fulfilling and productive ways, including creating deeper bonds with colleagues and experiencing the ease of being our full selves, even at school.

Visibility humanizes the LGBTQIA+ experience. Out, educators offer students the benefit of having queer role models. Straight/cisgender students in schools with “out” LGBTQIA+ educators have the opportunity to know and be taught by a queer adult. Queer and questioning students, who may crave affirmation of their own identities, have positive models for what “queer adulting” can look

like. Our trans youth of color especially benefit from seeing adult and elder trans people of color. They offer a vision of personal longevity when, presently, young people of color too often die tragically from violence. Having out educators supports students' understanding that LGBTQIA+ identity is just a different version of normal!

GSA's and National Coming Out Day Because you can't "see" LGBTQIA+ identity like some other identities, coming out as LGBTQIA+ happens again and again for many—each time we meet a new person or join a new space, and it can be scary every time. The good news is that many young people are already familiar with this process. Gender and Sexuality Alliance (GSA) club participants may bring attention to this event at school during morning announcements, with colorful flyers or on social media platforms. Some students may choose to come out—which takes courage!—and they deserve our congratulations and support.

Regardless of whether you, a colleague, a student, or no one at your school comes out on National Coming Out Day, it's important to establish that your classroom and your school are safe, pressure-free spaces for anyone to come out as members of the LGBTQIA+ community, if and when they choose to. 🏳️‍🌈

Connect!

- Do you have a photo to share of something in your classroom that affirms LGBTQIA+ identity?
- Are you an LGBTQIA+ person who came out to your students this year and want to share how it went?
- Would you like to share something you're planning for Indigenous People's Month in November that affirms LGBTQIA+ identities and teaches about the contributions of queer indigenous people?

We'd love to include it in future resource pages! Send to rainbowconnectionnjea@gmail.com.

Would you like to know more? Use the QR code below for more information about these topics.



Books for the month:

Troublemaker for Justice: The Story of Bayard Rustin, the Man Behind the March on Washington by Jacqueline Houtman (5-12) – Bayard Rustin was one of the most influential activists of our time as an early advocate for African Americans and for gay rights. He mentored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, teaching him about the power of nonviolent direct action.

Gay & Lesbian History for Kids: The Century-Long Struggle for LGBT Rights by Jerome Pohlen (4-8) This book offers perspective on early activism for LGBTQ rights, offering engaging personal stories, and the activities that help bring history to life.

PRIDE: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag, Rob Sanders, 2018 (K-2) – Trace the life of the Gay Pride Flag, from its beginnings in 1978 with social activist Harvey Milk and designer Gilbert Baker to its global importance.

CELEBRATE!

There are many lists of notable folks in the LGBTQIA+ community: trailblazers for civil rights as well as ordinary individuals who by virtue of being the first "out" person in their field make a huge contribution. This month, we'd like to acknowledge some LGBTQIA+ history makers serving in the current federal administration and working for all Americans.

They include:

- **Karine Jean-Pierre**, Deputy Press Secretary
- **Dr. Rachel Levine**, Assistant Secretary for Health
- **Pili Tobar**, Deputy White House Communications Director
- **Carlos Elizondo**, White House Social Secretary
- **Gautam Raghavan**, Deputy Director, Presidential Personnel Office
- **Pete Buttigieg**, Secretary of Transportation
- **Charlene Wang**, Special Assistant, Federal Highway Administration
- **Arlando Teller**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Tribal Affairs

Use the QR code to see other lists of individuals and additional ways to celebrate LGBTQ History Month!

Selected and Historic NJ LGBTQ Legislation with Impacts on Schools, Families & Youth

- ▶ **1992**
 NJ Law Against Discrimination is amended to include "affectional or sexual orientation" for employment, housing, and places of public accommodation.
- ▶ **2006**
 Law Against Discrimination is amended to include "gender identity and expression" for employment, housing, and places of public accommodation.
- ▶ **2008**
 Enhanced penalties are available for crimes committed in New Jersey with a bias based on the presumed sexual orientation and gender identity or expression of the victim, as well as sensitivity training sentencing options for judges.
- ▶ **2011**
 Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights signed into law ensuring that schools are creating a positive environment for students as well as protocols to address harassment, intimidation and bullying.
- ▶ **2013**
 In October of 2013, NJ begins recognizing and performing same-sex marriages.
 New Jersey passes legislation prohibiting conversion therapy directed at minors.
- ▶ **2017**
 NJ prohibits state-regulated health insurers, healthcare plans for public workers and teachers, and Medicaid from discriminating in providing coverage or services based on gender identity.
- ▶ **2018**
 NJ DOE issues guidance on trans students in schools including locker rooms, attendance and gradebook names/pronouns.
- ▶ **2019**
 LGBTQ Inclusive Curriculum Mandate signed into law
 Repealed the legal requirement in NJ for sex reassignment surgery on birth certificates, created a third gender category on official documents (labelled as "X") and included transgender and intersex people on death certificates.
- ▶ **2020**
 Individuals no longer need a doctor's note to change the gender marker from M to F or F to M for individual's driver licenses and I.D.s across New Jersey.
- ▶ **2021**
 NJ law prohibits long-term care facilities from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, intersex status, or HIV status
 Passes legislation requiring diversity and inclusion courses throughout K-12 education

STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA welcomed **MICHAEL MANNION** on June 30 to full-time NJEA staff as a UniServ field representative in the Region 7 office in Toms River. Mannion had been an English teacher at Central Regional High School in Ocean County for 14 years. From 2013 to 2020 he was the president of the Central Regional Education Association. In addition, since 2015 he had served as a part-time NJEA UniServ consultant in the Region 7 office.

Mannion holds a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University. He also holds a bachelor's degree in teacher education and a master's degree in education, both from Stockton University. Mannion lives in Manahawkin with his wife, Monica, and their children, Braden and Caleb.



NJEA welcomed **CINDY MATUTE-BROWN** on June 15 to full-time NJEA staff as an associate director in the NJEA Office of Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Matute-Brown had worked as a program liaison at the New Jersey Department of Education in the Office of Charter and Renaissance School since 2019. She was tasked with overseeing the compliance and probationary status of charter schools throughout New Jersey.

Prior to 2017, Matute-Brown worked for 19 years at the Jersey City Golden Door Charter School where she was founder and president of the Golden Door Charter School Education Association. She is a graduate of the NJEA Bolivar S. Graham Practicing Apprenticeship program. She also served as a part-time UniServ consultant at the Region 15 office in Cranford from 2018 to 2019. Matute-Brown was elected in 2018 to the West Orange Township Council where she currently serves as president. Matute-Brown holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University where she majored in English literature and women and gender studies and minored in criminal justice.

She resides in West Orange, New Jersey with her husband of 28 years, Stephen. They have three successful adult children, all proud products of New Jersey public schools.



NJEA congratulates **JAIME VALENTE** on his promotion to manager in the NJEA Office of Membership on May 14. Prior to his promotion, Valente served as a field representative in the NJEA Organizational Development Division, the position he held since first being hired to full time staff in February 2018. He had previously been employed as a part-time consultant in the same office since 2015.

Valente has over 12 years of teaching experience in public education. He had been employed as the director of performing arts at the Teaneck Community Charter School since September 2009. Prior to that, he worked as an educator in the Penns Grove in Salem County, Monroe Township Gloucester County, and Newark in Delaware. As an NJEA member, he served as president of the Teaneck Community Charter Education Association and was chair of the NJEA Public Charter School Members Work Group.

Valente holds a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's degree in teacher leadership, both from Rowan University. He lives in Springfield with his wife, Brittney Hamilton.

ADVOCATING FOR THE PROFESSION EARLY IN YOUR CAREER

BY ELLEN BACON



Early Career Network

For most early career educators, the concept of political action may seem daunting. Many of us have been told “fly under the radar” or “keep your head down” until we achieve tenure. But just because we are public employees does not mean that we shouldn’t have a voice.

One may ask, “why spend time concerning myself with politics?” I understand that the passion we have for teaching or serving students may blind us to the power elected officials have over what happens in our schools, but education is an inherently political career. Our livelihoods, standards, and working conditions are all determined by the elected and appointed government officials on the local, state and national levels. If we apply the same passion we have for planning engaging lessons, caring for students’ needs, and fostering their developmental and academic growth to political issues concerning public schools, the students are the winners in the end.

There is a misconception in our society that educators should be martyrs. Advocating for school funding, safe working conditions or collective bargaining improves public education. When educators are thriving, students are thriving. This article serves to offer suggestions to members that may be hesitant to draw attention upon themselves through political action. There are many ways to practice citizenry without fear of retaliation.

Ellen Bacon, a member of the NJEA Early Career Educators Network, is a special education teacher at Pond Road Middle School in Robbinsville.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

The first step into political action is knowing your rights in and out of school. Districts are not allowed to discriminate based on protected classes such as race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and others. However, educators carry the responsibility to comply with district contracts and handbooks. Various court cases have upheld the First Amendment rights of educators to free speech. (*Pickering v. BOE* [1968], *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* [1969], *Garcetti v. Ceballos* [2006]). While educators do not surrender their freedom of speech at the schoolhouse gate, those rights are strongest when they are expressing themselves as private citizens speaking on matters of public concern. Speech that might be considered political action should be reserved for outside of the classroom. (See mtsu.edu/first-amendment/article/973/rights-of-teachers.)

FIND YOUR PASSION

There are many different areas in which educators can lend their voices. It is important to pick an issue that is meaningful to you, one that you can advocate with passion. Consider curriculum, working conditions, compensation, and other public school matters when deciding how you can best advocate for public school employees and students. Once you have determined your area of interest, NJEA can provide advocacy training to support you. Visit njea.org/learning/advocacy-training.

BE A MINDFUL VOTER

Every election cycle, NJEA publishes a guide of candidates that have been endorsed by the NJEA Political Action Committee. This guide provides members with information on which candidates have pledged support for public school students and employees. One such candidate is incumbent Gov. Phil Murphy who worked closely with union leaders and public health officials during the COVID-19 pandemic in an effort to provide

uninterrupted, safe education to students across the state. When voting, it is important to consider who will work in the best interest of public schools among other issues you consider significant. See pages 32 of this edition of the *NJEA Review*.

TAKE PART IN GROUP MOVEMENTS

NJEA hosts an “Action Center that helps members in participate in campaigns, advocate for legislation, learn about events, and sign petitions. When members work together as a large group, on state or county issues they build a network of support with seasoned educators and advocates who were themselves once early educators. Most of the Action Center information can be sent directly to your email by indicating issues that are important to you.

VOLUNTEER IN YOUR FREE TIME

Groups such as the NJEA or other community-focused interest groups are glad to take volunteers that help spread the word about their organizations. Acting as an individual on behalf of one of these groups at an event can help influence constituents and candidates to support public school issues by sharing information.

CONTACT LOCAL OFFICIALS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

NJEA’s Political Action Guide offers tips for contacting government officials including the New Jersey State Legislature and State Board of Education. The guide is downloadable at actioncenter.njea.org and it recommends strategies for writing letters, making phone calls, submitting testimony during a public session, and engaging with officials on social media. You are a constituent of the elected officials in your town, state, and country. You have a First Amendment right to “petition” them and have your voices heard. 🗳️

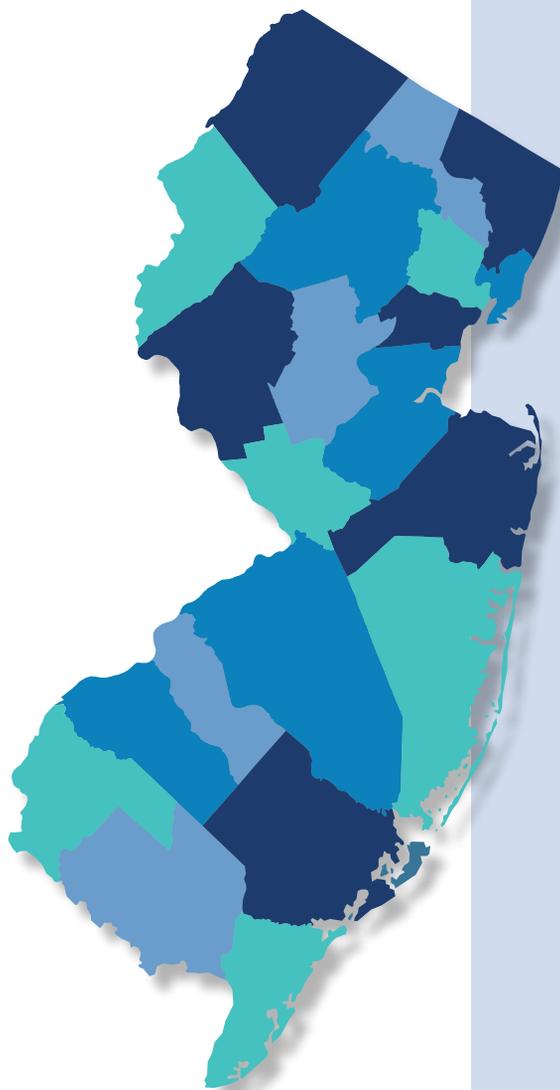
SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and
conferences

highlights

Science Convention and more

These experiences have 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 NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.



NEW JERSEY SCIENCE CONVENTION MEETS OCT. 19-20

The New Jersey Science Teachers Association, the New Jersey Science Education Leadership Association, and the New Jersey Science Convention are co-sponsoring a two-day convention on Oct. 19 and 20 at the Princeton Marriott at Forrestal. There will be over 100 workshops and 70 vendors.

On Tuesday evening the banquet speaker is Dr. William Gutsch, distinguished professor of the college of Arts and Science at Saint Peter's University. Dr. Gutsch's topic will be Science Education: A Grand Adventure Building Bridges Between the Formal and Informal Sectors.

The convention theme is Bringing 21st Century Science Skills to the Classroom—its impact on human society and impacts in New Jersey, Next Generation Science Standards and 3-D learning, science content in all areas, biology, physics, chemistry, space and Earth science and more.

A boxed lunch and snacks are included. To receive professional development hours, an evaluation of the workshops and general convention must be completed.

The registration deadline is Oct. 15. The registration fee is \$195 per day.

For more information, and to register, visit njscienceconvention.org.

MORE TO LEARN

LINKING INFORMATION ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES, ATTENTION ISSUES AND RELATED DISORDERS

A virtual conference for all

The Learning Disabilities Association of NJ (LDANJ) is a nonprofit organization of families, general and special educators, and outside professionals with the mission of sharing information and providing resources about Learning Disabilities. LDANJ and the Learning Disabilities Association of Michigan (LDAMI) are sponsoring a two-day virtual conference on Friday, Oct. 15 and Saturday, Oct. 16 for parents/families, educators, professionals, adults with LD, and students 14+ who are interested in learning more about various topics related to Learning Disabilities, attention issues, and related disorders. Over the two days there will be 12 keynotes, including the following presenters: LeDerick Horne, George McCloskey, Chris Dendy, Caroline Maguire and Nancy Mather. There will also be 52 workshops including information about dyslexia, executive function, personal stories, evaluations, IEPs, COVID-19 impact, environmental issues, college and work, anxiety, gap year, and more! Many workshops are relevant to any student and to residents of any state, but all are relevant in New Jersey. Attendees can go to one or more workshops during the day and get a certificate of attendance for up to five hours PDUs (Professional Development Units) each day. Since the conference is virtual, there is no travel and you can eat breakfast and lunch when you want.

Registration ends Oct. 13. One day admission is \$25 for LDA Members, \$50 for conference and membership, and \$75 for nonmembers. Admission for both days is \$50 for LDA Members, \$75 for conference and membership, and \$100 for nonmembers. Full conference details are on the website www.LDANJ.org Events.

To register go to

<https://LDANJMINJConference2021.eventbrite.com>.

Questions? Contact

LDAMINJConference@gmail.com or 732-645-2738.

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Username: 3386

Password: NJEA

Need help logging in?

Call 800-543-8381 (Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)

Access all this and more at [memberbenefits.njea.org!](http://memberbenefits.njea.org)



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PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS

Bergen

BCREA awarded eight \$1,000 scholarships this spring to area high school students. Waldwick High School graduates Alexis Conlon Hines and Fiona McGovern are attending East Stroudsburg University and Boston University, respectively. Morristown High School graduate Lorelei Eck attends Elizabethtown College; Wood-Ridge High School graduate Samantha Eckert attends Stevenson University; Rutherford High School graduate Ashley Hazekamp attends the University of South Florida; Lodi High School graduate Brooke Scarcella attends Monmouth University; Hasbrouck Heights High School graduate Olivia Myers attends Marist College; and Mahwah High School graduate Stephanie Lane attends Fordham University this fall.

Morris

Morris County REA awarded thirteen \$2,000 scholarships for the 2021-22 school year. All recipients of the scholarships plan to study or are currently majors in the field of education. First-year recipients of this award include Olivia Algieri and Hailey Scaff, both graduates of Hanover Park High School,

Jason Gabel, a graduate of Morris Knolls High School, Katherine Zeigler, a graduate of Chatham High School, and Olivia Scanzera, a graduate of Randolph High School.

Second-year recipients Anna Accumanno attends Kean University, Ashley Muth attends the University of Vermont, Caroline Berardo attends the College of St. Elizabeth, Katie Berger attends The College of New Jersey, Arianna Granda attends Rowan University, Nicole Kahwaty attends William Paterson University, Margaret Borinski attends University of Delaware, and McKenzie Lynch attends West Virginia University.

Salem

Salem County REA also awarded a future education major. Woodstown High School graduate Karly Pratt was selected to receive the one-year SCREA Field-Henderson \$1,000 scholarship. Karly attends Stockton University this fall.

2021-22 County REA Presidents

Each county has an affiliate of NJREA. Below are the presidents of each county REA and their email addresses.

Atlantic

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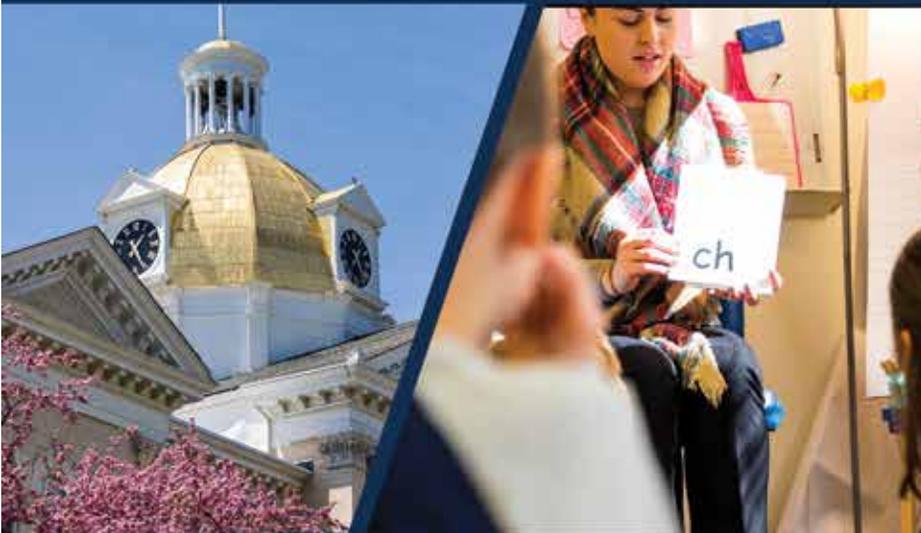
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 or contact the Graduate Admissions
 Office at 1-877-236-4723



Around the counties

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

Join **CUMBERLAND COUNTY REA** for its fall meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, Oct.13 at the Eastlyn Golf Course in Vineland. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Irene Savicky at 856-863-8424.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA'S next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 12 at Four Star Event Catering in Wenonah. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 570-710-5514.

MERCER COUNTY REA'S fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 20 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. The cost is \$20. To attend, contact Susan Karolkiewicz at 609-223-2570.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA welcomes you to its fall meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 12 at Jumping Brook Country Club in Tinton Falls. The cost is \$34. To attend, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

OCEAN COUNTY REA'S fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Oct. 28 at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. The cost is \$28. To attend, contact Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

The **SALEM COUNTY REA** will hold its fall meeting/luncheon on Monday, Oct. 18 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem. Nicki Burke, Salem County surrogate, will be the guest speaker. There is no cost for this event. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-467-0782.

WARREN COUNTY REA welcomes you to its meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, December 1 at the Hawk Pointe Golf Club in Washington. Holiday music will be the featured entertainment. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995.



Classroom Close-up NJ looks back at

Life Skills Beyond the Classroom

Special education students from Pennsauken High School volunteer to work at a local Habitat for Humanity ReStore to develop life skills and career readiness.

The students learn about community service by offering their time, strength and talent to help the greater good. This is an NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Project.



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.



OCTOBER & *beyond*

In-person status of any meeting not listed as virtual is subject to change.

OCT 13	FRIDAY NJEA Executive Committee meeting	NOV 03	WEDNESDAY NJEA Executive Committee meeting	NOV 10	WEDNESDAY Teacher Leader Academy Info Session
OCT 16	SATURDAY NJEA LGBTQIA+ Ed. Justice Forum Virtual	NOV 4/5	THURS & FRI NJEA Convention In-person and virtual	NOV 12/13	FRI & SAT NJEA Health and Safety Conference
OCT 30	SATURDAY Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit Virtual	NOV 06	SATURDAY NJEA Delegate Assembly Meeting	DEC 08	WEDNESDAY NJEA Executive Committee meeting

for more information go to [NJEA.org](https://www.njea.org)



LGBTQIA Education Justice Forum



During this virtual forum, attendees will have a chance to learn about organizations that partner with NJEA and can work with you and your school to help make our schools the safest and most inclusive in the nation for LGBTQIA+ students and staff. Join us for this empowering networking experience.

REGISTER @ [njea.org/lgbtqiaforum](https://www.njea.org/lgbtqiaforum)

October 16, 2021 10 a.m. - NOON

Let's take a vote!

It's the most natural instinct in the world. When people gather to make a decision that affects the entire group, someone invariably suggests a vote—and that's because it works. We don't turn to the biggest person in the room and ask them to decide. We don't turn to the person who owns the most land and give them all the power. And we don't all blindly follow the person whose family has lived longest in the area. Instead, we recognize the collective impact of the decision, and we make it together.

As educators, these have been challenging times. We have been guiding our students through remote learning, scientific debates, political upheaval, climate change, and social and economic justice all while helping them navigate growing up. From pre-K through higher education, we are custodians of our students' learning, regardless of our job category. We teach them through our example every day. We show them how to treat others, how to navigate change, and how to build resilience.

Political engagement has long been an important part of advocating for public education and public school students and staff. While some NJEA members truly love it, many others tolerate it because they have seen the impact of elections on their school budgets, on their pension and benefits, and on their ability to do their jobs.

Voting is one of the most effective ways to advocate for public education and this year in New Jersey, it is easier

than ever. For the first time, New Jersey is offering early voting from Saturday, Oct. 23 through Sunday, Oct. 31 at designated early voting locations.

In addition, New Jerseyans can vote by mail if they register to do so before Oct. 26 by going to vote.nj.gov. Once you receive and vote your mail-in-ballot, you have three options for how to return it. Additional instructions are available at vote.nj.gov.

Finally, on Nov. 2, Election Day, polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Voting for candidates who support public education is so critical to the success of our students and our communities that NJEA has a committee dedicated to meeting with candidates, analyzing their records, and making endorsements. The members who make up NJEA PAC volunteer countless hours of their time to evaluate candidates. Given this information, NJEA members can make their own well-researched decisions about whom to support.

Recently, New Jersey made history. For the third year in a row, New Jersey's public schools have been named the best in the nation by *Education Week*. This achievement is the product of our members' hard work and dedication, collaboration among all stakeholders, and financial support from elected officials.

We are committed to ensuring that every child has access to a great public education and that they are given the support, resources, and guidance to reach their full potential. Now, more than

ever, we must support candidates who support our students on issues ranging from universal pre-K, making higher education more affordable, taking a smarter approach to standardized testing, and working with us to help our students after the disruption of the pandemic. We accomplish these things when we have partners in political office—and we create those relationships by discussing with them the issues that matter most to our members.

And, at the end of the day, whether these elected officials are sitting in a board of education meeting, a higher education committee meeting, or the floor of the Statehouse, the matters before them will be resolved by a vote. So let's make sure our voices are part of that process.

Vote. 



Nov. 12-13, 2021



at the Hilton East Brunswick • 3 Tower Center Blvd. • East Brunswick, NJ

WORKSHOPS

During the pandemic, all arrangements are subject to change in response to public health directives.

1. IS YOUR DISTRICT READY TO BE RESCUED BY THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN?

The largest investment in public education in America's history is happening right now. Learn how to make sure your district spends it wisely and not wastefully.

2. BREATHING BAD: INDOOR AIR QUALITY & MOLD

Bad indoor air quality can make a bad workplace worse. It's also directly related to mold growth. This presentation will cover the basics of ventilation and filtration. You will also learn how to identify, document, and improve the temperature and humidity conditions that cause mold.

3. MERCURY IN GYM FLOORS & LEAD IN THE WATER: WHERE DID IT COME FROM AND WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT?

Discover how we got mercury in our gym floors, how to identify if it's in your school and what to do if you find it. Also, learn about the risks of ingesting lead, the laws in place, and the funding that will help us replace lead pipes.

4. 10 STEPS: INVOLVING MEMBERS ON HEALTH & SAFETY ISSUES AND THE ROLE OF HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEES IN POST-COVID EDUCATION

Your local health and safety committee should be an integral part of your district's response to the new normal. Find out what you can do to organize a health and safety committee and to become part of the planning and oversight of your district's critical mission to get education back on track in New Jersey.

5. SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY: RECOGNIZING INDICATORS OF POTENTIAL VIOLENCE

This session will inform attendees of traits and characteristics, as well as behaviors, that may indicate a student's potential for committing acts of targeted violence. The concept of behavioral threat assessment and the construction of threat assessment/screening teams will be discussed.

6. DISASTERS: THEY CAN HAPPEN & NURSES CAN HELP!

When disaster strikes, how do we as a health and safety committee respond? Learn about the safety of yourself and children and identify your responsibilities.

7. PROJECT FIRSTLINE FOR SCHOOL NURSES: TRIAGE & SCREENING, CRISIS STANDARDS OF CARE

This training will cover hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, and the basics of COVID-19 and virus transmission.

REGISTRATION:

Visit njea.org/2021hsconf
before Oct. 25, 2021.