

# REVIEW

SEP  
2022  
njea.org



*an education and advocacy resource*



## The Daily Mile™

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CONVENCIÓN DE NJEA

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OF UPSTANDERS

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WHOLE STORY

**42** DESIGN THINKING AND  
SPOTTED LANTERNFLIES



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**1 and 2:** Jessica Storch, a **Frankford Education Association** (Sussex) member used a Read Across NJ Pride grant that enabled her middle school's Bulldog Book Club to create a series of literature-based activities that promoted diversity and reading. Their "DIY with a Book Review" to-go kits were placed in area Free Little Libraries. "Edible Book" DIY kits were distributed through the Sussex County Library's main branch. "Stress Relief Kits" including coloring book marks, chocolate and tea were given to all PTA members and staff at the school. The club made and installed an outdoor picture book walk using *Kiyoshi's Walk*, by Mark Karlins. In a book walk, laminated book pages are adhered to wooden stakes and placed sequentially along a pathway.

**3.** NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson and NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty delivered a **New Jersey Education Association** contribution to the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice (BRCSJ) in Princeton. On hand to receive it were BRCSJ's Community Outreach Coordinator Carol Watchler and Chief Activist Robt Martin Seda-Schreiber. Watchler is a longtime educator and NJREA member. From left: Seda-Schreiber, Robertson, Beatty, and Watchler.

**4.** The **East Windsor Education Association** (Mercer) participated in National Night Out on Aug. 2. EWEA members connected with the students and the community, offering fun giveaways and useful resources thanks to an NJEA Pride grant. From left: Jolly Becerra, Beth Ferst, Pride Chair Angela Castaneda, Veronica Lubrano and Alexis O'Rane.

# FEATURES



## 26 | THE DAILY MILE

Turn up to Harrington Park School in the morning and you will be amazed at the flushed little faces racing around the back field alongside their teachers enjoying the sunshine. It's all part of a program called The Daily Mile, that has students and staff up and moving. It not only improves their overall physical health, it has connections across the curricula as it addresses social-emotional needs.

BY MARK S. TORRIE



## 30 | CREATING A CULTURE OF UPSTANDERS

In an age where everything is Google-able, lessons need to go beyond what is searchable and focus on skills that equip our students to be upstanding citizens. Students should be encouraged to critically and effectively participate in our democratic society. Asking students to reflect on their choices and how they participate allows them to see that they can effect change.

BY JAMIE LOTT-JONES AND MARY SOK



## 34 | BECOMING THAT TEACHER

As a county teacher of the year, the author of this article is often asked what inspired her to become a teacher. She notes that while many other teachers immediately recall a favorite teacher when confronted with that question, she offers an unexpected response: she didn't have THAT teacher. In many ways, her inspiration came from a desire to be the kind of teacher she needed when she was in school.

BY MICHELLE POOLAW



## 38 | TEACHING THE WHOLE STORY

Bills have been introduced in 35 state legislatures banning K-12 instruction that has been falsely linked with the graduate study of critical race theory. One such bill was introduced in the New Jersey Legislature. A social studies teacher evaluates his current instruction on civil rights against the limitations of this bill.

BY PAUL BLASS, ED.D.



## 42 | DESIGN THINKING AND SPOTTED LANTERNFLIES

The spotted lanternfly is an invasive insect species that has found its way to New Jersey. As few as 30 spotted lanternflies can kill a grapevine, as well as other trees and plants, presenting a serious threat to the state's agricultural industry, forests and communities. Working with the maker program at Rutgers University students at Branchburg Central Middle School use design-thinking to create traps that will help limit the spread of the insect.

BY DANIELLE PUGLISI

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# The number \$650 Million



Increase in state SFRA formula aid for K-12 schools appropriated in FY2023 budget.

Source: FY 2023 Appropriations Act, P.L.2022, c.49.

## 66 NJEA BUDGET SUMMARY

Fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2023



# GOOD NEWS

## Per-pupil arts spending has increased

Since 2016, spending on arts education in New Jersey has increased by 19% in elementary schools, 12% in middle schools, and 15% in high schools.

Source: Arts Ed NJ, "The 2021 New Jersey Arts Education Census Report," [artsednow.org/census-report-2021](https://artsednow.org/census-report-2021)



NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION  
**REVIEW** SEPTEMBER 2022



**The Daily Mile**

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On the cover

Students at Harrington Park School run, jog, or walk every day on school grounds with other members of the school staff as part of fitness program called The Daily Mile that addresses physical health, academic curricula, and social-emotional needs.

PHOTO BY  
Mark S. Torrie

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# REVIEW

180 W. State St., P.O. Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211 • 609-599-4561 • [NJEA.org](http://NJEA.org)

**President: Sean M. Spiller | Vice President: Steve Beatty | Secretary-Treasurer: Petal Robertson**  
**Executive Director: Steven Swetsky | Deputy Executive Director: Keven Kelleher**

## Organizational Directory

### NJEA headquarters, Trenton

To reach any of the offices at headquarters, call NJEA's main number, 609-599-4561.

**Executive Office:** includes NJEA's statewide officers and the offices of the Executive Director; Human Resources; Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance; Legal Services; Organizational Development; and the Labor Management Collaborative.

**Business Division:** includes the offices of Accounting and Finance; Information Systems, Facilities, Mailroom and Production; Membership; and Comptroller.

**Communications Division:** responsible for all aspects of the association's communications efforts, both internal and external.

**Government Relations Division:** includes the Office of Policy and Politics, which addresses legislation, administrative code, policy and advocacy at a statewide and federal level, and the Office of Member and Political Organizing, which works with members at the county and local level to organize around local, state, and federal issues that affect public education.

**Professional Development and Instructional Issues:** assists members and local and county affiliates with instructional issues and professional learning. The division also monitors state level and school level implementation of administrative code as promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Education.

**Research and Economic Services:** Provides information to support state and local association programs and activities, including collective bargaining and policy analysis. Offers guidance on retirement issues and administers NJEA Member Benefits.

### UniServ regional offices

Provides extensive field services to members and local and county affiliates throughout the state, including negotiations assistance, contract administration and grievance adjudication, member organizing and local member consultation and representation. UniServ field representatives train local leaders and assist in the coordination of NJEA and NEA resources. UniServ regional offices are organized under four zones.

#### UniServ South

**Reg. 1-3**  
**Director's office**  
856-234-0522

**Region 1 (Atlantic and Cape May Counties):**  
609-652-9200

**Region 2 (Salem, Gloucester and Cumberland Counties):**  
856-628-8650

**Region 3 (Burlington and Camden Counties):**  
856-234-2485

#### UniServ Central

**Reg. 7-9, 11, 13 and 29**  
**Director's office**  
732-287-6899

**Region 7 (Ocean County):**  
732-349-0280

**Region 8 (Mercer County):**  
609-896-3422

**Region 9 (Monmouth County):**  
732-403-8000

**Region 11 (Middlesex County):**  
732-287-4700

**Region 29 (Higher Education):**  
609-689-9580

#### UniServ Northeast

**Reg. 15, 19-21, and 25**  
**Director's office**  
973-321-3221

**Region 15 (Union County):**  
908-709-9440

**Region 19 (Hudson County-North and Newark):**  
201-861-1266

**Region 20 (Hudson County-South):**  
201-653-6634

**Region 21 (Essex County, except Newark):**  
973-762-6866

**Region 25 (Bergen County):**  
201-292-8093

#### UniServ Northwest

**Reg. 13, 17, and 27**  
**Director's office**  
973-347-0911

**Region 13 (Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren counties):**  
908-782-2168

**Region 17 (Morris and Sussex counties):**  
973-515-0101

**Region 27 (Passaic County):**  
973-694-0154

### MEMBERSHIP

Active professional: \$999 (full time); \$199.80 (full time \*low-earner); \$499.50 (part time); \$499.50 (on leave); \$199.80 (part time \*low-earner). Active supportive: \$488 (full time); \$97.60 (full time \*low-earner); \$244.00 (part time); \$97.60 (part time \*low-earner); \$244 (on leave). Retired professional: \$88; \$1,095 (retired life). Retired ESP: \$60; \$675 (retired ESP life); Preservice \$15. General professional (outside N.J. public education employment): \$250. Subscribing \$250. Only those in education positions in N.J. public schools and colleges are eligible for active membership. Payment of annual dues entitles a member to receive the Review for one year, from January through December. Dues include \$5 for the NJEA Review. \*Low-earner threshold 2020-21 is \$21,700.





# PRESIDENT'S *Message*

## *A new school year, a fresh look at your career*

Whether you're a 10-month employee, or report to school year-round, something special happens when September arrives. The influx of students and staff reinvigorates our school buildings, buses, and playgrounds and breathes fresh life and a renewed energy into the day.

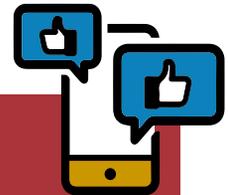
September is a time for new beginnings for everyone who operates on a school schedule, and it provides us all with an opportunity to take a fresh look at the work we do, its impact on students, and how we can ensure that we are showing up for them, our colleagues and ourselves in a way that truly brings out the best in each of us.

In this issue, there are many wonderful articles to help you take a fresh look at your career as an educator and advocate. In particular, I'd like to draw your attention to the article, "Becoming THAT Teacher: The Teacher I Needed." While it is written from a teacher's point of view, I believe it is relevant for each and every one of us. We all hold unique responsibilities and have immense, unseen power over the lives of our students. This article compels us to step back and examine how we exercise that power. Are we embracing compassion, understanding, and kindness? Or are we allowing ourselves, in our stressful lives, to overlook an opportunity to make a difference in someone else's life?

Education is one of the most powerful mechanisms to change the course of someone's life. We all play a significant role in our students' and our colleagues' lives, and we need to be sure that the role we play is a positive one.

I am proud to say that NJEA's members across the state are working hard to ensure that our public schools continue to be the best in the nation, and I want to wish you all a happy and healthy start to the school year. Let's make this the best one yet.

In Unity,



### SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: It feels great to be back in person with hundreds of NJEA members for our 2022 NJEA Summer Leadership Conference! We're ready to work, learn and build our collective power #WEareNJEA #NJEA SLC2022

On Aug. 6, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller shared photos from the 2022 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference (SLC). The conference was last held in person in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic began, and Spiller took the opportunity to celebrate being reunited with hundreds of NJEA members at SLC.

### STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: We all know the adage that "elections matter" and of course, "elections have consequences." This year we underscore those points as we see so many of our members getting involved in every which way—and seen last night with well over one hundred of our South Jersey advocates who came out in Hammonton to pledge their support and work in this next election. We know the stakes—and what it takes to advocate and agitate on behalf of our #1 public schools, our students and our great union! Thank you to the entire south zone staff team and the leadership of the counties, as well as our rank and file members who never give up! Ever forward - together!

On Aug. 3, NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty attended a campaign kick-off event in Hammonton. Attended by over 150 members, the event was designed to build excitement and engage members ahead of a pivotal federal election cycle this fall.

### PETAL ROBERTSON

Facebook

@PetalForNJEA: Just a summer Sunday working with some of our ESP advocates from ESPAN. Want more information? Email NJ.ESPAN@gmail.com to stay informed and become part of the team. Remember, we are always stronger together.

On July 31, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson shared photos from and a brief reflection on the NJEA Educational Support Professionals Action Network (ESPAN) workshop that she attended. She encouraged all her online followers to get involved with the newly formed ESPAN affinity group within NJEA.

OFFICERS ONLINE

# KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

## NJEA ENDORSES CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

NJEA has announced its congressional endorsements, all of whom have demonstrated a commitment to students, public education and working families. The October Review will feature statements from each of the endorsed candidates and a description of the endorsement process.

### Those candidates are:

- CD 1 – Donald Norcross
- CD 3 – Andy Kim
- CD 5 – Josh Gottheimer
- CD 6 – Frank Pallone
- CD 7 – Tom Malinowski
- CD 8 – Robert Menendez Jr.
- CD 9 – Bill Pascrell
- CD 10 – Donald Payne Jr.
- CD 11 – Mikie Sherril
- CD 12 – Bonnie Watson-Coleman

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SUMMIT SET FOR OCT. 21-22

The NJEA Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit will be held on Oct. 21-22 at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center in Somerset. The annual summit is an opportunity for local associations to come together for training opportunities that benefit members at the bargaining table.

If you're unable to attend in person, plan to participate with our Saturday-only, no-cost virtual seminars.

Visit [njea.org/cbsummit2022](https://njea.org/cbsummit2022) to register.

## STUDENT LOAN RELIEF WAIVER DEADLINE APPROACHES

The deadline to apply for a waiver to receive credit for past payments from all federal loan programs or repayment plans towards loan forgiveness is Oct. 31, 2022.

For assistance, reach out to NEA's Student Debt Navigator powered by Savi by phone at 833-615-1376 or visit [neamb.com/products/nea-student-debt-navigator](https://neamb.com/products/nea-student-debt-navigator). You can also learn more by attending one of NJEA's "Degrees Not Debt" monthly webinars. Visit [njea.org/dndwebinars](https://njea.org/dndwebinars) to register.

## NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR AWARDS TO BE CONFERRED AT NJEA EQUITY ALLIANCE WEEKEND

Nominations are now open for five awards that will recognize advocacy and achievement in equity and justice. The awards will be presented at NJEA's Equity Alliance Weekend to be held on Jan. 13-14, 2023.

The weekend will feature training on social justice issues and social justice activism, recognizing the intersection of diverse identities and circumstances among NJEA members and the communities they serve. With roots in the annual NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Celebration and the Minority Leadership and Recruitment Conference, the event is a collaboration of these NJEA committees: Exceptional Children, Human and Civil Rights, Minority Leadership and Recruitment, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Urban Education, and Women in Education.

Five of NJEA's highest awards will be presented during the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Human and Civil Rights Celebration, held at the conclusion of the Equity Alliance Weekend:

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

Descriptions for each award can be found at the website address below.

Nominations and documentation for these five awards are due Oct. 31, 2022.

For awards criteria and to make a nomination, go to [njea.org/equitynominations](https://njea.org/equitynominations).

For more information, contact Colleen Lopez at [clopez@njea.org](mailto:clopez@njea.org) or 609-599-4561, ext. 2290.

## NOMINATE A LOCAL ASSOCIATION FOR BARGAINING EXCELLENCE

A local association that has demonstrated excellence in negotiations will be honored at the Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit with the 2022 Jim George Collective Bargaining Award. Those nominated will also be recognized. The summit will take place on Oct. 21-22 at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center in Somerset.

## Criteria

A local qualifies for nomination by meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- Bargained one or more new contractual provisions not already found in another affiliate's contract.
- Conducted an extraordinary community-organizing effort that resulted in a settled agreement.
- Used the bargaining process to propel new members into association involvement and leadership positions.
- Achieved a particularly good settlement, in comparison to state averages, in salary increases, benefits, professional development, and/or member protection, and follows best practices for salary guides.

## Nomination

Local associations can be nominated by any NJEA member or NJEA staff member. To be considered for the 2022 Jim George Collective Bargaining Award, settlements must be ratified by both parties between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022.

To nominate a local, visit [njea.org/cbaward](http://njea.org/cbaward). Nominations are due Sept. 9, 2022.

## IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

### Oct. 18: Voter registration deadline for general election

Online registration and printable registrations forms can be found at [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov). Not sure if you're already registered? Visit [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov) to find out.

### Oct. 29-Nov. 6: Early voting period

This new option enables all registered voters to cast their ballot in person, using a voting machine, during in-person early voting period prior to Election Day. Find your county's early voting locations at [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov).

### Nov. 1: Deadline to apply for a mail-in ballot by mail for general election

For a vote-by-mail application, go to [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov). Complete and mail the application as early as possible, ideally well before Nov. 1.

### Nov. 7 – by 3 p.m.: Deadline for in-person mail-in ballot applications for general election

Visit [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov) for details on how to apply in person for a vote-by-mail ballot.

### Nov. 8: General election

To find your polling location check the sample ballot you received from your county board of elections or visit [vote.nj.gov](http://vote.nj.gov). This is also the deadline by which the post office must receive mail-in ballots for the general election. It is also the deadline for in-person submission of general election mail-in ballots to county boards of election.

## NOMINATIONS ACCEPTED FOR ESP AWARDS

NJEA will present the 2023 Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the Year Award to an NJEA member whose activities reflect the contributions of ESPs to public education. The purpose of the award is to recognize an individual who shows outstanding accomplishments in professional practice, advocacy and community engagement.

All forms described below can be found at [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).

Your local association's nomination form must arrive at your county association office no later than **Sept. 11, 2022**. County associations will select among local nominees. The county's nomination form for ESP of the Year must arrive at NJEA Headquarters no later than **Sept. 30, 2022**.

Nominations for ESP Career Achievement and Friend of ESP awards are also being accepted through **Oct. 23, 2022**.

Awards will be presented at the 2023 NJEA Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Conference.

## STATE OFFICER PETITIONS AVAILABLE SEPT. 1

Elections for NJEA state officer positions (president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer) will be held during the upcoming school year for the 2023-25 term. All nominations for these positions may be made only by petition on forms prescribed by the NJEA Elections Committee.

Petitions for state officers must contain at least 300 signatures of NJEA active members (including active professional and ESP, as well as life members and retired members who are eligible to vote) with at least 10 such signatures from each of 11 counties. Persons who are retired are considered to be from the county in which they last held employment prior to retirement. No more than one nomination may be proposed on any one petition.

Below are the anticipated deadlines and procedures for acquiring and returning petitions. Please note that the dates and procedures are subject to change because of the ongoing global pandemic. Changes, if any, will be posted at [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).

Petitions will be available on **Sept. 1, 2022**. They may be obtained from NJEA Headquarters in Trenton, or from a county or unit representative on the NJEA Elections Committee. All signed petitions must reach NJEA Headquarters at 180 W. State St., Trenton, or an NJEA-NEA UniServ office no later than 5 p.m. on **Oct. 17, 2022**.

These procedures and the deadlines are for state officer positions only and do not affect nominations for other NJEA positions.

Balloting for contested positions will take place in the regular 2023 NJEA spring elections.

# COOL STUFF

## A+ EFFORT GENE WOODS RECEIVES HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATOR AWARD

Gene Woods, a history teacher at Bayonne High School and president of the Bayonne Education Association, received the Hank Kaplowitz Outstanding Human Rights Educator Award from Kean University's Human Rights Institute. The institute conferred the award at its 14th annual conference on March 25. The award is named after Kean University educator and career human rights activist Dr. Hank Kaplowitz, who was influential in expanding the scope of Holocaust education on campus and beyond.

Woods was recognized for his contributions to the field of Holocaust education and the teaching of African American history, including his work to assist educators statewide in meeting and exceeding the Holocaust and Amistad education mandates.

Woods is a member of the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education and has worked with Kean's Human Rights Institute teaching its prejudice reduction course and its "upstander" course. (See Page 30 for more on upstanders.)



From left: Chevon Williams, Hank Kaplowitz and Gene Woods.

"This work is necessary," Woods said. "It is important to support each other in meeting the mandates so that whoever comes after us doesn't have to start from scratch. They can build on the work we've done."

Woods was particularly moved that one of his former students from Bayonne, Chevon Williams, received the Outstanding Students Human Rights Activist award at the same ceremony. A 2022 graduate of Kean University, Williams distinguished herself for her human rights work at Kean and in the community, including a voting rights drive.



## CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Hispanic Heritage Month is observed in the United States from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15. It celebrates the culture and history of the Caribbean, Central and South America, Mexico, and Spain. Sept. 15 is an important date as it the anniversary of independence of the Latin American countries El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Guatemala. In the following weeks, Mexico, Belize, and Chile also celebrate their independence days. Hispanic Heritage Month was enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, but its observation began in 1968.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month allows for educators to highlight diversity in the United States and overall world. Hispanic Heritage Month creates a space for the one-third of New Jersey's students who are Hispanic to be seen, heard and celebrated.

In celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, educators can celebrate the Hispanic community's rich culture, their contributions to society, and the diversity within the community. There are various ways in which educators may wish to observe the monthlong celebration. Educators may encourage students to read and discuss Hispanic literature, explore art within the Hispanic community, explore the varying cultures and numerous countries that are celebrated, and the countless contributions made by Hispanics.

NJEA hopes to support all educators and students in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month as it strives to continue working towards learning, equity, and justice. NJEA's membership consists of 8.5% members who self-identify as Hispanic, and it hopes to continue creating spaces where their heritage is celebrated.

For resources, visit [nea.org](http://nea.org) and search "Hispanic Heritage Month."



## NEW JERSEY EDUCATOR GRANTS: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Foundation for Impact on Literacy and Learning is a nonprofit organization with a mission to help provide a better future for our children. Our teachers strive every day to make this happen, and it's no surprise that teachers often reach into their own pockets to fill their classroom with supplies. The Help Our Teachers Fund program seeks to remove the burden of providing necessary resources from teachers to help fuel a semester of active learning for their entire class.

Applications are now open, and you are invited to apply for the Help Our Teachers Fund 2022 grants.

The ADP Foundation, for the second year, has generously donated \$5,000 to Help Our Teachers Fund, specifically for New Jersey teachers—10 grants up to \$500 each. Help Our Teachers Fund grant recipients may receive up to \$500 to use to enhance their students' learning experience.

In the past, the grant recipients have used the funds for many items such as student headphones, digital learning programs, supplies for project-based learning and fitness

items. A teacher working in an urban school in New Jersey was seeking diverse reading materials for students who often did not have access to books to read at home.

Applicants to the Help Our Teachers Fund must be employed by an accredited K-12 public or private school located in New Jersey.

- Full-time teachers, other certificated staff, and paraprofessionals with effective and innovative projects that improve student learning may apply.
- Applicants must be verified by the school superintendent, principal or applicant's immediate supervisor. If selected as a recipient, the school official will be contacted to verify your employment status and proposed project.
- Awards are granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, age, sexual orientation gender or gender identity, disability, or national origin.

Applications must be submitted on or before Oct. 3, 2022 for the 2022-23 school year.

Tell us your story. How would a grant help your students succeed?

Scan the QR-Code and register today or go to [Fill.foundation/njea](https://www.fill.foundation/njea).



## APPLY FOR A GRANT FROM SUSTAINABLE JERSEY FOR SCHOOLS

Apply Now

Sustainable Jersey for Schools strives to connect participating schools and districts with financial and technical resources to successfully complete actions and make progress toward a sustainable future. For the 2022-23 grants cycle, NJEA is contributing \$180,000 to support the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program. Funding supports efforts to implement projects that help schools and school districts gain points needed for Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification and make progress toward a sustainable future.

### Informational Webinar

An informational webinar that provides an overview of the NJEA grants cycle, tips on crafting a successful proposal, and a walk-through of the online application will be held on Sept. 20 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Visit [sustainablejerseyschools.com/grants/njea-cycle](https://sustainablejerseyschools.com/grants/njea-cycle) to register for the webinar as well as grant application details.

The application deadline is Nov. 21 at 11:59 p.m.

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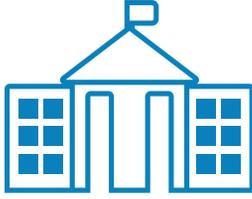
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## FREE CIVICS EDUCATION RESOURCES FROM NJSBF

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) is the philanthropic arm of the New Jersey State Bar Association whose mission is to provide law-related education for the public and schools. NJSBF is committed to the principle that public understanding of our legal system is essential in preserving the liberties that are fundamental in our democracy.

The foundation offers free, comprehensive public education programming. Among its many public and school-based activities, it presents law-related seminars, conducts conflict resolution and anti-bias trainings for educators, publishes law-related materials, operates a speakers' bureau, and coordinates elementary, middle and high school mock trial competitions.

With a focus on civics education, the foundation publishes a legal newspaper for kids, *The Legal Eagle* and *Respect*, a diversity newsletter, three times a

year. Free subscriptions may be obtained by visiting [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org). Digital subscriptions are also available. In addition, NJSBF has a stable of civics newsletters, covering the U.S. Constitution from the First Amendment to the 27th.

*The Bill of Rights Up Close*, a 28-page newsletter, takes a deep dive into the Bill of Rights with 13 articles, including four on the First Amendment alone. Covering all the bases, *Beyond the Bill of Rights*, a 24-page newsletter, focuses on the 17 Amendments added to the U.S. Constitution after the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791. Free print copies may be ordered at [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org). Downloadable PDFs of the newsletters can be found on the site's publication page, or individual articles from both newsletters are also available on The Informed Citizen blog.

In addition to these publications, NJSBF publishes *The Informed Citizen*, a civics blog that has tackled such topics as democratic norms, the meaning of equal justice under the law and the rule of law, to name but a few. The articles published on the blog also contain discussion questions and glossary words.

To learn more about the many educational offerings from the New Jersey State Bar Foundation, visit [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org).



## ENTER LAW FAIR AND LAW ADVENTURE COMPETITIONS

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation offers free educational mock trial programs for grades 3–6 and grades 7 and 8 respectively that are open to public and private schools and other organizations in New Jersey. Students and their teachers are invited to submit original mock trial cases to the Law Fair and Law Adventure competitions. There is no charge to enter.

Cases entered must be suitable for use in the classroom as a tool to teach students about legal issues. For details about the competitions, which help to increase writing, reading, listening and analytical skills, download the Law Fair (for grades 3–6) and Law Adventure (for grades 7 and 8) Rules Booklets from the New Jersey State Bar Foundation website at [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org).

Entries must be received by Jan. 31, 2023. Winners will be invited to perform their cases in person (or via Zoom if circumstances warrant) in May. Judges and attorneys will preside over the mock trials. Winning cases will be posted on our website.

To help teachers of grades 3–8 prepare their students for the competitions, and to learn how to use mock trials to teach about law in the classroom, the New Jersey State Bar Foundation will sponsor a free workshop on Oct. 28, 2022, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick. Register at [njsbf.org](http://njsbf.org). Professional development hours will be provided.

For more information contact Sheila Boro, Director of Mock Trial Programs New Jersey State Bar Foundation at 732-937-7519 or [sboro@njsbf.org](mailto:sboro@njsbf.org).

## THINKING OF GOING SOLAR?

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& Power, our new NJEA Member Benefits/ Buyer's Edge provider, at 800-558-1920 or login [www.BuyersEdgeInc.com](http://www.BuyersEdgeInc.com) with Username: 3386 and Password: NJEA



# Meet Cape May County ESP of the Year Debra Falck

## Celebrating retirement with a well-earned honor



After 25 years of service in the Lower Township Elementary School District, Cape May County Educational Support Professional of the Year Debra Falck retired in June and took a moment to look back over her career in the district while celebrating her achievements.

"My husband was a union boiler maker, and I ran a home daycare, primarily for the children of my friends and family," Falck said. "There were a few slow years, and I wanted to find another job that would still allow me to work with children."

Falck began by working as a substitute educational support professional in the district for a few months, working as a secretary, as part of the kitchen team, and in transportation before starting to work as a secretary in the nurse's office.

"People got to know me, and they felt like the nurse's office would be a good fit," Falck said. "It was a fifth- and sixth-grade building and the youngest of my three children was in sixth grade, so it worked out perfectly."

Falck worked as the secretary in the nurse's office for ten years until 2005 when her husband was diagnosed with cancer. At the same time, the principal's secretary at Sandman School was getting ready to retire.

"I needed a year-round position—the position in the nurse's office was ten months—so I applied and won the position," Falck said. "My husband is now cancer-free, thanks to a new treatment."

Falck enjoyed working in the principal's office.

"I've worked with great principals," Falck said. "They've all been wonderful to work with. And I love interacting with the children and the staff. They're all great people."

Falck has been very involved in her union over the course

of her career, and she used her position and knowledge to help other members.

"With my husband's medical situation, I learned a lot about insurance, so I was usually able to help other people with their questions," Falck said. "As a building representative, I think it was very helpful that I was in the front office. I was more available throughout the day for questions than a teacher would be. If I didn't know the answer, I could help members figure out the answer."

Falck's experiences early in her career working in different departments also helped her to understand the role everyone played in the district. She brought that knowledge to help her advocate for her colleagues as a member of the association's executive board and the negotiations committee.

"My association has fought for ESPs and has really supported them," Falck said. "We try to have someone from every department on negotiations, so we know what they need and how to help them. I feel like I help the secretaries by being on negotiations. I know that our aides work really hard. They make minimum wage, and they deserve more. We've fought for paid days off, but they should really have benefits."

Falck recalled that she worked in the district for six years before she received family medical benefits.

"Everyone needs to step up and get involved in their union," Falck said.

Falck was surprised and honored to be named the Cape May County ESP of the Year.

"It was nice to know that other people saw what you do," Falck said. "I just thought, what did I do that I deserve this over anyone else? How do you pick who gets this? I still have no idea but I'm very excited and happy to be recognized in this way."

To find resources for NJEA's ESP members, visit [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).



# NJEA Report

## NJEA members make national impact

In July, roughly 6,000 National Education Association (NEA) members assembled in Chicago, as well as remotely. Chicago was chosen after a historic decision to boycott the original 2022 NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) location of Houston, Texas, sending a strong message to Texas legislators in the wake of anti-women and anti-choice legislation voted into law in the lone-star state.

The RA is one of the union's most consequential events to debate, determine and enact policy that will guide the national union and its nearly 3.2 million members during the upcoming school year. Every state affiliate of NEA, including NJEA, sends a delegation of its members to represent its respective statewide union.

In her keynote address to the delegates on July 2, NEA President Becky Pringle delivered a stirring message of hope, resiliency and commitment. "You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world, and you have to do it all time," said Pringle, quoting writer and educator Angela Davis. Without hope for change, change is impossible. "We must share that view Professor Davis holds dear: Whether it is a mind, a heart, a school, a community, or our world: transformation is always possible!"

The challenges facing educators, students and communities today are real and many: crippling educator shortages, a lack of professional pay, an ongoing assault on curriculum that honestly confronts this nation's history of racism and openly celebrates LGBTQ+ people.

And still, despite these challenges, "you've embraced your role as the voice of education professionals; you understand that our work is fundamental to this nation, so you have accepted the profound trust that has been placed in us," Pringle told RA delegates. "You have found a way to resist, even as you hold onto joy. Courageous and creative. Prepared and persistent. You stand in the power of NEA—and NEA stands in the power that is you!"

### Vice President Kamala Harris to educators: 'You Are Essential to Our Democracy'

Vice President Kamala Harris gave high praise to educators for their commitment to students and social justice, and offered reasons for hope despite the obstacles they face in an electrifying "call-to-action" address on Tuesday, July 5.

After pausing to remember the seven people killed

and dozens wounded in the July 4 shooting in Highland Park near the site of the RA in Chicago, Harris issued a searing indictment of those politicians who refuse to make our schools and communities safer with further common sense legislation to curb gun violence. "Teachers should not have to practice barricading a classroom. Teachers should not have to know how to treat a gunshot wound. And teachers should not be told that 'Lives would have been saved if you only had a gun,'" said Harris.

Harris also thanked educators for their partnership, praised their commitment to social justice, and asked them to keep moving the nation forward.

### Initiating change and taking a stand

The work of NEA RA delegates is to debate association policies, legislative position statements, resolutions and new business items (NBIs) that govern the actions of the nation's largest union. Long hours are spent behind the scenes researching the policies and NBIs presented, speaking with the makers, and coming to decisions as a state caucus.

Educators are increasingly aware that students need and deserve safe, just, and equitable schools. One NBI really stood out, setting the tone for the rest of the proceedings, and it was spearheaded by NJEA member and NEA Board member James Frazier from Union County. He was one of several educators appointed to serve on the task force that developed the criteria behind the new policy, which continues to build upon the existing and ongoing racial and social justice work of the association.



Vice President Kamala Harris addresses the NEA RA.

Frazier is excited about the work ahead and how educators will be able to create positive, nurturing school communities for students to flourish in a diverse and interdependent world. Equally important, he is ready to help lead the work of the policy so that today's educators have the resources, training, and supports they need to help all students succeed.

"This policy statement allows NEA to provide the avenues for educators to have what they need so that education is safe, just, and equitable across this nation and to feel supported in their work," says Frazier. "In turn, our entire school community will be affected in a positive, nurturing way, and our students will leave their communities and flourish in whatever community they go into next. That is what this policy will help do."

NEA RA delegates adopted the policy statement. It will help students thrive and further cement the association's vision of schools as thriving spaces that are safe and welcoming for all students, discriminatory toward none.

The policy focuses on a variety of actions guided by the following principles:

- Adopt a restorative justice philosophy to create a school climate that rejects the criminalization and policing of students.
- Provide training and support for culturally competent instruction.
- Develop and implement plans to end disparities in disciplinary and behavioral practices.
- Create a community-centered school environment to foster safe, positive environments and engage all members of the public school.

## NJ delegates elected for national seats

During the NEA RA, delegates are also responsible for electing the association's leadership, which this year included three three-year seats and one one-year seat on the NEA Executive Committee. Several NJEA and NJREA members were elected into national seats.

Christine Sampson-Clark, a delegate from Mercer County and a teacher in the Trenton Public Schools, was reelected to a three-year term on the NEA Executive Committee.

"I'm honored to continue my advocacy work and representing the voices of my fellow education professionals in my second term on NEA's Executive Committee," said Sampson-Clark. "I believe it is my duty to promote education excellence for our students and our educators." As an educator, advocate, and community activist, Sampson-Clark is dedicated to raising issues on the national agenda that are important to students and NEA members. She also is committed to quality and



James Frazier, an NJEA Delegate and an NEA Director, introduces a new business item to the NEA RA concerning equity, cultural competence and restorative justice.

equity in public education and inspiring members to work collectively.

Previously, Sampson-Clark has served on the NEA Board of Directors, as chair of a number of NEA boards and committees, including the NEA Board's Black Caucus and the NEA Friends of Education Committee. This is her second three-year term on the NEA Executive Committee.

Middlesex County Education Association member and NJEA delegate, Lois Yukna, was elected president of the National Council for Education Support Professionals (NCESP) for the next three years by her fellow NCESP members. Her term begins Sept. 1, 2022.

"It is indeed an honor and I am excited to advance the work of the council," said Yukna. "The voices of our ESPs must be at the forefront of our work. We not only represent school staff but students as well. Our experience and knowledge are critical to creating environments in which our students feel safe and can thrive within their communities."

Yukna serves as president of the Middlesex County Education Association, Executive Committee member of the Woodbridge Township Education Association, the NJEA Executive Committee and is the 2017 NJEA ESP of the Year. Yukna previously served as the NCESP Secretary.

As a strong advocate for all members, she has risen through the ranks of the association. Yukna's association experience began with her successfully graduating from NJEA's Union School and the NJEA Bolivar L. Graham Practicing Apprentice Program. She is an accomplished leader on the local level and has achieved key leadership roles on the county, state and national levels. She embodies the true essence of an education support professional in every aspect of her work and will serve our national membership proudly.

# You and your union: NJEA Convention in Spanish

On Nov. 10 and 11, thousands of members will have access to workshops in their native language, Spanish. Every voice in our union matters and members’ voices must be empowered and heard. It is with that in mind that NJEA will be offering a Spanish speaking track during this year’s convention.

There will be four workshops offered in Spanish, another workshop focusing on learning disabilities in English language learners that will be hosted in English, and an exhibit by the New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center titled, “Edible History: How Latin American Food Changed the World.”

## The Spanish language offerings are:

### You & Your Union: How to Get Involved

This workshop will focus on members who have not attended union-sponsored events in their district. After this workshop, members will have a greater understanding of the benefits offered as well as ways to get involved and have their voices heard.

### The Steps Toward Certification to Teach in NJ

This workshop will discuss opportunities available for educational support professionals to become credentialed and how to apply for teacher certification at the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). After this workshop, members will know the steps toward New Jersey teacher certification and how to have their college-level coursework from other countries evaluated through the NJDOE in preparation for New Jersey teacher licensure.

### Technology Tools

This workshop will focus on NJEA’s technology tools available to members. After this workshop members will be able to navigate the NJEA website to learn more about the benefits of membership, meetings, workshops, pension information, and much more.

### Accessing Benefits for NJEA/NEA Members

This workshop is prerecorded and will be offered virtually with a live Q&A portion after. It will focus on learning more about the NJEA Members benefits program that NJEA/NEA offer and how members can access them.

## The workshop below will be offered in English:

### Learning Disabilities in English Language Learners: Identification and Considerations

This workshop will be in English focusing on the needs of English language learners (ELL). After this workshop members will have a greater understanding of how to properly identify ELL students who may have a learning disability.

NJEA continues to create equitable spaces and this year’s convention illustrates that as the association hopes to engage members in their native language.

Please visit the registration table located on the second floor of the convention center.

# Stay overnight at the NJEA Convention

Want to reserve a room in Atlantic City for the NJEA Convention at a great rate? Take a look at these discount rates available at Borgata, Caesars, Golden Nugget, Hard Rock, Harrah’s, Resorts and Tropicana. To make a reservation, go to [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org). To access the room reservation tool, you’ll need to log in as a member. For your PIN, use either the email address you’ve previously given NJEA or the PIN that is found on your membership card. Your password is the last four digits of your Social Security number unless you have changed it.

**Shuttle service to the Atlantic City Convention Center is available from the hotels listed here.**

| Hotel                | Wed-Thurs rate | Friday rate | Deadline | Group code |
|----------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| <b>Borgata</b>       | \$115          | \$115       | Oct. 10  | GBNJE22    |
| <b>Caesars</b>       | \$110          | N/A         | Oct. 16  | SC11FBM    |
| <b>Golden Nugget</b> | \$64           | \$129       | Oct. 25  | ANJEA22    |
| <b>Hard Rock</b>     | \$89           | \$179       | Oct. 10  | GNJEA22    |
| <b>Harrah's</b>      | \$79           | \$169       | Oct. 16  | SH11FB2    |
| <b>Resorts</b>       | \$67           | \$149       | Oct. 30  | VNJEA22    |
| <b>Tropicana</b>     | \$75           | \$150       | Oct. 16  | ST11FB2    |

*Quoted room rates do not reflect taxes and other resort fees.*

## Usted y Su Unión: Convención de NJEA

El 10 y 11 de noviembre, miles de miembros tendrán acceso a talleres en su idioma nativo, el español. Cada voz en nuestra unión es importante y las voces de los miembros deben ser empoderadas y escuchadas. Es con eso en mente que NJEA ofrecerá la pista en el idioma de español durante la convención de este año.

Se ofrecerán cuatro talleres en español, otro taller centrado en las discapacidades de aprendizaje en los estudiantes del inglés como segundo idioma; este taller será en inglés, y una exhibición de Nueva Jersey Centro de información e investigación hispana titulada " Historia comestible: cómo la comida latinoamericana cambió el mundo."

### Usted y su unión: cómo participar

Este taller se centrará en los miembros que no han asistido a eventos patrocinados por la unión en su distrito. Después de este taller, los miembros comprenderán mejor los beneficios que se ofrecen, así como las formas de involucrarse y hacer que se escuchen sus voces.

### Los pasos hacia la certificación para enseñar en NJ

Este taller discutirá las oportunidades disponibles para que los profesionales de apoyo educativo (ESP) obtengan credenciales y cómo solicitar la certificación de maestros en el Departamento de Educación de Nueva Jersey (NJDOE). Después de este taller, los miembros conocerán los pasos hacia la certificación de maestros de Nueva Jersey y cómo evaluar su título universitario de otros países en preparación para la licencia de maestro de Nueva Jersey.

### Herramientas tecnológicas

Este taller se centrará en las herramientas tecnológicas de NJEA accesibles para los miembros. Después de este taller, los miembros podrán navegar la página web de NJEA para obtener más información sobre los beneficios de membresía, reuniones, talleres, información sobre pensiones y mucho más.

### Acceso a beneficios para miembros de NJEA/NEA

Este taller está pregrabado y se ofrecerá virtualmente con una parte de preguntas y respuestas en vivo después. Se centrará en aprender más sobre el programa de NJEA beneficios de miembros que ofrece NJEA/NEA y cómo los miembros pueden acceder a ellos.

### Problemas de aprendizaje en los estudiantes del inglés como segundo idioma: identificación y consideraciones

Este taller será en inglés y se centrará en las necesidades de los estudiantes del inglés como segundo idioma. Después de este taller, los miembros podrán comprender mejor cómo identificar adecuadamente a los estudiantes ELL que pueden tener una discapacidad de aprendizaje.

NJEA continúa creando espacios equitativos y la convención de este año ilustra eso, ya que esperan involucrar a los miembros en su idioma nativo.

La mesa de registro estará ubicada en el segundo piso del centro de convenciones.



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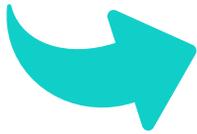
[njctl.org/K5](http://njctl.org/K5)

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4 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



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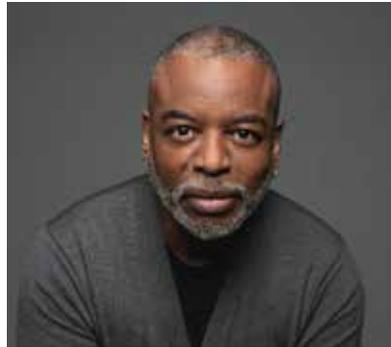
Check [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org) often for the answer to this and all the new things happening this year!



njea

2022 convention November 10 & 11

THURSDAY, NOV. 10



**LEVAR BURTON**

Actor and beloved host of "Reading Rainbow," appears at the NJEA Convention on Thursday morning.



**NYLE DIMARCO**

American model, actor, and deaf activist, appears at the NJEA Convention on Thursday afternoon.

FRIDAY, NOV. 11



**NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES**

Pulitzer Prize-winning creator of the 1619 Project and a staff writer at The New York Times Magazine, appears at the NJEA Convention on Friday morning.



**DAVID HOGG**

Co-Founder of March for Our Lives and passionate advocate to end gun violence appears at the NJEA Convention on Friday afternoon.

# Plan for a yearlong Read Across NJ

Welcome back to school! Believe it or not, it's already time to start thinking about your Read Across New Jersey plans for the year in support of the National Education Association's (NEA) Read Across America program.

Gather your favorite books and join the nationwide celebration of reading. Read Across America aims to build a nation of diverse readers and offers opportunities for involvement in children's reading throughout the year. The year-round program can fit reading fun into any educator's calendar and includes celebrations of reading on March 2 and throughout National Reading Month in March.

When you read, there's no place you can't go! The titles and resources featured by NEA's Read Across America and NJEA's Read Across-NJ programs strive to include books that students can see themselves reflected in.

## Pride in Public Education funding for RANJ

Using the NJEA Pride portal, found at [njea.org/pride](http://njea.org/pride), local presidents and Pride chairs may submit their grant applications. Grants will be \$500 each and local associations are encouraged to think outside of the box to lift literacy in their communities. Local associations are encouraged to work collaboratively when sharing a community, but each local must submit its own grant application. The RANJ grant may not be used for promotional items but may be used for food or related costs in engaging members, students, families and community. Check out the Pride portal for important deadlines associated with the grants.

Some ideas may include:

- A spaghetti dinner night where the cost of admission is books appropriate for various grades levels. Following dinner, a special guest of the local's choosing could read a book to all the families present. The collected books may go to a women's shelter or the local library restoring its collection following a flood.
- Sponsor virtual readings as a weekly event with special guest readers. Families participating may receive a book ahead of the event to read along with the special guest or families may receive paints, brushes, and a blank canvas to recreate the stories heard in a special paint along.
- Host adult literacy nights in the high school media center. Community members are invited and may participate in various classes in a series taught/facilitated by members.

For more information, please go to [njea.org/ranj](http://njea.org/ranj).

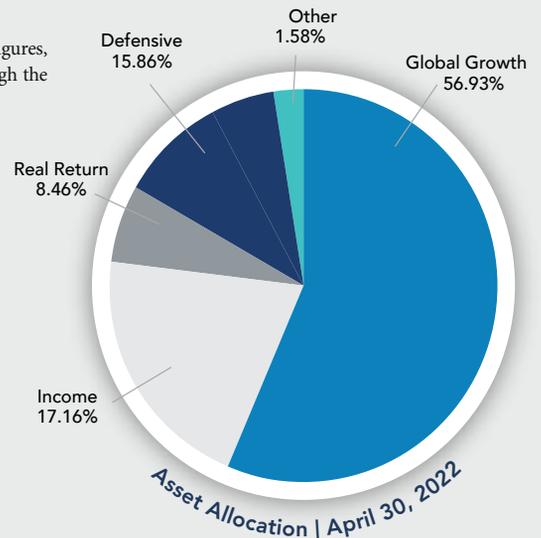
# PENSION UPDATE

TOTAL PENSION FUND: \$92.26 BILLION

The totals below reflect market values as of April 30, 2022, and for comparison, Feb. 28, 2022. The figures, which are rounded, may not reflect the current market values of some alternative investments through the period noted, because of lags in reporting under industry standards.

All reports and financial statements are posted on the Division of Investments' website at [nj.gov/treasury/doinvest/index.shtml](http://nj.gov/treasury/doinvest/index.shtml).

|               | April 30, 2022             |                  | Feb. 28, 2022              |                  |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
|               | Market Value (\$ billions) | Asset Allocation | Market Value (\$ billions) | Asset Allocation |
| Global Growth | \$52.52                    | 56.93%           | \$54.88                    | 57.63%           |
| Income        | \$15.84                    | 17.16%           | \$16.66                    | 17.50%           |
| Real Return   | \$7.81                     | 8.46%            | \$7.60                     | 7.98%            |
| Defensive     | \$14.63                    | 15.86%           | \$14.67                    | 15.40%           |
| Other         | \$1.46                     | 1.58%            | \$1.42                     | 1.50%            |
| Total         | \$92.26                    | 100%             | \$95.23                    | 100%             |



## Higher Education at the NJEA Convention



From left: At the 2021 NJEA Convention, members Edward Carmien, Thomas Harrington, Brent Costleigh and John Bukovec discuss higher education issues.

The 2022 NJEA Convention has programming designed for its higher education members, including its annual luncheon.

**Friday, November 11**  
**1-2:30 p.m.**

### **NJEA Higher Education Members Convention Luncheon**

Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel  
Crown Ballroom  
Cost: \$29

Join your fellow higher education members for our annual convention luncheon. At this year's luncheon, we will be joined by members of the New Jersey State Legislature Higher Education committees. The state legislature plays a key role in higher education through these committees, which consider legislation that affects us. Come and hear from the committee members.

Take advantage of the opportunity to ask them questions. Submit all questions in advance by Oct. 28 to [HigherEd@njea.org](mailto:HigherEd@njea.org).

Pre-registration is required and must be done by Oct. 28. 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 luncheon, contact NJEA's Region 29-Higher Education office at [HigherEd@njea.org](mailto:HigherEd@njea.org) or 609-689-9580.

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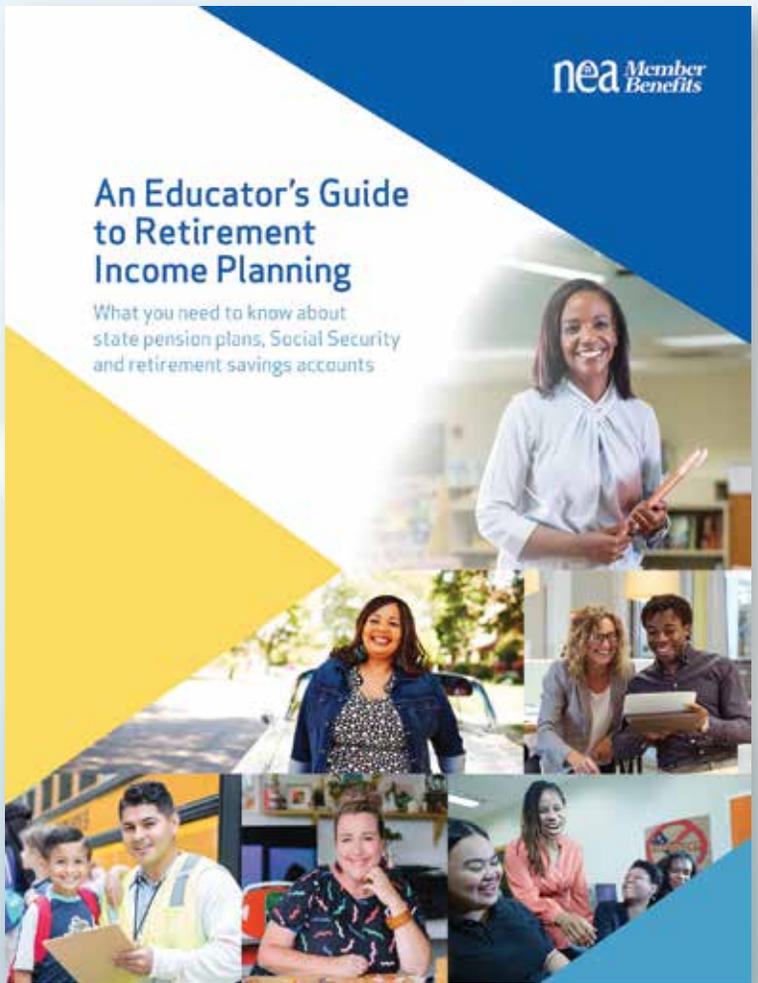
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RT330922

## Mercer County EA partners in Juneteenth event NJEA social justice Pride grant provides funds



Mercer County EA members capture a selfie with Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora during a Juneteenth celebration in the Mill Hill neighborhood.

Locals that are looking to tap into NJEA Pride funding with a social justice grant, may consider following the lead of the Mercer County Education Association (MCEA) when planning events for the 2022-23 school year.

On June 18, hundreds of community members and their families joined the MCEA Pride Committee and MCEA executive officers for the Juneteenth event held at Mill Hill Park in Trenton. The celebration, hosted by the African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County, was full of activities, awards, and fun in the sun.

MCEA Pride Committee Chair Debbie Baer plans to continue her committee's involvement in social justice and equity focused events.

"This Pride grant allowed us to show off the social justice work of Mercer County students!" Baer said. "We had art and creative writing entries to our social justice contest from students in all of our public school districts. We used those entries to create an activity book and T-shirts."

At the event, MCEA Pride gave away over 200 activity books that included submissions from 50 Mercer County students and 800 original T-shirts.

"The T-shirts have a Trenton middle school student's artwork on the front and a West Windsor-Plainsboro third

grade student's artwork on the back," Baer said. "I just love this project!"

If you would like more information on NJEA Pride events in Mercer County, please contact Debbie Baer at [mercercountyea@gmail.com](mailto:mercercountyea@gmail.com).

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# Big tenure rights win in NJ appellate court

By Kaitlyn Dunphy, Esq.

Katie Parsells, a long-time NJEA member, taught preschool full time for the Somerville Board of Education from 2010 until 2016, when she accepted a part-time preschool position. She accepted the part-time position on the condition that it included health benefits. At no time did any administrator tell her that, by reducing her hours to part time, she would lose tenure rights to her full-time position, nor was she told that she would no longer be entitled to return to her full-time position.

In February 2017, Parsells took maternity leave. She understood at the time that she could continue in a part-time position with benefits when she returned from leave. However, the outgoing superintendent notified her that the board could only offer benefits if she returned to work full time. Parsells was not able to work full time, so she declined the position and extended her maternity leave through the 2017-18 school year.

In April 2018, Parsells spoke with her principal about returning to work full time for the 2018-19 school year and was told for the first time that she did not have the option of doing so, that the only position available to her was a part-time position without benefits. Her principal

told her that if she wanted to be considered for a full-time position, she would need to apply for one.

With the assistance of an NJEA network attorney, Parsells filed a petition of appeal with the New Jersey commissioner of education. Her petition was successful. The commissioner held that Parsells never knowingly and voluntarily waived her right to a full-time teaching position, citing "a long line of cases holding that tenure rights can only be waived knowingly and voluntarily through a clear, unequivocal, and decisive act."

The commissioner further noted the board's superior knowledge of tenure law, concluding that the board "had all of the information and nonetheless kept [Parsells] in the dark. The fact that the Legislature has not enacted a statute to define a board of education's notice obligations regarding changes from full time to part time employment is not dispositive in light of the broad protective purpose of the Tenure Act."

Affirming the commissioner in a published opinion, the Appellate Division went a step further, holding for the first time that "school boards have a duty to notify, in advance, full-time teachers who consider voluntarily transferring to part-time teaching positions that they may not have a right to return to their full-time position." The court extended the reach of a prior decision, which requires nontenured teachers to be given advance notice about the tenure consequences of their designation as replacement teachers. Now, tenured teachers are entitled to advance notice about the tenure consequences of their voluntarily transferring from full-time to part-time positions.

This is an incredible win for our members and an expansion of the protections found in the Tenure Act. At the time of publication, the district has filed a petition seeking an appeal to the New Jersey Supreme Court.

**“ This is an incredible win for our members and an expansion of the protections found in the Tenure Act. ”**

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*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](mailto:kdunphy@njea.org).*





# THE DAILY MILE IS HERE

## Movement-based education with a focus on SEL opportunities

By Mark S. Torrie

In the small district of Harrington Park, in Bergen county, a movement is afoot. This movement, a free initiative that came to our shores via the U.K., combines movement-based education with opportunities to improve student and staff social and emotional learning. Best yet, it is accessible to all and can be done in as little as 15 minutes, three times per week.

In fact, turn up to Harrington Park School in the morning—or really any part of the day—and you will be amazed at the flushed little faces racing around the back field, alongside their teachers, enjoying the sunshine. The buzz is palpable. Whether students run the whole time is completely up to them. As individuals, groups or with staff, they choose the level of intensity in a manner that not only works on physical fitness but boosts their brain performance and gives extra opportunities for social interaction during the school day.

### A movement-based movement

So what is this movement? The Daily Mile is the brainchild of former Scottish Head Teacher Elaine Wyllie MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire). Ten years ago, as the head teacher of St. Ninian's Primary School in Stirling, Scotland, Wyllie became acutely aware of the students' lack of fitness and decided to act. She understood the relationship between physical well-being and

overall student outcomes, so she created an easy to implement initiative that changed the culture of the school.

Sometimes the best idea is the simplest, and Wyllie proved it. She instituted a 15-minute-a-day program that encouraged students to run, jog or walk around the school's field to improve their overall fitness. Staff were likewise encouraged to join in to show a good example for the students. The students went out in warm weather (it's rarely hot in Scotland), cool weather, cold weather, and even inclement weather. Within six months, Wyllie recognized the impact these 15 minutes were having on not only the students' physical fitness, but their classroom behaviors too.

The program quickly spread throughout my native Scotland and south into the other countries making up the United Kingdom. From there it has traveled worldwide and is currently being utilized in over 86 countries. Over 3 million children worldwide are signed up to take part and it is easy to see why.

In addition to the extra exercise, students set goals, track their progress and are provided with SEL opportunities along the way to develop key personality traits. The Daily Mile website ([thedailymile.us](http://thedailymile.us)) is stocked with resources that teachers and guidance counselors can use to round out their positive experiences.

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*Mark S. Torrie is a physical and health education teacher at Harrington Park School in Bergen County. He can be reached at [torrie@hpsd.org](mailto:torrie@hpsd.org).*



## Collaboration: a root cause and effect in Harrington Park

During the 2020-21 school year, with limited gym equipment available due to COVID protocols, our physical education team came up with the idea to institute a walking initiative in which our students would attempt to walk the distance from Harrington Park, New Jersey, to my hometown of Forfar, Scotland.

In addition to the daily walking, students tracked their journey via the website created for the program. Students learned history, geography and culture for the states of New England, the Canadian provinces and countries en route across the great Atlantic Ocean. The culminating event took place when the students walked into "Forfar" and were met by a bagpiper in the front of the school, followed by a personal video message from children in Scotland.

The success was evident, and the interdisciplinary nature of the initiative led to a question: How can we expand this across the school? Born out of a conversation in the spring between Harrington Park's Physical Education and Guidance departments, we decided to mobilize the SDGP (self-directed growth plan) process and see if other teachers would be willing to give it a go with their students. Fortunately for us, the ever-supportive Harrington Park administrators jumped all over it and so it began in September 2021.

I, for one, was still unsure as to how receptive the teachers were going to be. I had a suspicion that the focus on the new school year would be on trying as hard as possible to catch up from the past 18 months.

We all know that teachers have so much on their plates that to add yet another obligation was a concern of ours, but those fears were misplaced. I presented the



Students gather outside Harrington Park School to begin their "daily mile."



Top: Physical education and health teacher Mark Torrie with students.  
Middle: Students can move at their own pace during the Daily Mile.  
Bottom: The Daily Mile boosts positive social interaction, brain performance and physical fitness.

initiative on the first day of school and it was met with an overwhelmingly positive response from my colleagues. Not every class signed up, but many did, and so for the 2021-22 school year, around 50% of our students reaped the rewards.

### What are the data saying?

As part of the SDGP process, it's imperative that data are collected along the way to measure the various levels of success witnessed throughout the school year in order to drive future tweaks and improvements to the initiative. Fortunately, the Daily Mile affords opportunities to measure aspects of student and staff physical, cognitive, social and emotional well-being.

For the physical component, the health office provided body mass index (BMI) data from the student physicals that were recorded at the start of the school year. This is completely anonymous as to not break any HIPAA laws and was reassessed in late spring for a comparative analysis—no one other than our school nurse knows which students match which BMI. This may prove futile in providing any sort of meaningful data, but BMI was chosen over weight, because as the students grow, they inevitably will become heavier.

Interestingly enough, BMI steadily increased in almost every class that was tested. This was interesting as in order to ascertain the impact of the Daily Mile on student physical well-being we probably needed to measure body fat percentage but don't currently have the capability for that. So we substituted it for BMI, which increases through weight gain but doesn't really account for weight gain due to muscular growth and other changes.

The second aspect for physical assessment is on cardiovascular endurance. Students at the start, middle and end of the year recorded the number of laps that they completed in the 15-minute timeframe. Cardiovascular fitness improved in every class that was tested from the start of the school year through the end of the year. In fourth grade there was a slight dip in the middle of the year. This could be explained by the harsh winter and lack of Daily Mile time during this period. However, overall, the benefits for the students' cardiovascular systems are consistent and positive.

Learn more about the daily mile and how to help your school participate at [thedailymile.us](https://thedailymile.us).

## “ Sometimes the best idea is the simplest.

The remaining components of cognitive and social and emotional learning have been tracked and tested in a variety of ways. The SEL component includes mood meters, self-reflection journals, goal setting, goal tracking, and a multitude of other activities that are provided by the Daily Mile. The main tool for cognitive learning was the use of a Daily Mile video that was turned into an Edpuzzle assignment that reiterates for students that their success in life is intimately connected to their personal health and wellness.

### Next steps (pardon the pun)

The Harrington Park staff will continue to monitor the benefits the Daily Mile has on our students. In addition, the guidance department will push into classrooms to focus on some of the SEL activities aimed at developing key character traits within the students. The key here though is to keep getting the kids outdoors—rain or shine—and keep the kids moving. The scientific literature shows that an uptick in movement, vitamin D absorption and the release of endorphins in the brain, all lead to happier and healthier people.

The last aspect of the SDGP process was to finalize the data from all the components and then begin to analyze areas of strength and positive growth, as well as areas that could be improved moving forward. This was presented to the administration, superintendent and board of education in early June prior to the end of the school year. All staff members involved were present and spoke to the benefits observed over the course of the past school year.

With the overall success we saw last year, it is fair to say that Harrington Park will be continuing with and expanding the initiative into the 2022-23 school year. The details are to be finalized, but discussions have taken place to secure a 15-minute block for the middle school students to get out and burn off some steam while the PreK- 4 grades will remain as is and enhanced when the students need it. 🏡

## What are the stakeholders saying?

### Students

58% of our fourth-grade students expressed that they felt happy after completing their daily mile run. 81.1% said they feel more focused and able to pay more attention to their classwork. In addition to these statistics, 91.3% of students in fourth grade think that the Daily Mile is a positive initiative and one that should remain in place moving forward.

### Staff

Quotes from staff members involved in the initiative would appear to corroborate with the student findings. When asked if teachers thought the Daily Mile was contributing to their own health and mental wellness, responses included:

- “Yes – It feels good to get outside, enjoy some fresh air, take off the mask for a bit, and see the students' faces again.”
- “Exercise is important to your well-being! Getting a mile in is rewarding for me, and it clears my mind and gives me a fresh start to the next part of my day.”
- “Yes. The fresh air is great for my own reflection on my practice, and I'm bonding with my students in a way I wouldn't usually be able to.”

### Administration

Vice Principal Ross Herbert states, “The students and teachers enjoy the Daily Mile as it gives them some time to pause from the fast-paced nature of the school day to stretch their legs, enjoy the weather and enjoy time with each other. Both the students and staff have commented that the Daily Mile not only is reinvigorating, but it also refocuses them.”

Principal Jessica Nitzberg believes that “the Daily Mile has been a strong unifying and collaborative initiative. No matter the grade level or subject area, each day students and staff have the opportunity to get outside in the fresh air to exercise, connect with one another and reset.”

### Parents

Possibly the most excited group that we have spoken to is the parents and their perception of the new initiative is again overwhelmingly positive. One parent that I had a recent conversation with said, “I think the Daily Mile allows educators to afford students the opportunity to educate and motivate themselves to be more conscious of their well-being and to fight against inactivity that has plagued many of our younger children. Moreover, it allows educators to move beyond the traditional classroom setting to keep kids active.”

# CREATING A CULTURE OF UPSTANDERS

By Jamie Lott-Jones and Mary Sok

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**The start of the school year is the optimal time to reflect on your purpose in the classroom. The essential question for educators should be: How can I empower my students?**

In an age where everything is Google-able, lessons need to go beyond what is searchable and focus on skills that equip our students to be upstanding citizens. Students should be encouraged to critically and effectively participate in our democratic society. Asking students to reflect on their choices and how they participate allows them to see that they can effect change.

According to Dr. Norman Webb's Depth of Knowledge Level 4 "Extended Thinking," our goal as educators should be to enable our students to transfer knowledge from one content sphere to another to solve problems in their lives. By creating lessons that encourage reflection, critical analysis and application, we demonstrate to students that they have power to be civic change makers.

As social studies teachers, how do we connect past to present in ways that cultivate students' power and ability to effect change? Our motivation came from a letter written by a Holocaust survivor to educators, published in "Teacher and Child" by Dr. Haim Ginott:

*Dear Teacher:*

*I am a survivor of a concentration camp. My eyes saw what no man should witness:*

*Gas chambers built by learned engineers.*

*Children poisoned by educated physicians.*

*Infants killed by trained nurses.*

*Women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates.*

*So, I am suspicious of education.*

*My request is: Help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns.*

*Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human*

Educators want students to master content, become critical and creative thinkers, and engage in our school, community, and country. It is important for students to reflect, as the website Facing History and Ourselves notes,

on "the power of the individual to make decisions that affect not only oneself and one's neighbors but also the survival of the entire world." (See [bit.ly/3Q7ntgK](http://bit.ly/3Q7ntgK).)

Giving students the opportunity to be actively engaged and providing real world opportunities with real people in the learning process, empowers students to understand and value a democratic society (John Goodlad, 2000). So we had to think about how to equip our kids to be upstanders.

## What is an upstander?

For years, we have employed the term "upstanders," taken from a 2003 speech Samantha Power gave to capture the essence of what we were trying to instill in our students. An upstander is an individual who sees wrong and acts. After learning from spellcheck that it was not a "real" word, our Watchung Hills students, Monica Mahal and Sarah Decker, began a campaign to promote a word, *upstander*, that gave a name to a behavior that is crucial for building stronger communities and a more humane world.

"Students can easily recognize the bully, the 'bad guy,' the one throwing the punches . . . and most can point out the bystanders, the individuals in the shadows, watching and doing nothing . . . so who are the upstanders?" Decker and Mahal challenge, ask, then answer. "A person who takes a stand against an act of injustice or intolerance is not a 'positive bystander,' they are an UPstander. The word

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*Jamie Lott Jones and Mary Sok are social studies educators. They co-chair the Equity Team at Watchung Hills Regional High School in Warren, New Jersey. They are professors at Kean University's Holocaust Resource Center. Both serve on the executive boards for the Diversity Council for Global Education and Citizenship at Kean University and for Sen. Ray Lesniak's Stand Up for the Other Coalition. Lott-Jones and Sok have conducted many Diversity, Equity and Inclusion professional development workshops at Montclair State and Kean University. Their equity work is featured in Kappa Delta Pi, NJEA Review, Not In Our Schools, Facing History and Ourselves, Classroom Close-Up NJ and One on One with Steve Aduato.*



## An upstander is an individual who sees wrong and acts.

itself has the ability to empower students to make an active change in their schools, in an effort to build communities that support difference and unify against intolerance. The concept of an upstander is critical to the well-being of our society." (See [bit.ly/3dcxVEM](http://bit.ly/3dcxVEM).)

In 2016, due to their efforts *upstander* was successfully added in both the Oxford and the Merriam-Webster dictionaries. The most important part of the definition of upstander is that anyone can become one!

### Empowering students to be upstanders requires critical analysis of our curriculum choices.

In designing a curriculum, decisions have to be made. Whose history should be included? Whose might be left out? If everyone's history is included, what may be lost? How do you discover universal lessons from a particular history without trivializing that history? Whose voice is missing? How can we develop lessons that acknowledge, affirm and value what the students bring to class? Their voices and experience matter.

Use Dr. Rudine Sims Bishop's mirrors, windows and sliding doors in your curriculum portfolio to expose your students to myriad voices and experiences. "Mirrors" help students see themselves reflected in curricula. Windows enable them to see into the world of others. Sliding glass doors offer the opportunity to enter into the world of other. (See [bit.ly/3zZTNfC](http://bit.ly/3zZTNfC).)

Expect your students to nurture a culture of empowerment. Provide opportunities to experience new lenses with which to view literature, history, and current events.

Begin the year with activities that build community, such as group norms and contracting. Below are examples of group norms to create a culture of learning and respect:

- Listen with respect. Try to understand what someone is saying before rushing to judgment.
- Make comments using "I" statements.
- If someone says an idea or question that helps your own learning, say "thank you."
- If someone says something that hurts or offends you, do not attack the person. Acknowledge that the comment—not the person—hurt your feelings and explain why.
- Put-downs are never okay.
- Think with your head and your heart.
- Share the talking time—provide room for others to speak.



Former Watchung Hills students Monica Mahal (l) and Sara Decker are now pursuing careers in law with an emphasis on human and civil rights.

- Do not interrupt others while they are speaking.
- Active listening is participating. Talk or listen- do both if you feel inclined.
- Foster a safe and supportive learning space

(See [facinghistory.org/contracting](http://facinghistory.org/contracting).)

At the beginning of the school year, have students explore historical themes in relation to their own lives. Identity charts and biopoems allow students to share information about themselves and have them begin thinking about who they are and what type of person they want to become. For more about biopoems visit [bit.ly/fh-bio-poem](http://bit.ly/fh-bio-poem). For identity charts visit [bit.ly/fh-identity-chart](http://bit.ly/fh-identity-chart).

### Empowering students to be upstanders makes us reflect on times we have been bystanders.

Next, challenge students to think about their own choices by examining in-groups and people's need to belong. Start on their level—when something went wrong at a party, the mall, the school cafeteria. What do they wish they had done once they had time to think it over?

Our goal is not to judge but to be open to others

and to learn tools to help teachers facilitate meaningful conversations and respond in the moment to support our students in the classroom.

Model responses for students to help them think in the moment and move from bystanders to upstanders. How many times do we all feel stunned in the moment but discover the right “comeback” response hours after an uncomfortable situation? Help kids find their own voice.

For example, have students identify a moment when they did something to fit in with a group. What did they do? Would they do the same thing again?

Why or why not? When can it be useful to conform in order to belong to a group? When can conformity be harmful? Why do you think people do nothing even when they know something happening around them is wrong? Can they connect these questions to a historic event or piece of literature? Why is it important to have students reflect on their own choices?

These questions can be woven into the curriculum for critical analysis of the impact of individual and collective decision-making. (See [bit.ly/fh-in-group](http://bit.ly/fh-in-group).)

Give students the vocabulary to be an upstander with statements that help them to interrupt, question, educate and echo what the witness:

- Why did you say that?
- Did you mean to say something hurtful?
- Speak using I statements...
- I don't find that funny.
- Using that word offends me
- I'm surprised to hear you say that
- Tell me more.
- Please help me understand....
- You really didn't mean that?
- What did you mean by that?
- Do you know the history of the word?

Empowering students to be upstanders requires analyzing historic and current events when action should have been taken by others

Our history has been shaped by the action or inaction of everyday people. As one of the goals of a lesson found on the Facing History and Ourselves website contends, “The identity of a nation like the United States is the product of collaboration and conflict between a variety of individual



Human rights activist and founder of the Enough Project, John Prendergast, with former WHRHS Principal Dr. Thomas DiGianci, Mary Sok and Jamie Lott-Jones.

voices and groups—some famous, but many not.” (See [bit.ly/3QmEXFn](http://bit.ly/3QmEXFn).)

In our classrooms, we examine how in history, bystanders “watched” while events impacting them unfolded. Many students claim they would never have idly watched evils like the Holocaust. Yet far too many people did.

In order to explore inaction, it is important to look at why people’s reactions were impeded. Socially and emotionally, some students cannot see outside of their bubble; genocides, human rights issues, and civic-mindedness are not really in the forefront of their thinking. Cognitively, many students have not considered that they might have influence in shaping a more positive social awareness in their own sphere. It can be difficult for teenagers to objectively critique the norms of their lived experiences when they enter a classroom. But they are able to critically examine choices people made historically, find valor or cowardice in their responses, and brainstorm alternate courses of action.

Discussing what should have occurred in history is an entry point for student action. Kids know who has power and influence; they understand clique behavior and the “we” and “they” divisions that exist within their communities. As educators, we empower students to examine institutional power dynamics and injustice, helping them find their voices and equipping them with tools to make systemic changes in their community.

“Each one of us has the power and courage to rise as upstanders, to stand up against injustice. To change our communities, our countries, and even our world... Together as upstanders, we can change the course of human history towards a future of mindful, active global

citizens.” (Excerpted from “What Difference Can a word make? From Facing History and Ourselves Choosing to Participate,” [bit.ly/3dcxVEM](https://bit.ly/3dcxVEM))

### Student upstanders who have made a difference

Raegan Miller, 2022 Watchung Hills graduate and president of the school’s Diversity Club wrote an op-ed for the local newspaper:

*“Growing up, I wasn’t taught about the system of privilege and prejudice and its effect on society. It wasn’t until my freshman year at Watchung Hills Regional High School that my understanding of discrimination became clear through the lens of world history. In one lesson, my world history teacher gave out identity charts to everyone in class. We were encouraged to ask ourselves questions like: Who do you want to be? Who am I? What do you want to accomplish? This exercise launched an important dialogue, unlike one I’d ever had before, about recognizing some of the ugly racial biases that people in my community and across America experience.*

*“It showed us that even young people have experienced this trauma. That same year, we were introduced to lessons developed by Facing History and Ourselves on the experiences of victims from the Rwandan and Holocaust genocides. These pivotal lessons woke me up to painful moments in history and how prevalent bigotry and hate still are in society.*

*“It is possible to build a brighter future built on equity and justice. We’ve learned that however troubling our history may be, students deserve a complete and robust education.”*

A 2022 graduate of Watchung Hills High School, Kaylin Davis was born in Newark, but spent most of her life in Greenbrook. As president of the school’s Black Student Union, Davis talks about the racial divide within her school in her TEDxYouth@WHRHS talk titled “Can you see us?” You can view it at [bit.ly/3BH7D89](https://bit.ly/3BH7D89).

“What if your friend makes a racist joke?” Davis asks. “Do you laugh it off or do you call them out on it? Take this time to self-reflect. Not only will it improve your character, but it will encourage your peers to do the same.”

In 2018 Watchung Hills students Helen Yang and Alanna Margulies created and taught a lesson on Islamophobia to several freshman world history classes. The lesson was featured on NJEA’s “Classroom Close Up NJ.” You can view their story at [classroomcloseup.org/islamophobia](https://classroomcloseup.org/islamophobia). 🇺🇸

## Former students reflect on being upstanders

Sarah Decker (she/her)

Staff Attorney, U.S. Advocacy & Litigation, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights

Learning history from Ms. Sok and Ms. Lott Jones inspired me to dedicate my life to defending marginalized communities as a civil rights attorney. In high school, we learned that history has repeatedly featured many perpetrators and bystanders, but upstanders—those who witness wrongdoing and act—have the ability to become the real change-makers. We learned that the right thing is almost never the easy thing, and that leveraging the privilege we have to defend and uplift others is an essential part of building a community that supports all of us.

Monica Mahal, J.D.

Clerk to Judge Michael Mossman, U.S. District Court, Oregon

The word “upstander” belongs in every community, and possibly most importantly in schools. Since Sarah Decker and I worked to define upstander, we’ve been overjoyed to see that upstander has become more commonly used. Just the other day, my six-year-old niece told me that she learned what it means to be an upstander and even acted out different scenes with her classmates.

My path since being a part of our high school’s diversity club has centered on serving as an advocate. In law school, I worked for nonprofit organizations focused on environmental human rights. I earned my J.D. this past May and will soon move to Portland to clerk for Judge Michael W. Mosman at the District of Oregon. I will always embrace the values of an upstander as I progress through my legal career, and I will continue to stand up for others.

### Facing History and Ourselves

Facing History and Ourselves uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate. Its classroom resources and professional development offerings examine racism, antisemitism, and prejudice at pivotal moments in history. Facing History and Ourselves helps students learn about the impact of choices made in the past, and connect them to the choices they will confront in their own lives. Facing our shared history and how it informs our attitudes and behaviors allows us to choose a world of equity and justice.

# Becoming **THAT** teacher

## The teacher I needed

*By Michelle Poolaw, 2021-22 Burlington County Teacher of the Year*

We were told, as county teachers of the year, that this year would be unlike any other. So far, I have gotten a chance to meet many outstanding educators and influencers. I've already had many opportunities to learn and grow from previous county and state winners, and I have made connections with leaders across the state.

During this experience, I've repeatedly been asked why I got into teaching and who inspired me.

Many people, when asked what inspired them to become a teacher, immediately recall a favorite teacher. However, as many times as I have confronted that question, I keep coming back to the same unexpected response. I didn't have THAT teacher.



I grew up in the Olney section of Philadelphia. I attended three different schools by the time I was a freshman in high school. I was one of 30-45 students in a classroom, usually seated in the back, with hardly any personal interaction with any of my teachers. I couldn't tell you the name of one teacher I had had from elementary to high school. I never had a teacher who saw me, or showed me that I was important.

My parents were young when they had us. We had very little money, but they were loving and worked hard for everything we had. They taught us to keep trying, even when we wanted to give up. "You'll get it. Sound it out," my mom would whisper while I would try to do homework that made no sense to me, the tears filling my eyes making it even more impossible to decode the words on the page.

No one ever reached out to my parents regarding my academic difficulties or the learning disabilities that would not be diagnosed until I was an adult.

I struggled through school, as many of our students do. I had a hard time learning to read, compute simple mathematical problems, and even focus on the one-dimensional learning styles all of my teachers employed. I would never raise my hand because I knew I had no idea what was happening; not that I didn't want to know or didn't try to know. I would just be so lost between the gaps in learning, the ADHD, and the anxiety I developed. There were no 1:1 check in. No concern that I was lost. No plan or accountability to catch me up. Just F's and C's and D's.

No dignity or grace for students like me. Just targeted embarrassment so that "I would learn to pay attention."

To some extent, I don't blame those teachers. That's what education was back then. Lessons weren't personal or differentiated. We didn't have that, but we needed THAT.

I needed a teacher to see me, to see my struggle, to show me dignity. I needed a teacher to help me see I was good enough and smart enough.

---

*Michelle Poolaw is the 2021-22 Burlington County Teacher of the Year. She is a basic skills teacher at Hillside Elementary School in Mount Laurel. She can be reached at [burlingtonCTOY2122@gmail.com](mailto:burlingtonCTOY2122@gmail.com).*

## I always wanted to be a teacher

As long as I can remember I wanted to be a teacher. I would play “school” like many of us did. I spent all of my own money from my eighth birthday at RiteAid. I bought everything I needed for the perfect classroom. My stuffed animal students were always engaged in my lessons. But I wasn’t going to be like the teachers I had. I would show every student I had that they were important and valued. I would show them that they belonged.

However, as I got older, I never really thought I was good enough or smart enough to become a teacher. I didn’t think I could get into college, so I didn’t try. I have never even taken my SATs. Instead, I became a secretary. All the while, hushing my nagging gut telling me to take the risk to be THAT teacher.

THAT teacher, the teacher I strive to be, works to reach all learners. THAT teacher advocates for the disadvantaged, connects with those who feel disconnected, and creates a community with opportunities for every student, no matter their differences, difficulties, background or even their home life.

THAT teacher sees every student and shows them that they are good enough, smart enough and deserving enough for anything they can dream of.

In my late 20s, I decided I wanted to go back to school. I wanted so badly to be THAT teacher, so if I wasn’t smart enough and couldn’t spell all the words, I would work really hard until I got it.

And I did it! I graduated summa cum laude in an accelerated program where I received my bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education. I finally felt like I was smart enough and good enough to go out there and save every child. That’s why we are all here, right?

## Bringing all of my experiences to the classroom

What makes me the educator I am, and the impacts I have made so meaningful, are my experiences. All of them. The good, the not so good, and every moment in between have given me a unique perspective. My teaching is a reflection of THAT child,



Michelle Poolaw back when she needed the kind of teacher she became. Top: First day of kindergarten. Middle left, right: Seventh birthday, first day of third grade. Bottom left, right: Second grade, fourth birthday.



Michelle Poolaw's first year in the classroom.

## Truly seeing our students

Part of what makes our profession so powerful is having the responsibility to ensure that all of our students are connected to the world around them. My childhood experiences are a huge part of why I am the teacher I am today, but so are the experiences I have had as a mother.

My younger son, Zachary, has ADHD. He, too, has struggled to fit the mold. He was expected to sit “criss cross” hands folded without moving for more than 30 minutes at a time in first grade. He would always get frustrated when he didn’t finish his work as quickly as everyone else did, and I would get phone calls and emails about how he just wouldn’t listen or pay attention to his teachers because he would not look them in the eye. His impression of his first-grade teacher was that they were mean and just didn’t like him. I wish that teacher would have seen him and helped him feel like he belonged even though his brain worked a little differently. I wish they would have treated him with dignity and grace.

My oldest son, Xavier, was that kid that went to the bathroom or the nurse 10 times throughout the day. Again, I would get phone calls and emails about how he was lazy and trying to get out of class.

Well, that year, as an eighth grader, Xavier was diagnosed with inflammatory bowel disease. He has ulcerative colitis. The day I took him to the Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania Emergency Room he admitted to the doctor that it had been going on for over a year.

because I never want any child to ever feel the way I did.

As teachers, we have the ability to define a child’s future with our words and actions. We often hear stories of famous people and their struggles to become who they are. Some, like Michael Jordan, were told they weren’t good enough, but beat all odds and persevered to achieve greatness. I love these stories. But, what about the students that hear they aren’t good enough time and again, going through life never believing they can achieve success?

Celebrating differences, cultivating creativity, and inspiring a sense of curiosity that invites risk taking and trying new things are crucial to teaching each new student in front of us. They help empower reluctant and struggling learners, and bridge cultural and socioeconomic differences that hinder engagement for so many children. Our jobs are to help students and empower them, all students, no matter their differences, difficulties, background or home life.

Teaching has changed my life. I love my job. My unique outlook and approach are what make me THAT teacher that I set out to be. As I watch students go from hating school to evolving into learners full of curiosity and wonder, striving to take risks and growing from mistakes; it’s all the evidence I need to know that the relationships I have built with them through my words and actions made a difference. I know that I have helped them gain confidence to see that they can achieve anything they want by believing it, working hard and persisting.





From left: Camden County Council of EAs President April Brown, 2021-22 Camden County Teacher of the Year Sonia Chugh, 2021-22 Burlington County Teacher of the Year Michelle Poolaw, and Burlington County EA President Anthony Rizzo.



**I needed a teacher to see me, to see my struggle, to show me dignity. I needed a teacher to help me see I was good enough and smart enough.**

have were the books and resources he needed to see himself. He needed to have a sense of belonging and connection. He never got picked for classroom awards, or to be the ambassador or leader for his class. He didn't look like the kids that typically got picked. I wish his teachers had taken the time to see him, to show him that he was valued even though he might look different.

Representing all cultures is something that should be a natural practice. Advocating and promoting representation for all means that our kids see and learn from not only others that look like them, but also others who do not.

No wonder he hated school.

I wish his school had seen him and worked with me to uncover the reasons he hated school and didn't want to be or couldn't be in class. I wish they had shown him dignity and grace.

As a kindergartener, Xavier, who is multiracial, used to draw himself with skin and hair color not like his own. He loved reading and would draw himself as the characters in his books. What he didn't

Building relationships, learning about other cultures and ways of living is vital to inspiring human kindness for students and teachers. We have a responsibility to embrace this.

Teaching each of my children to be proud of their colors and abilities is one of the most important tasks I have had as a parent. If my sons felt this way, how many other kids feel this way?

I wish my teachers had seen me. I wish they had taken the time to make me feel like I belonged. I wish they had shown me dignity and grace.

I strongly believe that there are so many amazing teachers out there who make a difference every single day. They have empathy, they are creative and diverse, they make mistakes and teach others to bounce back from failure, they see all of their students, no matter their situation, because they know these are some of the most important components for growth and change. My message to those teachers is the same message I want each and every child in the world to hear:

I see you, all of you, and you are enough.

Continue to lead each student in front of you with dignity and grace. Continue to be THAT teacher who will make a difference in so many children's lives because of your words and actions, because you see each and every child and show them that they belong.

Be THAT teacher. 🏡

# Teaching the WHOLE STORY

## Challenges of instruction in a politicized environment

By Paul J. Blass, Ed.D.

I think my colleagues would agree that these past two years have been the most exceptional in our careers. The internet was not around when I went through teacher training, and now I know how to instruct a class of students without being in the room with them. Teachers were initially praised for their ingenuity and perseverance during the COVID pandemic, but that would fade as the pandemic stretched on. One consequence of the long road back to normalcy was that the public's attention turned toward more divisive issues.

Teaching history has always been my passion. I approach it as telling a story. Throughout my career, I have continually added to that story as I learned more from books, workshops, and, occasionally, a good documentary. Yet, over this past year there seems to be a growing number of people who want students presented with an incomplete story. Not only is that unacceptable to me, it is unfair to the students.

I understand there are ebbs and flows in the culture wars. A recent target has been critical race theory. I had not heard of it until I was in graduate school, where I was required to investigate frameworks for my pending research. Critical race theory, which focuses on how racism is ingrained within the foundation of American society, was one of many possible approaches. I ultimately chose the disabilities studies in education approach because it better fit my goals.

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*Dr. Paul Blass is a social studies teacher at Pitman High School in Gloucester County. He is also the adviser to the school's Mock Trial team and liaison to the Borough of Pitman Youth Advisory Council. He also serves as an adjunct at Camden County College and is a former president of the Pitman Education Association. He can be reached at [pjblass87@gmail.com](mailto:pjblass87@gmail.com).*

There is a concerted effort by some to portray critical race theory as a type of leftist agenda, where the teaching of race is used to contrast those who have power and privilege against those they exploit. But critical race theory is not a curriculum used in K-12 schools, though I see why people would believe it is based on some of the media coverage given the topic.

Nonetheless, bills have been introduced in 35 state legislatures to restrict or regulate the discussion of race within the classroom. New Jersey is one of those states. A bill (S-598) has been referred to the Senate Education Committee that would prohibit teaching of critical race theory in New Jersey's public schools and would prohibit public teachers from engaging in political, ideological or religious advocacy in the classroom.

### Looking at my own teaching

If passed, as similar bills have in other states, this legislation would force teachers to choose between teaching history within its full context or following a law that curtails such an examination. While under current legislative and gubernatorial leadership in New Jersey the bill is not likely to become law, I decided to evaluate my teaching of civil rights against the stipulations outlined in S-598.

The United States History II curriculum in my school has included a unit on civil rights since the 1970s. The initial focus was on African Americans and women. It has expanded to include the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community, the Latinx community, those with disabilities, and students.

I began the unit with a pretest that presented a list of 17 people and events. Students are asked to describe each person or event in their own words. Just over half of



Students Aidan James and Sean Monteith in class with teacher Paul Blass.

the names and terms were taught during middle school. I wanted to see what they retained before starting the six-week examination of civil rights.

I was not surprised that every student could identify Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. Most could describe the March on Washington and write a definition for lynching, but no student could identify the Freedom Rides, John Lewis or the four terms listed that were related to women's rights and LGBTQIA+ rights. It was clear that the students had an introduction to the African American civil rights experience but not of any other group. Clearly their understanding of the whole story would require a more extensive exploration.

I readily admit that I did not attempt any especially creative methods to teach civil rights. I approached each of the groups separately and followed each history chronologically. I had an outline on a PowerPoint for students to copy. There were plenty of images for us to discuss. I showed numerous video clips, particularly from the PBS series "Eyes on the Prize."

Some topics stimulated more of a reaction: the Tuskegee syphilis study, the images of the disfigured Emmitt Till and the screaming mob at Little Rock High School.

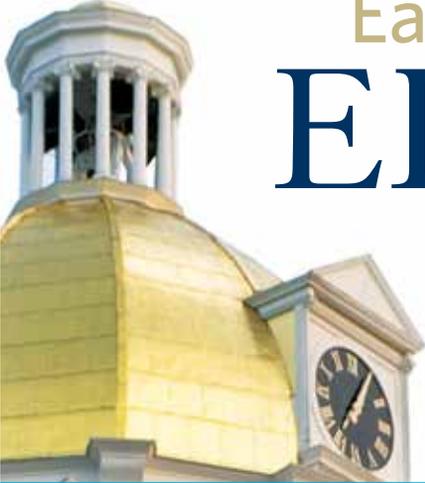
One student asked why they had not been taught

the "real story of Rosa Parks." He was referring to the misconception that she was sitting in the front of the bus when asked to move. I said that I was not sure, but my guess is that most teachers only know the built-up version. I showed my students an interview with Parks where she explained the full story. She also wondered why it became distorted.

When discussing that Jackie Robinson's "calm demeanor" was part of the reason he was chosen as the first Black player for the MLB, a student announced, "I wouldn't have been chosen." When discussing Selma, a student rhetorically asked with a tone of confusion, "Why did they beat them? It was a peaceful march?" It was these and many other comments throughout the unit that made me realize that students were personalizing the material. They were making their own understanding of the story they were being told.

My culminating activity on African American civil rights utilized Peggy McIntosh's "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." In that article, McIntosh lists 50 daily life experiences that are different for a white person as compared to a person of color. The students found the list thought provoking. It generated a lot of discussion.

The common theme was "I had never thought of this."



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“Over this past year, there seems to be a growing number of people who want students presented with an incomplete story. Not only is that unacceptable to me, it is unfair to the students.

One student declared, “I see a pattern running through ‘the matrix’ of white privilege while reading this list.” The students then had to write a reaction to McIntosh’s ideas. Though some disagreed with some of the experiences McIntosh described, every student felt that white privilege existed.

Arguably, some students may have responded in the way they thought I wanted to hear; however, I have fostered a classroom

environment where all ideas, properly supported, are welcomed. Besides, many students disagreed with portions of McIntosh’s list, without dismissing the overall premise.

### Local social media weighs in

Within a few days of the discussion of McIntosh’s list, a parent, though not one of a high school student, asked fellow parents on a local Facebook group page, “Is it OK to teach our children about ‘white privilege?’” The poster also wondered if it was appropriate for a teacher to teach students that the town was segregated.

Though I was not named, it was clear the post referred to what was happening in my class. As is typical with these types of posts, it set off a barrage of comments: 174 of them. I was glad to see that most of the comments took one of two paths: “Did you ask the teacher or principal about this before posting?” or “The complete story needs to be told; not all history is good.”

No parent ever reached out to discuss the course’s content. Had they done so I would have explained how we discussed de facto segregation and related it to the community and school, and, yes, we discussed the concept of white privilege.

### Choosing the truth or following the law

One section of the S-598 considers instruction to be a form of critical race theory when “an individual, by virtue of the individual’s race or sex, is inherently privileged, racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or subconsciously.” If S-598 were the law, I am not sure how topics such as Jim Crow laws, school segregation and redlining could be taught in their proper context.

The architects of the bill might have recognized this



Paul Blass discusses the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1957.

because the next paragraph in the bill, which seems contradictory, does not preclude schools from utilizing curricula or materials regarding “the impartial instruction on the historical oppression of a particular group of people based on race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, or geographic region.” I wonder how a group could be oppressed if the oppressor were not privileged.

If the concern is to recognize past events but not see their continued effect, then the bill’s sponsors underestimate our students. During the “unpacking” activity one student announced that he knew white privilege existed; he had seen it. He recounted being in a store where, despite his age, he was not followed around, but a Black man was. If the concern is that teachers are somehow indoctrinating students, then teachers’ professionalism is, once again, being questioned.

I have always found this unit interesting to teach in large part because of the students’ reactions. It is taught between the unit on the early part of the Cold War and the unit on Vietnam. Yet the topics stretch into the current day. We connected the protests of the 60s to those of Black Lives Matter. We discussed the struggles of the gay rights movement to the now broader LGBTQIA+ movement.

In each class someone eventually noted that “this didn’t happen that long ago.” I think that is the biggest take away. This is not a history that is only part of a book. This is a history that people are currently experiencing firsthand. This is a history that is still evolving. To ignore any part of it does our students an injustice. 🇺🇸

# ERADICATING SPOTTED LANTERNFLIES

## through design-thinking challenges

A STEM partnership through Rutgers University's  
maker certification program

By Danielle Puglisi



Picture this:  
On the day  
before the  
long-awaited  
freedom of

2022 summer vacation,  
seventh grade students at  
Branchburg Central Middle

School (BCMS) were not watching movies or signing yearbooks. They enthusiastically participated in a spotted lanternfly eradication engineering-design challenge that demonstrated a notable example of citizen science and place-based education.

These students got an important opportunity to investigate the real-world problem of the devastating invasive lanternfly. In order to design solutions to the lanternfly problem damaging the Garden State, the students learned about the bug's life cycle and how as few as 30 of them can kill a grapevine. These students designed, built, redesigned and tested their lanternfly traps—all while their teachers observed in the wings.

Solving problems has always been an integral part of my career. I became the STEM instructional coach at BCMS in the 2019-20 school year after teaching middle school mathematics for nine years. The new challenges of supporting learning in the science, technology, and engineering disciplines both excited and scared me. I knew I had a lot to learn to do right by my colleagues and our students.

As COVID-19 swept across the globe and changed much of what we once knew about education, my priorities shifted as I helped my school community navigate new

modes of instruction. Then, in the fall of 2021, our school experiences started to resemble normalcy, and I began researching professional development at the graduate level that would better my ability to support rich STEM opportunities.

Last spring, I enrolled into Rutgers University's new Maker Education hybrid certificate program and became a member of the program's second-ever cohort. The program's goals focused on enabling "educators to create and run a makerspace, become proficient in maker-based projects, and explore maker-centered pedagogy for STEM-rich learning." Intrigued to be learning something completely new, I found myself fascinated by the creative ways that maker education can transform student learning. Makerspaces are designed for flexible thinking, collaboration, imagination and—most importantly—making! Schools, libraries, universities and other public institutions globally are increasingly developing makerspaces to support 21st-century learning and innovation.

### The making mindset

In the first course of the sequence, the Maker Mindset, I was put in the shoes of a student, going through various interdisciplinary design challenges, and learning how to "fail forward." This remains one of the most important overarching themes of the maker movement; we want students to be OK with not reaching "the right answer" the

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“ Students were then introduced to the design brief containing the following task: Create a device to eliminate the lanternfly without damaging the environment, plants and animals found where lanternflies live.

first time they approach a real-world problem. We want them to learn how to problem-solve as real engineers do, to persevere and to reflect on their errors and processes.

Admittedly, this was the hardest lesson for me since I had never been in this type of learning environment. The program professors, Chris Anderson (a technology consultant and adjunct professor) and Lauren Shohen (a STEM educator in the Morris School District), did an excellent job modeling the importance of growth mindset in class. Through dedication and grit, I gained hands-on practice in a variety of skill sets valuable to making, including basic circuitry, soldering, coding, CAD drawing and 3-D printing.

### Maker safety

The second course focuses on maker safety and highlights the layers of safety needed in any maker environment. Live guided practice sessions at Rutgers' on-site makerspace adds to the learning experience, helping educators feel confident using tools and machines safely in their classrooms with students. We experimented with foam wire cutters, drill presses and scroll saws, to name a few.



Top: Hayden C. and Guiliana O. hang their completed lanternfly trapping device on a tree located in White Oak Park across the street from the school. Bottom: Luca A., Alexander C., Christian C., and Noah H. proudly pose with their newly engineered lanternfly trapping device.



Students study the life stages of the spotted lanternfly.

### Maker environments

I am currently enrolled in Maker Environments, the third class in the sequence, and learning how to write maker-centered curricula, instruction and assessments that align to multiple standards. Advocating for makerspace pedagogy and facilities is another focus of this course. I look forward to obtaining my certification in fall 2022 after completing a capstone project to further my school's makerspace opportunities.

### Students design and create devices to trap the spotted lanternfly

Through my coursework and live classes, I met Eddie Cohen, assistant director of Rutgers' Center for Mathematics, Science and Computer Education (CMSE), and Brielle Kociolek, Rutgers' iSTEM coordinator. They offered a design-thinking, professional development initiative on spotted lanternfly eradication for teachers and students in grades K-12 at local wineries of Terhune Orchard and Beneduce Winery since fewer than 30 lanternflies can kill a grapevine! Unfortunately, my schedule did not allow me to attend this training, but to my surprise and delight, Cohen and Kociolek offered to run a demonstration of the design challenge right at my school. That is the kind of personal attention you get when participating in this program!

With less than two weeks remaining in the school year, we planned the logistics and timing of a busy half-day

event, coordinated with teachers to observe the event, gathered materials, laid out the space, selected the students who would participate, and more.

When students walked into their science classroom on event day, displays of spotted lanternfly life cycles (with real bugs!) immediately piqued their interest. Students observed an engaging video clip (since we could not start outside due to a thunderstorm) of the following phenomena: "The lanternflies swarm on some trees but not others. Why is it those trees versus the others they are choosing to attach?"

Cohen then led students through a review of the engineering design process and summarized some important research that students would need to navigate this challenge (Note: The research step of the design process would normally be led by students, but given the time constraints of our schedule, this part was condensed to allow more time for prototyping and feedback). Students were then introduced to the design brief containing the following task: Create a device to eliminate the lanternfly without damaging the environment, plants and animals found where lanternflies live.

Using a morphological chart, the class brainstormed distinctive features important to consider when creating their trapping device and listed various versions of each feature as options for their final designs. This is a great tool to use with students to encourage divergent thinking. We want kids to think outside of the box!

Using the ideas generated in the morphological chart, students sketched two or three device designs. Each group then chose one design to prototype using the materials provided: netting, wire, several types of tape, paper, string, rubber bands, aluminum foil, paper clips and other household items. Giving students a variety of materials to manipulate encouraged them to consider the properties of each material in conjunction with their goal: to design a device to eradicate the spotted lanternflies (and only the spotted lanternflies).

Each group shared their prototypes and explained their reasoning behind each design choice. Issues of both form (appearance) and function (how it works) were equally discussed. Students had the opportunity to give their peers feedback on their designs, allowing students an opportunity to iterate their designs.

The event culminated with students walking across the street to Branchburg's White Oak Park to affix their trapping devices to the trees. Students were fascinated to find the spotted lanternflies, in the first and second instar stages, all over the park's wooden fence, benches and trees. It was truly rewarding to observe them having that "a-ha" moment—that there was actually a need for what they just engineered!

The six teachers and one administrator who observed the event had an opportunity to debrief with Cohen and Kociolek to ask questions, reflect on the learning experience and brainstorm ways to improve the activity with more time and careful planning. The following month, I collaborated with our seventh-grade science teachers, Deborah Glick and Lucyna Plaza, to integrate a more robust version of this design challenge into their curriculum for the 2022-23 school year.

### Going forward

We plan to incorporate global climate change as a key theme into this unit, which is required in the Next Generation Science Standards. We look forward to future Branchburg students participating in this meaningful, relevant design-thinking activity! Cohen and Kociolek shared all their resources, including teacher lesson plans, assessment rubrics, research material and an engineering notebook for students to document their learning.

The remarkable thing about these resources is how easily adaptable they are to other design challenges. We are so grateful for the opportunity we had to partner with such impactful educators.

My biggest takeaway: Students are motivated to work hard, even in the last days of school, if they are engaged in meaningful, hands-on learning that is relevant to their lives and has a real purpose. When given a choice, they will also choose the engaging STEM design challenge over other traditional end-of-the-year activities!

For more information about CMSCE programs for students and teachers, call 848-932-4769 or visit [cmsce.rutgers.edu](https://cmsce.rutgers.edu). 🌐



# NOISE

## harms a lot more than our ears

By Dorothy Wigmore

### How does noise affect us?

Like stress, loud noise increases blood pressure, leading to heart-related problems. It also can cause endocrine disruption (another route to cardiovascular effects) and gastrointestinal effects.

People get frustrated or anxious around noise (e.g., reactions to fire crackers, blaring music). Muscles tense, breathing changes and heartbeats increase—all common stress responses.

Different body tissues resonate at really low noise levels (e.g., loud, thumping bass music), causing headaches, nausea, ear problems, dizziness and more.

Noisy environments present safety hazards, such as not hearing warning sounds, and decrease concentration. Students learn less in noisy spaces.

Noise also interferes with our ability to hear, often forcing school staff to shout or yell. The strain leads to voice disorders, sometimes called “teacher’s voice.” They range from laryngitis to a huskier voice to nodules in the larynx. A 2016 study of 14,256 Miami teachers found absenteeism costs from voice disorders were about \$1 million.

Finally, there’s temporary or permanent hearing loss and tinnitus (ringing in the ears), with a variety of consequences.

### What else should we know about noise?

Sound is vibration passing through something—air, water, surfaces.

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*Dorothy Wigmore is a long-time health and safety specialist and WEC consultant. She has worked in Canada, the U.S. and Mozambique, focusing on prevention and worker participation to solve job-related hazards. These days, she is writing *Transmission Truth? a book about workers’ experiences in the pandemic.**

Frequencies (pitch) matter. With good ears, we generally hear sounds between 20 and 20,000 hertz (cycles/second). Hearing loss and resonance vary by frequency.

Distance and time also matter. The closer we are to a noise, and the longer there, the worse the effect.

In schools, there also is resonance and background noise from ventilation systems.

“In one workplace, people said they were dizzy, had ear problems, felt like they were losing consciousness, but never actually did,” says Canadian occupational hygienist John Oudyk.

“We checked out all the air quality issues,” he explains. “Nothing showed up. Then we used the noise meter, looking at the frequencies. I think at 60 hertz, we had 87 decibels. It wasn’t noise you would perceive but you could feel it in your head ... If you have a lower frequency, then you’ll feel it in your thorax, depending on your size.”

### What are decibels? How are they used?

Anything above 65 decibels (dB) eventually wears down our hearing. Regular exposure to noise at 80 to 85 dB can cause legal deafness.

What’s a decibel? Basically, it’s sound measured on a logarithmic scale. (You can’t just add or subtract numbers.) Sound level meters and the law use the dB(A) scale to account for how people hear.

New Jersey’s Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) uses federal OSHA noise rules. When employees may be exposed to more than a time-weighted eight-hour average of 85 dB, employers must have noise monitoring and free hearing/audiometric testing programs. They also must try to reduce the noise. Engineering changes are much more effective than hearing protection, which must fit and account for the frequencies and sound levels.

“Whether you’re in a classroom, driving a school bus, using a hand dryer or operating tools or equipment, noise can be a hazard in multiple ways.

The law also limits how long to be in noisy places, based on the sound level doubling every five dB. That means four hours at 95 dB(A). Most authorities elsewhere use a three dB doubling rule; that’s just under an hour at 95.

The law ignores other effects, while U.S. classroom acoustics standards limit background noise to between 35 and 40 dB(A) and

ventilation background noise to similar levels.

Those Paterson School District air purifiers were rated at 45 and 55 dB for low to high speeds. Their Carrier OptiClean air scrubbers are between 51 and 56 or 61 and 64 (depending on the model). In reality, they’re likely worse.

No wonder Baker’s class had problems. To hear, we need a difference of 15 decibels between background noise and how loud the speaker’s words are when they reach us.

“If a student’s at the back to the room near (the unit) and the teacher’s at the front, to project their voice at almost 80 decibels to the back of the room, they’ve gotta be yelling,” Oudyk says. 🗣️

## What to do?

When school staff complain about noise, inspectors or outside consultants often say there’s no problem if it’s less than 85 dB.

“They get these blinders on,” Oudyk says. “They’re ignoring real hazards that affect staff and the quality of education.”

Health and safety committees can:

- Survey members about the noise and its effects.
- Map noise (including from ventilation) in workplace inspections/walk-throughs.
- Use apps to measure noise at different frequencies (see resources).
- Push back about noise effects below 85 dB.
- Promote district purchase of personal microphone headsets and voice coaching to prevent “teacher’s voice.”
- Get agreements with districts about maximum sound levels for new equipment/tools and ventilation (including air filters).

## Resources

### Hazards.org

“Occupational voice loss”  
[hazards.org/voiceloss](https://hazards.org/voiceloss)

### John Oudyk

“Five steps to doing something about noise”  
[bit.ly/5steps-noise](https://bit.ly/5steps-noise)

### NJEA

“Reducing noise in schools”  
[njea.org/reducing-noise-in-schools](https://njea.org/reducing-noise-in-schools)

### OSHA

“Occupational noise exposure and controls”  
[osha.gov/noise/exposure-controls](https://osha.gov/noise/exposure-controls)

### PEOSH

“Occupational Noise Exposure Standard”  
[bit.ly/peosh-noise-standard](https://bit.ly/peosh-noise-standard)

### Sound level meter apps

[bit.ly/sound-level-apps](https://bit.ly/sound-level-apps)  
[apple.co/3PmHYFA](https://apple.co/3PmHYFA)

### Standards – ANSI S12.60-2002

“Acoustical performance criteria, design requirements and guidelines for schools” (summary)  
[acoustics.com/ansi\\_education.asp](https://acoustics.com/ansi_education.asp)

### Toronto Star

“Big city noise pollution is harming our health”  
[bit.ly/city-noise-toronto](https://bit.ly/city-noise-toronto)



Visions gives special thanks to our educators. That's why we established the **Visions Loves Educators Classroom Funding Program** that awards up to \$500\* for projects outside their school's budget. This is just one small way we can give back as Visions also offers the **Student Loan Eraser** and **Educator of the Year Award** to those who strengthen the next generation and our communities!

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Visions has partnered with the NJEA and committed \$1 million over the next 10 years in support of their members and mission. The NJEA has started by focusing these resources on building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New Jersey Public Schools.

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# Buffalo, racism, and education

By Sundjata Sekou

No one arrives at this point in time without history placing us here.

An armed, dangerous, murderous, racist 18-year-old white male arriving at Tops grocery store in Buffalo with the intent to kill Black people is the historical consequence of a society that fails to confront its legacy of racism.

The place that most fails to confront the American legacy of racism is the nation's K-12 public school systems. We live in a country where schools are still named after slave owners and confederates. Students attend schools that daily reinforce how Greek, Roman, European, Western, and predominantly white societies contributed to civilizations. Yet they refuse to educate children on how Black societies like Ancient Egypt, Nubia, Ancient Ghana, Mali, Songhai and other African nations contributed to civilizations in areas of writing, mathematics, science, religion, music and the arts.

In most curricula, the only time that Black people appear is during slavery and the Civil Rights Movement. To simplify a people's history to two moments in time is educational malfeasance. But to this day, in most classes, this practice continues.

Although Asian civilizations contributed the numeric system, paper, printing and agricultural advances to the world, the mere mention that people from these areas did those things is almost universally ignored in most curricula. Also, most curricula ignore the fact that Mesoamerican societies such as the Olmecs had cities, a calendar and a writing system. The Aztecs built a city on a lake and schools. The Incas built a city 9,000 feet in the air. The

Iroquois Confederacy, which consisted of Mohawks, the Onondaga, the Cayuga, the Oneida, the Seneca and the Tuscarora formed a multistate government in North America before the United States was

created.

Why don't most children know these facts? Why don't most adults learn these facts until maybe college or when they become autodidactic? It is because of the omission of

these facts by state learning standards. "Wack" learning standards create wack curricula which produces wack teachers who are evaluated by wack administrators who expect to see exclusionary wack lessons. For a teacher to be "dope" (very good) at including Black, Brown, Asian, native, and Indigenous people's history, they have to smuggle contraband into classrooms. What is contraband in this perspective? The contraband is inclusionary lessons and books.

Thus, the essential question is how do you become a dope teacher and dismantle an educational system that bolsters and promotes whiteness and largely excludes Brown, Asian, native, Indigenous, and particularly Black people's history? The second essential question is how do we stop perpetuating the myths fostered by white supremacy that mass shooters may use as justification for their racism?

If you are a dope teacher who is creating room in your class for students to discuss, interrogate, and grapple with American racism, I salute you!

If you are a teacher who neglects to engage students with issues of race, African and Native people's histories before enslavement and colonialism, you are doing all students a disservice. In order to become a dope teacher, you should undertake an endeavor of self learning about non-European nations, attend the NJEA Members of Color Conference on Sept. 16-17, NJEA REAL Movement workshops, read books by the Zinn Project, and you and your children should attend MapSo Freedom School events.

What students need now and in the future is for teachers to become education liberators, uncompromising truth tellers, abolitionist teachers, student advocates, researchers, presenters of historical facts, and deconstructors of American historical myths.

This is what we must do as educators to get rid of the dangerous scourge of white supremacists online and in person!

---

*Sundjata Sekou is a third-grade math and science teacher at Mount Vernon Avenue Elementary School in Irvington. He is a member of the NJEA Amistad Curriculum Design Team. Sekou can be reached at [sundjata.sekou@gmail.com](mailto:sundjata.sekou@gmail.com).*

“**To simplify a people's history to two moments in time is educational malfeasance.**”



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# BRINGING PD ENERGY IN '22-'23

By Dr. Chrissi Miles

Effective teams are fueled by a shared purpose that creates impact. It is not enough to explore what we do and how we do it: we must fundamentally be driven by an understanding of why.

Simon Sinek states: “Leading means that others willingly follow you—not because they have to, not because they are paid to, but because they want to.” Plainly, leadership does not mean being in charge, but rather taking care of those within your charge—be it education professionals, students, or the communities we serve.

The NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues (PDII) Division is committed to igniting this energy, carrying it forward, and inspiring communities to learn and lead with us, side-by-side.

The PDII Division seeks to improve and enrich society through public education. We create experiences that cultivate enhanced professional practice, promote organizing around educational issues, and foster the development of community leadership. As we conceptualize, design, and implement our work, we continually ask one another:

- In what ways does our work enhance members' professional practice?
- In what ways does our work intentionally organize members around meaningful educational issues?
- In what ways does our work lead members to take equitable, just, and impactful action?

**To that end, here's where we begin:**

## Convention

NJEA Convention will amplify issues of advocacy, organizing, and enhancing professional practice. Keynotes focusing on the power of seeing one's identity and history reflected in the curriculum will include national treasure LeVar Burton, deaf-activist Nyle DiMarco, and 1619 Project author, Nikole Hannah Jones. We'll elevate student activism and leadership with March for Our Lives' David Hogg, Time magazine's "Kid of the Year" Orion Jean, and Cherry Hill's very own transgender-rights activist and Disney Marvel Comic-star, Rebekah Bruesehoff. Highlighted sessions on labor will capture the power and promise of organizing.

Workshops on Amistad, Holocaust, LGBTQIA+, Asian

American and Pacific Islander, and persons with disabilities curriculum inclusion are infused across the convention program and highlighted in our new NJEA Consortium space. Additionally, educator self-care is prioritized with guided meditation, healing through the arts, and baby-goat yoga in our expanded Wellness area. “Bah-maste.”

Booksmiles, a member-led nonprofit on a mission to “irrigate book deserts” will distribute to members over 10,000 representative books purchased from independent, Black-owned bookstores.

## PDII Conference Series

Our PDII Conference series will weave together themes of wellness, equity, advocacy, organizing, and enhancing professional practice. Each conference will include keynote and workshop sessions focused on developing instructional practice, special and gifted education, teacher leadership, healing, and educational support professional (ESP) issues. Consortium-sponsored sessions will further the knowledge, skills, and understanding of teaching the truth. Hosting and participatory practices will complement each conference, creating intentional space to amplify member voices and strengthen networks.

## Professional Learning and Programs

County and local professional learning opportunities continue in both in-person and virtual formats. A statewide virtual “Year of Healing” series brings opportunities to develop understanding of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), social-emotional learning, healing practices, and inclusive curricula.

Our Teacher Leader Academy program's third cohort is actively developing understanding of what it means to lead from within the profession in ways that impact the larger education system.

Our ACCESS program (A Community Collective for Equitable and Sustainable Schools) continues to foster environments that build a thriving community.

## Policy

The PDII team advocates for equitable, just and impactful policy with the New Jersey Department of Education and State Board of Education. Our public comment collection tool ensures amplification of member and community voices on a variety of issues including standards and assessment, certification, recruitment and retention, and more.

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*Dr. Chrissi Miles is the director of NJEA's Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. For more information, questions, concerns or cries of outrage, email Dr. Miles at [cmiles@njea.org](mailto:cmiles@njea.org).*

# NJEXCEL

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For further details, visit [njea.org/tla](http://njea.org/tla)

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

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

WEB: [njea.org/tla](http://njea.org/tla)  
EMAIL: [teacherleader@njea.org](mailto:teacherleader@njea.org)

\*12 credits offered through Thomas Edison State College



## Meet your NJEA Preservice officers and chairs

NJEA Preservice is led by college students like you, preparing for a career in education.

Meet this year's NJEA Preservice officers and committee chairs.



### Sarah Adamo President

Last year, Sarah served as the NJEA Preservice secretary and political action co-chair, sitting on numerous committees, campaigning to eliminate edTPA, and organizing events to grow membership. Sarah was also a virtual delegate at the 2022 NEA

Representative Assembly. Moving forward, she hopes to raise awareness about issues that impact current and aspiring educators and their pupils and to highlight the indispensable role that teachers play in schools and communities.



### Matthew Yuro Vice President and Membership and Local Outreach Chair

Matthew is a sophomore at The College of New Jersey, majoring in special education, elementary education, and history. Matthew looks

forward to growing membership past pre-pandemic numbers, as well as engaging with more NJEA Preservice members and discussing the benefits of being in this organization as an aspiring educator.



### Kayla Kanarkowski Secretary and Communications Chair

Kayla is a junior at Rider University where she is studying elementary/special/middle school social studies education. She served last year as the social media chair and is excited to

see what the team can accomplish in the upcoming year regarding membership growth.

### Bianca Nicolescu, Diversity and Justice Co-Chair

Bianca (she/her/hers) is a sophomore at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), studying secondary mathematics education as well as women's, gender, and sexuality studies through the Women in Learning and Leadership (WILL) program. Bianca is excited to continue working alongside the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee and the NJEA Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee to fight for racial and social justice and more diverse teacher representation in schools.

### Jeannie Pincus Diversity and Justice Co-Chair

Jeannie is a senior at Stockton University where she is studying elementary education, holistic health, and disability studies. Her goal for the Diversity and Justice Committee is to provide a supportive role while making a positive impact in our community. She looks forward to bringing diversity into our educational community.

### Brian Reilly Political Action Co-Chair

Brian is a senior at Seton Hall University studying secondary education and mathematics. Brian has served on a number of different committees and in various roles in NJEA Preservice, most recently serving as the NJEA Preservice president for the 2021-22 school year. Brian is looking forward to fighting for all preservice members on a range of issues from debt to certification requirements.

### Nicholas D'Antuono Political Action Co-Chair

Nicholas is a senior at Kean University's Ocean County College satellite, where he is majoring in history with certification in teaching K-12 students with disabilities. After graduation, Nicholas' goal is to become a middle school social studies teacher and basketball coach. He has a passion for instilling a well-rounded, civic-based education in students in hopes of creating the next generation of informed citizens.

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[EcoCitizenship.org](https://EcoCitizenship.org)

# CREATING SAFER SPACES

Amy Moran, Ph.D. with Kate Okeson

Welcome back! We wanted to start off the school year with some thoughts on Safe Spaces and the creation of more inclusive environments for learning.

We hear the term “safe space” and might assume that some kind of magic has happened that makes it that way. This magic ensures that LGBTQIA+ and other students of marginalized populations are “safe” from any inhibiting factor that would endanger their capacity to freely learn, explore and comfortably be their authentic selves in that space.

In reality, the concept of safety for LGBTQIA+ and other marginalized people is continually up for interrogation. It's not magic, but educators can activate a few connected elements in their classrooms to help make “safer spaces” for all. It is a process, not a pronouncement.

Let's start with VISIBILITY. Make LGBTQIA+ identity visible! Post visuals in classrooms and hallways. Say queer-affirming things regularly. Include intentionally queer-positive options in your choice-based assignments. Signal that LGBTQIA+ community is warmly welcome in your presence. Do so in a way that young people and colleagues have a clear and visible understanding that queer-positivity is the norm where you are.

Once something is visible, it has the chance of becoming FAMILIAR. At this stage, we can begin to integrate information we're exposed to—such as LGBTQIA-affirming language, literature, and other signs and signals—and it is recognizable. While this affirmation is crucial for LGBTQIA+ identified students, it's important for straight/cisgender students as well. As those students become familiar with the concepts and presence of queer-positivity and LGBTQIA+ identities, it's much more difficult to disparage them. It gives rise to honoring, supporting, and celebrating them.

We all know that it's hard to be comfortable with something you know nothing about. But regular, positive visibility and emerging familiarity can lead to COMFORT. Remember the first time you read a menu in a restaurant that served unfamiliar cuisine? You may have experienced some discomfort or uncertainty. After a few positive experiences with that cuisine, you became comfortable ordering familiar dishes and maybe even tried new



This is a condensed version of the full Rainbow Connection column. Type [njea.org/rainbow-connection](http://njea.org/rainbow-connection) into your browser for the full article. Use this QR code for book recommendations and resources. Want to share your ideas? Email [rainbowconnectionNJEA@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowconnectionNJEA@gmail.com).

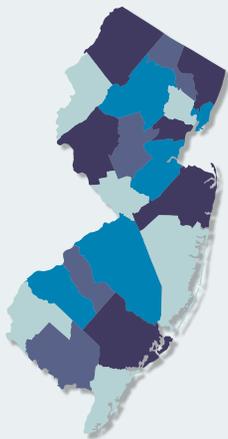
dishes as well. Similarly, because of the ways in which queer culture and LGBTQIA+ experiences have been marginalized in nearly all realms of our society, it may take some educators a little extra effort to bring their learning environments into the realm of comfortability with LGBTQIA+ issues, but it's totally doable!

Public schools often do an amazing job of normalizing and celebrating many things that were considered “abnormal” even a short time ago, such as women in STEM, people of color in leadership positions in the White House, and religious/ethnic identities and experiences that aren't Christian. Consider other identities that you've chosen to bring to the center and the reasons you've done it for a person or event, and do it for queer people too. Make LGBTQIA+ identities visible, familiar, and comfortable with language, literature, signs and signals. Queer positivity can be a NORMAL part of your classroom culture, and everyone benefits.

This brings us to SAFETY. Safety isn't automatic. We work hard to co-create learning environments in which social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies are expanded; incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB) are minimized or extinguished; and where we understand that teaching for tolerance was never a high enough goal. Rather, as the newly renamed publication *Learning for Justice* (formerly called *Teaching Tolerance*) exemplifies, tackling systemic injustice is what makes spaces safer. It's not possible to envision your classroom to be a “safe space” for your LGBTQIA+ students if queer positivity isn't first visible, familiar, comfortable, and normal. Until it is, can queer students, queer colleagues, and queer community members experience your classroom as a “safer space”? And you can do it. 🌈

**Visible** → **Familiar** → **Comfortable** → **Normal** → **Safe**

Amy's pathway to safer spaces follows this progression.



# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and conferences

## highlights

Science convention and Voices  
From the Land

## SHOWCASE

Showcase experiences have been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on [njea.org](http://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.

### VOICES FROM THE LAND: EXPLORING LANDSCAPE AND LANGUAGE, ART AND CULTURE

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, 2022 (rain or shine)  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

New Jersey School of Conservation,  
1 Wapalanne Road, Branchville, N.J.

Starting on Sept. 30, the New Jersey School of Conservation, will host "Voices from the Land: Exploring Landscape and Language, Art and Culture." This two-day, hands-on workshop is an exploration of the oral and written language of science, art and performance. The target audience is elementary, middle school and high school teachers, art teachers at all levels, and environmental educators.

Participants will be prepared to implement the program in their classroom or other educational setting with preschool- through secondary-level students of all abilities.

Registration is \$99 for both days. A box lunch will be provided each day, and each participant will receive a Voices from the Land guide containing examples and instructional materials. Purchase orders from school districts are accepted.

Participants who need lodging can find options in nearby Newton or may be able to reserve a nearby campsite or lean-to in Stokes State Forest, which fill up quickly. ([nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/stokesstateforest.html](http://nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/stokesstateforest.html)).

Retired New Jersey educators and originators of Voices from the Land, Erik and Kris Mollenhauer have conducted Voices projects across the U.S. and several countries.

Interested participants can register at [bit.ly/voices-land-2022](http://bit.ly/voices-land-2022). Registration runs through Sept. 10, 2022.

For more information, email Shayne Russell at [rsrussell@friendsofnjsoc.org](mailto:rsrussell@friendsofnjsoc.org) or visit [friendsofnjsoc.org](http://friendsofnjsoc.org).

### NEW JERSEY SCIENCE CONVENTION

Join the New Jersey Science Convention organization for one or both days at the New Jersey Science Convention on Oct. 18-19 at the Princeton Marriott at Forrestal. Plan also to attend the convention banquet on Tuesday night, Oct. 18. The banquet speaker is Dr. John Wilkin from the Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University. He will discuss the future of coastal ocean environmental forecasting.

A variety of sessions address K-12 three dimensional/ Next Generation Science Standards lessons in all areas of science. Methods will be presented demonstrating how to create culturally responsive science classrooms that promote equity and inclusion and that engage students in climate change issues through research, discourse, and problem solving. The explanation and exploration of local problems will also be presented.

#### Registration Fee:

- Until Oct. 7, attendance for one day is \$180. For both days, the fee is \$300.
- After Oct. 7, attendance for one day will be \$195. For both days, the fee will be \$315.
- Preservice and future professionals are charged \$119 for one day and \$238 for both days.

For more information, email Cheryl Zanone at [clzanone@gmail.com](mailto:clzanone@gmail.com). To register, or for more information, visit [njscienceconvention.org](http://njscienceconvention.org).

## MORE TO LEARN ACROSS THE STATE

### 40TH ANNIVERSARY AUTISM CONFERENCE

Autism New Jersey is hosting its 40th Anniversary Autism Conference at Harrah's Atlantic City Waterfront Conference Center on Oct. 20-21. Come learn best practices for addressing challenging behavior, communication, and social, vocational, and life skills for students of all ages. Workshops will include supports in general education settings, teaching students who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), promoting generalization of skills, transition-related topics, and avoiding burnout. In addition, browse among 100 autism-specific exhibitors. Professional development hours and APA, ASHA, and BACB continuing education credits are available. Note that an NJDOE overnight waiver has been granted.

For registration and fees, visit [autismnj.org](http://autismnj.org) and click on "Annual Conference."

## **NJASL 2022: UNLEASH YOUR SCHOOL LIBRARIAN SUPERPOWERS!**

Join the New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) for its three-day conference, Dec. 4-6, 2022, at the Hard Rock Hotel in Atlantic City. This year's theme is "Unleash Your School Librarian Super Powers!"

Author Malinda Lo will deliver the conference keynote address. Lo is the New York Times bestselling author of *Last Night at the Telegraph Club*, winner of the National Book Award, the Stonewall Book Award, and the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, as well as Michael L. Printz and Walter Dean Myers honors.

The conference features a wide selection of workshops presented by practicing school librarians, authors, and special guests, as well as opportunities to meet one-on-one with authors, vendors and NJASL leaders.

There are also opportunities to purchase tickets to additional special events, such as an Author's Lunch and Panel Discussion, a retirees' reception, and a breakfast and keynote session on the final day of the conference.

The registration deadline is Nov. 12.

For more information about workshops, special events, pricing, and registration, visit [njasl.org/FallConf](http://njasl.org/FallConf).

Question? Email Conference Chair Beth Raff at [conferencechair@njasl.org](mailto:conferencechair@njasl.org).

## **USE STARLAB TO MAKE SCIENCE COME ALIVE FOR YOUR STUDENTS**

Starlab is an inflatable dome on which you can project vivid images of the night sky, ancient mythological characters, our solar system and galaxy, Earth's weather patterns and geological features, or the biological cell. Starlab is easily transportable and fits into a small car. It can be set up in 15 minutes and accommodates up to 30 students. The Starlab dome requires a clean floor space of 20 x 22 feet and a 12-foot-high ceiling.

Starlab allows students to make observations, collect and analyze data, and construct explanations for natural phenomena in astronomy, earth science, and biology. Astronomical phenomena such as the daily and yearly motions of the sun, moon, planets, stars, and constellations are easily observed with Starlab.

The Starlab Training will be held in-person at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg and will begin promptly at 9 a.m. and end by 4 pm. The training fee is \$150. Teachers who complete the training are eligible to rent Starlab for a fee of \$400/week (\$300/week between June 1 and Dec. 1).

To register online use [tinyurl.com/RVCC-REGSLT](http://tinyurl.com/RVCC-REGSLT) or visit [raritanval.edu/ngss](http://raritanval.edu/ngss). For more information contact Tina Gandarillas at [tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu](mailto:tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu) or 908-526-1200, ext. 8942.

This Starlab Training is supported by a grant from the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium.

## **NGSS WORKSHOP SERIES 2022-2023**

The Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community College offers a series of workshops for K-12 teachers and supervisors on how to support students as they investigate and make sense of phenomena in the classroom. Through these workshops, participants will explore all aspects of effective Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) aligned instruction.

The workshops will be led by Dr. Wil van der Veen, author and a nationally recognized expert on the NGSS and science education. The workshops will be held at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg. Each workshop begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 3 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The fee is \$125 per workshop per teacher. Participants will receive five professional development units for completing each workshop.

To register, visit [tinyurl.com/RVCC-REG22-23](http://tinyurl.com/RVCC-REG22-23) or visit our website at [www.raritanval.edu/ngss](http://www.raritanval.edu/ngss). For more information contact Tina Gandarillas at [tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu](mailto:tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu) or 908-526-1200 Ext 8942.

This workshop series is supported by a grant from the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium.

### **Nov. 2: Using Core Ideas to Construct Explanations for Science Phenomena**

Develop productive phenomena to drive instruction and explore how students can use core ideas explicitly as they make sense of these phenomena.

### **Dec. 7: Engaging Students in Practices Using Performance Tasks**

Use NGSS Practices to develop meaningful sequences of three-dimensional performance tasks that guide and support students as they make sense of phenomena.

### **Feb. 8: Making Crosscutting Concepts Explicit**

Explore the connection between NGSS practices and crosscutting concepts and use crosscutting concepts to frame questions and focus three-dimensional performance tasks.

### **March 1: Using Explanation and Argument to Assess Student Learning**

Explore the difference between explanations and arguments and how they can be used to assess student learning. Discuss claim-evidence-reasoning (CER) and how to use it more effectively with NGSS.

### **March 29: Defining Problems and Designing Solutions for Engineering Phenomena**

Explore how engineering is different from science, and to use core ideas in science to define engineering problems and design solutions for engineering phenomena.

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Member  
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## NJEA Member Benefits welcomes you back to school!

Learn how to maximize your NJEA membership through  
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### September 2022

- 12** Degrees Not Debt: Student Loan  
Debt Relief @ 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Register at [njea.org/dndwebinars](https://njea.org/dndwebinars).

### October 2022

- 12** Accessing Your Member Benefits  
@ 4:30 p.m.
- 20** Degrees Not Debt: Student Loan  
Debt Relief @ 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Register at [njea.org/dndwebinars](https://njea.org/dndwebinars).

### November 2022

- 2** What is Income Protection and  
Why is it Important? @ 4:30 p.m.
- 19** Ways to Pay for College:  
FAFSA 101 @ 10 a.m.  
Register at [tinyurl.com/FafsaNov19](https://tinyurl.com/FafsaNov19).
- 21** Degrees Not Debt: Student Loan  
Debt Relief @ 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Register at [njea.org/dndwebinars](https://njea.org/dndwebinars).

### December 2022

- 7** Holiday Hacks and End-of-Year Car  
Buying Tips @ 4:30 p.m.
- 8** Degrees Not Debt: Student Loan  
Debt Relief @ 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Register at [njea.org/dndwebinars](https://njea.org/dndwebinars).

### January 2023

- 2** Dollars & Debt: Meeting Your Personal  
Finance Goals @ 4:30 p.m.
- 11** Ways to Pay for College: FAFSA 101 @ 7 p.m.  
Register at [tinyurl.com/FafsaJan11](https://tinyurl.com/FafsaJan11).

### February 2023

- 8** Unlocking Member Benefits for  
NJREA Members @ 10 a.m.
- Acceso a Sus Beneficios para Miembros de  
NJEA/NEA (español)

### March 2023

- 1** NJEA Homebuying Helpers @ 4:30 p.m.
- 9** Ways to Pay for College: FAFSA 101 @ 7 p.m.  
Register at [tinyurl.com/FafsaMarch9](https://tinyurl.com/FafsaMarch9).

### April 2023

- 5** Springtime Planning Using Your  
Member Benefits @ 4:30 p.m.

### May 2023

- 10** Summer Savings @ 4:30 p.m.

### August 2023

- Ways to Pay for College:  
**15** FAFSA 101 @ 10 a.m.  
Register at [tinyurl.com/FafsaAug15](https://tinyurl.com/FafsaAug15).



Visit our newly  
redesigned website at  
[memberbenefits.njea.org](https://memberbenefits.njea.org)  
for even more information,  
resources, and discounts.

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



**FACEBOOK:** Follow @NJEAMemberBenefits on  
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PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

## CHANGES TO EMPLOYMENT AFTER RETIREMENT

The rules for working after retirement have changed recently, sparking some confusion about when retired members can return to work in the public sector in New Jersey. School nurses may now return to work full time for up to a two-year period while collecting a pension. Teachers and other professionals providing special services can return to work full time during the 2022-23 school year while still collecting a pension as long as the district has established a critical need with the commissioner of education.

It is important to keep in mind that anyone who returns to work in the public sector must have a bona fide severance of employment and make no prearrangement to return to work until the required period of separation has been met. The mandatory separation period is as described below.

### Returning to employer from which you retired

Ten-month employees who retire in July or August must wait 180 calendar days after Sept. 1 of the new school year. For example, if you just retired July 1, 2022 and you want to work in any capacity in your former district, the earliest you can return is March of 2023. If you retire in July or August, neither of those months count toward the 180-day separation.

**12-month employees AND 10-month employees who retire in any month other than July or August** must wait 180 calendar days after the retirement date. For example, if you retired May 1, 2022 and you want to work in any capacity in your former district, the earliest you can return is November of 2022. If you are a 10-month employee and you do not retire in July or August, the months of July and August count toward the 180-day separation.

If seeking employment at any other public entity in New Jersey:

- **Ten-month employees who retire in July or August** must wait 30 calendar days after Sept. 1 of the new school year.
- **Twelve-month employees AND 10-month employees who retire any month other than July or August** must wait 30 calendar days after their first pension check is due and payable—typically 30 days after your retirement date, so long as you didn't make any last-minute changes to your retirement selection.

### Working for a subcontractor in a public school

Working for an agency such as Source for Teachers is considered public employment because you are working in a public school. Also, working for a company that the school district subcontracts with for things such as transportation, food services or security is also considered public employment, even though you are paid by a private company.

### Working as a “dual member”

Anyone who is a dual member, for example, someone who has a full-time teaching position and teaches part time at a community college, can retire from the teaching position and continue to work part time at the community college so long as you halt contributions to the defined contribution retirement plan at the college (ABP or DCRP) and do not withdraw any monies from your defined contribution account.

### More information available

Please make sure that you are not putting your hard-earned pension in jeopardy. More detailed information on working after retirement can be found on the Division of Pensions' fact sheet. If you need more information, please contact the New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524 or [state.nj.us/treasury/pensions](http://state.nj.us/treasury/pensions).



# Around the counties

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

## **BURLINGTON COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 13:** Fall meeting/luncheon at Marco's at Indian Springs Country Club in Marlton. Cost is \$20. To attend, call Donna O'Malley at 609-268-0838 by Sept. 28.

## **CAMDEN COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 13:** Nonperishable food drive and monetary donations for SCUCS at the CCCEA office in Voorhees from 10 a.m. to noon. For more information, call Susan Ronca at 856-816-1289.

**Oct. 26:** Fall meeting/luncheon at Adelphia Restaurant in Deptford. Cost is \$30. To attend, call Dottie Williams at 856-234-2045 by Oct. 14.

## **CUMBERLAND COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 5:** Fall luncheon at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville. Cost is \$30. To attend, call Irene Savicky at 856-863-8424 by Sept. 16.

**Dec. 7:** Holiday luncheon at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville (GPS: 8000 Dividing Creek Rd.). Cost is \$30. To attend, call Irene Savicky at 856-863-8424 by Nov. 18.

## **ESSEX COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 19:** Fall meeting/luncheon at Hanover Manor in East Hanover. Cost is \$35. To attend, call Kathie McKoy-Osborne at 973-715-6591 by Oct. 12.

## **GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 11:** Fall meeting/luncheon at Four Star Event Catering in Wenonah. Cost is \$30, payable by check made out to GCREA. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 570-710-5514.

## **MONMOUTH COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 11:** Fall luncheon/meeting at Waterview Pavilion in Belmar. Cost is \$35. To attend, call Sue Shrott 732-995-7754 by Sept. 30.

## **MORRIS COUNTY REA**

**Sept. 7:** Welcome Back meeting at Birchwood Manor in Whippany. Cost is \$35 for members, \$44 guest. To attend, call John Beekman at 973-514-1080 by Sept. 1.

## **OCEAN COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 20:** Fall meeting/luncheon at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. Topic is NEA Member Benefits. Cost is \$28. To attend, call Barbara Miller at 732-477-1711 by Oct. 7.

## **PASSAIC COUNTY REA**

**Sept. 21:** Fall meeting/luncheon at The Brownstone in Paterson. Cost is \$33. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at 201-410-1325.

## **SALEM COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 17:** Fall meeting/luncheon at the St. John's Episcopal Church. Topic is NJ Office on Aging. Cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-467-4795 by Oct. 10.

## **SOMERSET COUNTY REA**

**Oct. 4:** Fall meeting/luncheon at the Elks Lodge in Somerville. Cost is \$25. To attend, call Kathy Kapp at 908-722-7715 by Sept. 26.

## **SUSSEX COUNTY REA**

**Sept. 19:** General meeting/luncheon at the Farmstead Golf and Country Club in Lafayette. There will be a guest speaker. Cost is to be determined. To attend, call Sharon Mullen at 908-852-1221.

# STAFF NEWS

## HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA welcomes **DEBORAH CORNAVACA** back back to NJEA in her new role as the Director of Government Relations – Politics and Policy. Cornavaca had previously worked at NJEA as a field rep in the Organizational Development Division

from 2015 to 2018. She also worked at NJEA in 2013 as an associate director of Government Relations, filling in for a full-time staff member on a leave.

In 2018, Cornavaca was appointed deputy chief of staff for Gov. Phil Murphy. In that role, she engaged in policy work on a variety of issues, including the COVID pandemic, education, criminal justice, drug policy, veterans' affairs, housing, immigration, women's rights, appointments to boards and commissions, racial, social and economic justice, and the state budget. Her responsibilities also include working with labor unions and advocacy organizations to develop and implement shared strategic priorities.

In addition to Cornavaca's work at NJEA and in the Murphy administration, she has held a number of positions with advocacy organizations across the state, including legislative director at New Jersey Working Families and community organizer at Save Our Schools NJ.

Cornavaca holds a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College and a Ph.D. from UCLA. She lives in East Brunswick with her husband, Ervin, and their three children, Ben, Nate, and Rebecca.



NJEA welcomes **ADRIAN RODRIGUEZ** who joined NJEA staff on July 1 as a UniServ field rep in the Region 21 office in Livingston. Prior to joining NJEA staff, worked for more than 20 years as a social studies and humanities teacher. Most recently

he taught AP World History, AP U.S. Government and Politics, and theory of knowledge at Fort Lee High School. He served as local president of the Fort Lee Education Association as well as other positions. He had also been employed as a part-time UniServ consultant in the Region 23/25 office in Hasbrouck Heights since February 2020. Rodriguez holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Pennsylvania with a major in international relations and a minor in Latin American studies. He lives in Edgewater with his wife and son.



NJEA welcomes **ADAM SHERIDAN** who joined NJEA staff on June 16 as an associate director in the Government Relations Division. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Sheridan worked for 20 years in the Pemberton Township and Winslow Township

school districts as a computer technician and English language arts teacher, respectively. He served as president of the Winslow Township Education Association, among many other local association positions. Sheridan holds a bachelor's degree in English from Rutgers University-Camden. He lives in Berlin with his wife, Leslie.



NJEA welcomes **KRISTA ORELLANA** who joined NJEA staff on July 1 as a secretary in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Orellana had been a lead preschool teacher at a childcare center since

2019. This year, she graduated from Mercer County Community College with an associate degree in education. Orellana lives in Hamilton with her husband, Roberto, and their children, Alyssa, Luciano and Liliana.



NJEA welcomes **JEANETTE RODRIGUEZ** who joined NJEA staff on July 1 as a secretary in the Region 15 UniServ office in Cranford. Rodriguez has over 25 years of administrative and customer service experience. Prior to joining NJEA

staff, she had served as ombudsman assistant/judiciary clerk 3 at the Superior Court of New Jersey-Union Vicinage in Elizabeth since 2003. Rodriguez lives in Edison.



NJEA welcomes **MEGHAN WESTBROOK** who joined NJEA staff on July 18 as an administrative assistant in Office of Legal Services/Member. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Westbrook worked as a legal assistant for the labor and employment law

firm, Zazzali, Fagella, Nowak, Kleinbaum and Friedman since 2005. She holds an associate degree in liberal arts from Bucks County Community College. Westbrook lives in Churchville, Pa. with her husband David and their two children, Luke and Olivia.



NJEA congratulates **JESSICA VAZQUEZ-DENNEY** on her promotion to temporary UniServ field rep in the Region 3 office in Mount Laurel. Vazquez-Denney initially joined NJEA staff in February 2020 as a secretary in the Region 3 office.

Prior to joining NJEA staff, she worked for 16 years as a principal's secretary in three New Jersey public school districts: Pine Hill, Clementon and Gloucester City. An NJEA member for all of those 16 years, Vazquez-Denney was an active member of the Pine Hill Education Association, having served as its president and vice president. She was also an NJEA Summer Fellow in 2017. Vazquez-Denney lives in Pitman with her husband, Steve, and three children.



NJEA welcomes **ANDREA WHILDEN** who joined NJEA staff on July 18 as a temporary secretary in the UniServ Region 3 office in Mount Laurel. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Whilden had performed administrative duties for the Borough

of Pitman's Finance Office since 2021. From 2010 through 2020, she worked in the Fitness Department at the Virtua Center for Health and Fitness. Prior to that she worked as a probation officer in both the Family Division and Criminal Case Management Office at the Cumberland County Courthouse. Whilden holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of South Carolina. She lives in Pitman with her daughter, Mackenzie, and son, Benny.

## NATIONAL HISTORY DAY NAMES ALBURG THE PATRICIA BEHRING TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Lizandaa Alburg, an associate director in NJEA's Professional Development and Instructional Issues division was named the 2022 Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year for the Junior Division. Each of the 58 National History Day® (NHD) affiliates may nominate one high school and one middle school teacher for the

award. Until April 1, Alburg was a middle school social studies teacher at the Paterson Academy for the Gifted and Talented at School 28 in Paterson, when she was among the nominees for the award.

Both division awards are sponsored by Patricia Behring, a life-long supporter of education, who recognizes teachers that excel at student-centric learning. The award comes with a \$10,000 cash prize in addition to the prestige of winning an internationally competitive award that recognizes social studies educators who demonstrate creative teaching methods that engage students in history and help them make exciting discoveries about the past.

"Lizandaa is an extraordinary middle school teacher,"

said Nancy Norris-Bauer, the New Jersey History Day Affiliate coordinator. "Once she learned about the NHD program in 2013, she decided it would be a perfect fit for her students and has since mentored 223 gifted and talented middle school students in one of the largest urban school districts in New Jersey."

"Mrs. Alburg demonstrates the very best attributes of a history teacher," said NHD Executive Director Cathy Gorn. "In addition to her enthusiasm, she is experienced, dedicated, knowledgeable, and innovative. I am very proud to award Lizandaa Alburg the Patricia Behring Award during this tough year for teachers, especially teachers of history."

NHD is a nonprofit organization based in College Park, Maryland, that seeks to improve the teaching and learning of history. The National History Day Contest was established in 1974 and currently engages more than half a million students every year in conducting original research on historical topics of interest.

New Jersey History Day is an affiliate of NHD and a year-long educational program sponsored by William Paterson University. The annual program enables more than 5,000 New Jersey students in grades six through twelve the opportunity to learn about historical issues, ideas, people and events. For more information email [njhistoryday@wpunj.edu](mailto:njhistoryday@wpunj.edu).

## WEGMANN NAMED DIRECTOR OF NEW LEADERS COUNCIL-NJ

NJEA Northwest UniServ Director Mayrose Wegmann has been named the Director of the New Jersey chapter of the New Leaders Council (NLC-NJ). Wegmann took over this voluntary leadership role on Aug. 1 from former Chapter Director Petra Gaskins, Chief of Staff to Senator Andrew Zwicker. She will work with Robert Matos-Moran, Aide to Governor Phil Murphy, who replaced outgoing Deputy Chapter Director Louis Di Paolo, the Communications Director at New Jersey Policy Perspective (NJPP).

The mission of the New Leaders Council, a national nonprofit organization, is to develop, connect, and uplift inclusive, leaders across various sectors who transform the country through social and political change rooted in equity.

"I'm eager to lead NLC-NJ and pick up where Petra and Louis left off," said Wegmann. "This organization does incredible work building the progressive bench, and our alumni are a powerful group of leaders making real, collective change in their communities. I can't wait

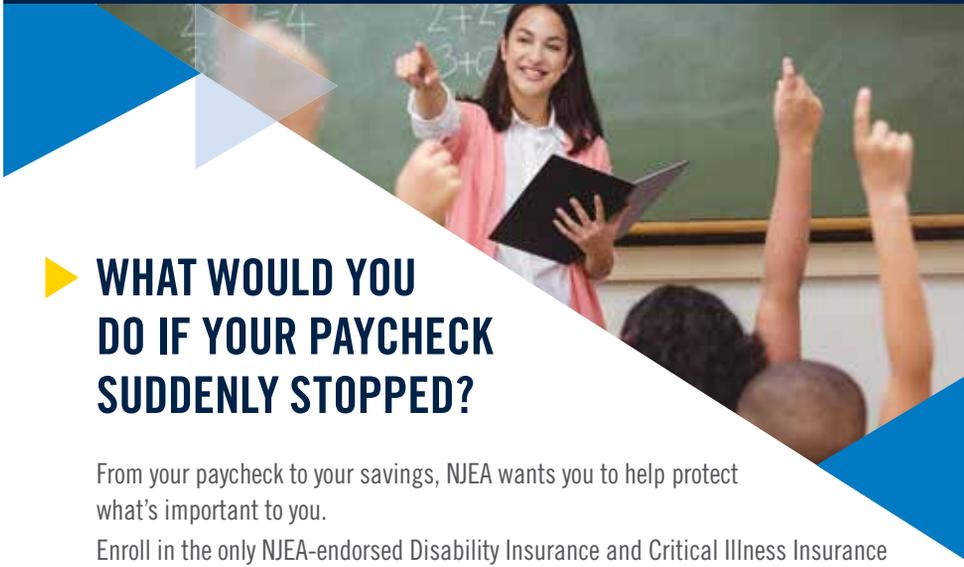


Mayrose Wegmann speaking at Rutgers.

to lead this impressive group of leaders who are bringing about progressive change throughout our great state."

In addition to the skills she brings to NLC-NJ from her ongoing work at NJEA and her past experience, Wegmann graduated this past May from a labor relations program at Rutgers University with a certificate in Negotiation, Arbitration, and Conflict Resolution and a certificate in Public Sector Labor Relations. She is a current student at Rutgers University in the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy where she is earning a Masters of Public Affairs and Politics.

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**njea**

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## Got a great idea?

Get it funded, just like these NJEA members!

Garden State Gardeners – Kresson Elementary School in Voorhees is using the outside classroom facility for a Garden State Gardeners project. The gardening space adds substantial educational and aesthetic value while giving children a chance to enhance gardening and interpersonal skills. Students also authored and illustrated a companion book about their garden.

NJEA's Frederick L. Hipp grants provide \$500-\$10,000 grants for educators just like YOU!

The only foundation of its kind in New Jersey, the Hipp Foundation supports initiatives to promote excellence in education. Since 1993, the foundation has disbursed more than \$2.3 million in grants for innovative educational projects.

Apply by March 1, 2023 at [njea.org/hipp](https://njea.org/hipp).



# NJEA BUDGET SUMMARY

FISCAL YEAR  
ENDING AUGUST 31

## PROPOSED INCOME AND EXPENDITURES (EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)

|   | 2021<br>Actual     | 2022<br>Budget     | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>INCOME</b>   |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| NJEA Membership Dues  | \$ 124,931,251     | \$ 122,774,185     | \$ 123,678,460      | 0.74%              |
| NEA Funds   | 6,480,831          | 7,124,600          | 7,014,000           | -1.55%             |
| General Income  | 11,783,114         | 1,974,715          | 2,022,040           | 2.40%              |
| Publications  | 177,324            | 210,000            | 200,000             | -4.76%             |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>   | <b>143,372,520</b> | <b>132,083,500</b> | <b>132,914,500</b>  | <b>0.63%</b>       |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>   |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| <b>PROGRAM SERVICES</b>   |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Governance  | 4,895,795          | 6,334,200          | 6,391,100           | 0.90%              |
| Legal Services  | 12,775,391         | 14,311,700         | 14,115,000          | -1.37%             |
| Organizational Activities                                       | 533,054            | 4,109,500          | 4,622,000           | 12.47%             |
| Organizational Projects   | 11,586,850         | 6,000,000          | 9,000,000           | 50.00%             |
| Communications  | 6,148,359          | 6,861,200          | 7,060,200           | 2.90%              |
| Government Relations  | 4,223,059          | 4,997,300          | 5,420,300           | 8.46%              |
| UniServ Regional Offices  | 25,585,435         | 28,360,400         | 26,005,800          | -8.30%             |
| UniServ Field Office  | 6,052,934          | 9,398,500          | 9,507,300           | 1.16%              |
| Organizational Development                                      | 6,490,003          | 6,907,100          | 5,730,100           | -17.04%            |
| Prof Development  | 4,828,410          | 5,753,900          | 5,393,700           | -6.26%             |
| Research & Economic Services                                    | 6,002,714          | 7,029,200          | 6,795,000           | -3.33%             |
| Conventions   | 1,677,088          | 3,537,000          | 3,455,100           | -2.32%             |
| Organizational Mgmt   | 7,516,951          | 7,978,800          | 8,330,400           | 4.41%              |
| Membership Organizing   |                    |                    | 443,000             |                    |
| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL</b>                             |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Executive Office  | 5,073,437          | 6,530,000          | 6,691,300           | 2.47%              |
| Business and Finance  | 14,601,691         | 15,612,400         | 18,088,800          | 15.86%             |
| <b>TOTAL PROGRAM, ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL EXPENDITURES</b> | <b>117,991,171</b> | <b>133,721,200</b> | <b>137,049,100</b>  | <b>2.49%</b>       |
| <b>NET INCOME (EXPENSE) BEFORE USE OF FUNDS</b>                 |                    |                    |                     |                    |
|   | 25,381,349         | (1,637,700)        | (4,134,600)         | 152.46%            |
| <b>USE OF FUNDS</b>   |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Current Postretirement  | 37,773             | 500,000            | 500,000             | 0.00%              |
| Contribution - VEBA   | 8,359,538          | 7,387,300          | 8,825,200           | 19.46%             |
| Pension - Cash Funding Adj                                      | (7,864,275)        | (8,000,000)        | (6,400,000)         | -20.00%            |
|   | 533,036            | (112,700)          | 2,925,200           | -2695.56%          |
| <b>NET INCOME (EXP) CASH BUDGET</b>                             | <b>24,848,313</b>  | <b>(1,525,000)</b> | <b>(7,059,800)</b>  | <b>362.94%</b>     |
| <b>ADJ BACK TO ACCR'L REPORTING</b>                             |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| VEBA - Cash Funding Adj   | (8,359,538)        | (7,387,300)        | (8,825,200)         | 19.46%             |
| Pension - Cash Funding Adj                                      | 7,864,275          | 8,000,000          | 6,400,000           | -20.00%            |
|   | (495,263)          | 612,700            | (2,425,200)         | -495.82%           |
| <b>NET INCOME (EXP) ACCR'L BASIS</b>                            | <b>25,343,576</b>  | <b>(2,137,700)</b> | <b>(4,634,600)</b>  | <b>116.80%</b>     |

## NJEA OTHER FUNDS: PRIDE DUES

|                                  | 2021<br>Actual    | 2022<br>Budget    | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>                   |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Dues                             | \$ 12,531,945     | \$ 12,348,500     | \$ 12,452,500       | 0.84%              |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>             | <b>12,531,945</b> | <b>12,348,500</b> | <b>12,452,500</b>   | <b>0.84%</b>       |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>              |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Communication 3650               | 8,202,547         | 8,348,500         | 8,348,500           | 0.00%              |
| Organizing 3907                  | 2,740,447         | 4,000,000         | 4,104,000           | 2.60%              |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>        | <b>10,942,994</b> | <b>12,348,500</b> | <b>12,452,500</b>   | <b>0.84%</b>       |
| <b>INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS</b> | <b>1,588,951</b>  | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>            | <b>0.00%</b>       |

## COMPARATIVE INCOME (EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)

|                                | 2021<br>Actual     | 2022<br>Budget     | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>DUES INCOME</b>             |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Active Professional            | \$ 108,088,559     | \$105,639,600      | \$107,451,600       | 1.72%              |
| Active Supportive              | 16,087,478         | 16,404,900         | 15,510,900          | -5.45%             |
| Retired Members                | 745,067            | 713,510            | 704,460             | -1.27%             |
| General Members                | 1,500              | 2,500              | 2,500               | 0.00%              |
| Subscribing Members            | 1,000              | 500                | 500                 | 0.00%              |
| Preservice Members             | 7,646              | 13,175             | 8,500               | -35.48%            |
| <b>TOTAL MEMBERSHIP DUES</b>   | <b>124,931,251</b> | <b>122,774,185</b> | <b>123,678,460</b>  | <b>0.74%</b>       |
| <b>NEA FUNDS</b>               |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Uniserv Grant                  | 3,073,557          | 3,085,600          | 3,417,000           | 10.74%             |
| Uniserv Option Program         | 388,618            | 399,000            | 407,000             | 2.01%              |
| Legal Defense (DuShane)        | 2,675,627          | 3,250,000          | 3,000,000           | -7.69%             |
| Legal Fee Reimbursements       | 3,745              | 100,000            | 100,000             | 0.00%              |
| Member Benefits Grant          | 84,638             | 90,000             | 90,000              | 0.00%              |
| Cooperative Projects           | 254,647            | 200,000            | 0                   | -100.00%           |
| Travel Expense Reimb           | 0                  | 0                  | 0                   | 0.00%              |
| Preservice Reimbursement       | 0                  | 0                  | 0                   | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL NEA FUNDS</b>         | <b>6,480,831</b>   | <b>7,124,600</b>   | <b>7,014,000</b>    | <b>-1.55%</b>      |
| <b>GENERAL INCOME</b>          |                    |                    |                     |                    |
| Convention Exhibits & Fees     | 140,015            | 341,500            | 351,500             | 2.93%              |
| Interest & Investments         | 11,477,342         | 500,000            | 500,000             | 0.00%              |
| Conference & Workshop Fees     | 108                | 807,000            | 829,500             | 2.79%              |
| Teacher Leader Academy         | 40,500             | 156,000            | 156,000             | 0.00%              |
| Member Benefits Income         | 81,387             | 30,000             | 30,000              | 0.00%              |
| Grant Income                   | 0                  | 100,000            | 100,000             | 0.00%              |
| Miscellaneous                  | 43,763             | 40,215             | 40,000              | 0.53%              |
| <b>TOTAL GENERAL INCOME</b>    | <b>11,783,114</b>  | <b>1,974,715</b>   | <b>2,007,000</b>    | <b>1.63%</b>       |
| <b>PUBLICATIONS INCOME</b>     | <b>177,324</b>     | <b>210,000</b>     | <b>200,000</b>      | <b>-4.76%</b>      |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME PROJECTION</b> | <b>143,372,520</b> | <b>132,083,500</b> | <b>132,899,460</b>  | <b>0.62%</b>       |

## NJEA OTHER FUNDS: CAPITAL ASSETS

|                                  | 2021<br>Actual    | 2022<br>Budget     | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>                   |                   |                    |                     |                    |
| Investment Income                | \$ 10,396,892     | \$ 500,000         | \$ 500,000          | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>             | <b>10,396,892</b> | <b>500,000</b>     | <b>500,000</b>      | <b>0.00%</b>       |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>              |                   |                    |                     |                    |
| Capital Assets                   | 3,066,717         | 2,504,700          | 2,782,400           | 11.09%             |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>        | <b>3,066,717</b>  | <b>2,504,700</b>   | <b>2,782,400</b>    | <b>11.09%</b>      |
| <b>INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS</b> | <b>7,330,175</b>  | <b>(2,004,700)</b> | <b>(2,282,400)</b>  | <b>13.85%</b>      |

## NJEA OTHER FUNDS: DISASTER RELIEF FUND

|                                  | 2021<br>Actual  | 2022<br>Budget | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>REVENUE</b>                   |                 |                |                     |                    |
| Contributions                    | \$ -            | \$ 325,000     | \$ 325,000          | 0.00%              |
| Contrib from Member Benef Fund   | 7,000           | 0              | 0                   | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>             | <b>7,000</b>    | <b>325,000</b> | <b>325,000</b>      | <b>0.00%</b>       |
| <b>EXPENDITURES</b>              |                 |                |                     |                    |
| Relief Fund Expenditures         | 11,500          | 325,000        | 325,000             | 0.00%              |
| Direct Financial Assistance      | 7,000           |                |                     | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>        | <b>18,500</b>   | <b>325,000</b> | <b>325,000</b>      | <b>0.00%</b>       |
| <b>INCR/(DECR) IN NET ASSETS</b> | <b>(11,500)</b> | <b>0</b>       | <b>0</b>            | <b>0.00%</b>       |

**PROPOSED EXPENDITURES  
(EXCLUSIVE OF PRIDE)**

|   | 2021<br>Actual    | 2022<br>Budget    | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>GOVERNANCE</b>                       |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Executive Committee 0400                | \$ 2,519,961      | 3,294,000         | 3,264,000           | -0.91%             |
| Delegate Assembly 0410                  | 58,598            | 283,500           | 285,500             | 0.71%              |
| Elections 0430                          | 445,772           | 335,000           | 341,000             | 1.79%              |
| Officers 0440                           | 1,834,029         | 1,969,000         | 2,030,700           | 3.13%              |
| Committees 1400                         | 37,434            | 452,700           | 469,900             | 3.80%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>4,895,795</b>  | <b>6,334,200</b>  | <b>6,391,100</b>    | <b>0.90%</b>       |
| <b>ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES</b>        |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Organizational Activities 0470          | 405,447           | 3,614,500         | 3,832,000           | 6.02%              |
| Human/Civil Rights and Equity 0450      | 97,840            | 265,000           | 530,000             | 100.00%            |
| Equity Alliance Conference 0455         | 29,767            | 230,000           | 260,000             | 13.04%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>533,054</b>    | <b>4,109,500</b>  | <b>4,622,000</b>    | <b>12.47%</b>      |
| <b>ORGANIZATIONAL PROJ 0471</b>         | <b>11,586,850</b> | <b>6,000,000</b>  | <b>9,000,000</b>    | <b>50.00%</b>      |
| <b>LEGAL SERVICES PROG 0465</b>         | <b>12,775,391</b> | <b>14,311,700</b> | <b>14,115,000</b>   | <b>-1.37%</b>      |
| <b>ORGANIZATIONAL MGMT 0565</b>         | <b>7,516,951</b>  | <b>7,978,800</b>  | <b>8,330,400</b>    | <b>4.41%</b>       |
| <b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>                   |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Communications Office 0600              | 4,630,036         | 5,024,000         | 5,141,800           | 2.34%              |
| Other Services 0605                     | 34,133            | 99,000            | 69,000              | -30.30%            |
| Consultants 0615                        | 143,790           | 206,400           | 206,400             | 0.00%              |
| Media Relations 0620                    | 101,816           | 165,000           | 135,000             | -18.18%            |
| Public Relations 0630                   | 16,566            | 41,000            | 39,000              | -4.88%             |
| Review 0660                             | 1,222,019         | 1,325,800         | 1,399,000           | 5.52%              |
| Communications Conference 0680          |                   |                   | 70,000              |                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>6,148,359</b>  | <b>6,861,200</b>  | <b>7,060,200</b>    | <b>2.90%</b>       |
| <b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS</b>             |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Gov Relations Office 0700               | 3,551,524         | 3,994,500         | 4,552,500           | 13.97%             |
| Legislative Field Proj 0720             | 662,684           | 864,000           | 729,000             | -15.63%            |
| Legislative Publications 0730           | 8,851             | 31,000            | 31,000              | 0.00%              |
| Consultants 0740                        |                   | 107,800           | 107,800             | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>4,223,059</b>  | <b>4,997,300</b>  | <b>5,420,300</b>    | <b>8.46%</b>       |
| <b>UNISERV PROGRAM REGIONAL OFFICES</b> |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Regional Offices 0899                   | 23,623,319        | 25,923,300        | 23,480,300          | -9.42%             |
| 01 Galloway 0800                        | 156,795           | 171,600           | 176,100             | 2.62%              |
| 02 Mullica Hill 0805                    | 173,431           | 195,300           | 201,900             | 3.38%              |
| 03 Mt Laurel 0810                       | 126,244           | 192,100           | 251,200             | 30.77%             |
| 05 Morrestown 0815                      | 51,656            | 56,800            | 37,600              | -33.80%            |
| 07 Toms River 0820                      | 122,671           | 129,700           | 133,600             | 3.01%              |
| 08 Trenton 0823                         | 1,891             | 12,100            | 14,300              | 18.18%             |
| 09 Wall Twp 0825                        | 117,667           | 157,600           | 157,100             | -0.32%             |
| 11 Edison 0830                          | 207,712           | 237,900           | 245,300             | 3.11%              |
| 13 Flemington 0835                      | 102,434           | 132,200           | 134,300             | 1.59%              |
| 15 Cranford 0840                        | 54,376            | 152,100           | 154,500             | 1.58%              |
| 17 Parsippany 0845                      | 47,595            | 69,700            | 71,400              | 2.44%              |
| 19 W. New York 0850                     | 77,284            | 90,900            | 92,400              | 1.65%              |
| 20 Jersey City 0852                     | 131,441           | 147,600           | 148,800             | 0.81%              |
| 21 Livingston 0855                      | 171,431           | 189,500           | 194,100             | 2.43%              |
| 23 Emerson 0860                         | 34,642            | 33,000            | 33,000              | 0.00%              |
| 25 Hasbrouk Hgts 0865                   | 188,808           | 214,200           | 216,600             | 1.12%              |
| 27 Wayne 0870                           | 96,678            | 118,400           | 120,700             | 1.94%              |
| 28 Stanhope 0873                        | 96,701            | 126,100           | 129,600             | 2.78%              |
| 29 Higher Ed 0875                       | 2,659             | 10,300            | 13,000              | 26.21%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>25,585,435</b> | <b>28,360,400</b> | <b>26,005,800</b>   | <b>-8.30%</b>      |
| <b>ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT:</b>      |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Organizational Dev Office 0900          | 3,076,177         | 3,809,700         | 2,689,700           | -29.40%            |
| Organizational Dev Program 0905         | 269,137           | 410,000           | 435,000             | 6.10%              |
| Active Supportive 0910                  | 3,843             | 358,200           | 358,200             | 0.00%              |
| FAST Program 0915                       | 4,486             | 80,000            | 80,000              | 0.00%              |
| Conference Expenses 0920                |                   | 362,700           | 362,700             | 0.00%              |
| ESP & Inclusive Org 0930                | 8,518             | 51,200            | 51,200              | 0.00%              |
| Strategic Organizing 0935               | 2,823,695         |                   |                     | 0.00%              |
| NJEA Preservice 0945                    | 14,519            | 98,000            |                     | -100.00%           |
| Summer Leadership Conf 0955             | 8,294             | 1,018,800         | 1,018,800           | 0.00%              |
| Leadership Operations 0965              | 114               | 37,000            | 37,000              | 0.00%              |
| New Member Orientation 0975             | 46,727            | 256,500           | 194,000             | -24.37%            |
| Membership Recruitment 0977             |                   | 30,000            | 30,000              | 0.00%              |
| Membership Promotion 0980               | 132,079           | 235,000           | 183,500             | -21.91%            |
| Members of Color Initiative 0985        | 102,412           | 160,000           | 290,000             | 81.25%             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>6,490,003</b>  | <b>6,907,100</b>  | <b>5,730,100</b>    | <b>-17.04%</b>     |

|   | 2021<br>Actual    | 2022<br>Budget    | 2023<br>Prop Budget | Budget<br>Variance |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>         |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Prof Develop Office 1000                | 3,690,260         | 3,965,100         | 3,574,400           | -9.85%             |
| PD Learning 1005                        | 28,857            | 201,000           | 245,000             | 21.89%             |
| PD Capacity Bldg 1010                   | 47,617            | 200,000           | 175,000             | -12.50%            |
| Training Consultants 1075               | 845,137           | 393,000           | 393,000             | 0.00%              |
| ACCESS Program 1080                     | 17,175            | 578,800           | 578,800             | 0.00%              |
| Teacher Leader Academy 1085             | 122,354           | 156,000           | 167,500             | 7.37%              |
| Prof Development Conf 1097              | 77,009            | 260,000           | 260,000             | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>4,828,410</b>  | <b>5,753,900</b>  | <b>5,393,700</b>    | <b>-6.26%</b>      |
| <b>RESEARCH &amp; ECONOMIC SERVICES</b> |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Research Office 1100                    | 5,620,152         | 6,022,200         | 5,788,000           | -3.89%             |
| Research Services 1105                  | 120,501           | 335,500           | 335,500             | 0.00%              |
| Member Benefits 1110                    | 248,665           | 481,000           | 481,000             | 0.00%              |
| Research Conference 1115                |                   | 175,000           | 175,000             | 0.00%              |
| Research Library 1120                   | 13,396            | 15,500            | 15,500              | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>6,002,714</b>  | <b>7,029,200</b>  | <b>6,795,000</b>    | <b>-3.33%</b>      |
| <b>UNISERV FIELD</b>                    |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Uniserv Field Directors 1200            | 2,687,640         | 3,916,100         | 3,780,500           | -3.46%             |
| Uniserv - South 1201                    | 601               | 11,000            | 11,000              | 0.00%              |
| Uniserv - Central 1202                  | 3,279             | 6,100             | 12,000              | 96.72%             |
| Uniserv - Northwest 1203                | 2,227             | 13,000            | 15,300              | 17.69%             |
| Uniserv - Northeast 1204                | 2,651             | 16,400            | 17,300              | 5.49%              |
| Uniserv Field Program 1205              | 111,913           | 582,900           | 661,600             | 13.50%             |
| Field Conferences 1220                  | 977               |                   |                     | 0.00%              |
| Field Consultants 1240                  | 3,151,594         | 2,590,600         | 2,590,600           | 0.00%              |
| Strengthening Locals 1250               | 180,221           | 940,000           | 1,090,000           | 15.96%             |
| Higher Education 1260                   | 7,160             | 102,400           | 109,000             | 6.45%              |
| Leadership Operations 1265              | (95,330)          | 1,220,000         | 1,220,000           | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>6,052,934</b>  | <b>9,398,500</b>  | <b>9,507,300</b>    | <b>1.16%</b>       |
| <b>CONVENTIONS</b>                      |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| NJEA 1095                               | 1,359,247         | 2,350,000         | 2,268,100           | -3.49%             |
| NEA 0475                                | 317,841           | 1,187,000         | 1,187,000           | 0.00%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>1,677,088</b>  | <b>3,537,000</b>  | <b>3,455,100</b>    | <b>-2.32%</b>      |
| <b>MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZING</b>            |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Membership Organizing 0532              |                   |                   | 345,000             |                    |
| Preservice 0535                         |                   |                   | 98,000              |                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>0</b>          | <b>0</b>          | <b>443,000</b>      |                    |
| <b>ADMINISTRATIVE &amp; GENERAL</b>     |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Executive Office 0435                   | 4,031,358         | 4,681,500         | 4,909,300           | 4.87%              |
| Administration 0460                     | 994,290           | 1,646,000         | 1,607,000           | -2.37%             |
| Personnel 0480                          | 47,789            | 202,500           | 175,000             | -13.58%            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>5,073,437</b>  | <b>6,530,000</b>  | <b>6,691,300</b>    | <b>2.47%</b>       |
| <b>BUSINESS &amp; FINANCE</b>           |                   |                   |                     |                    |
| Business Office 0500                    | 8,845,168         | 9,443,100         | 10,178,500          | 7.79%              |
| Accounting 0510                         | 4,838             | 6,000             | 6,000               | 0.00%              |
| Contract Obligations 0515               | 1,182,958         | 800,000           | 800,000             | 0.00%              |
| Computer Center 0520                    | 1,798,758         | 2,091,000         | 3,708,200           | 77.34%             |
| Membership Processing 0530              | 138,280           | 339,800           | 345,500             | 1.68%              |
| Headquarters Operation 0540             | 1,896,385         | 2,182,000         | 2,231,600           | 2.27%              |
| Mail Room & Production 0550             | 242,971           | 202,000           | 230,000             | 13.86%             |
| Financial Admin Fees 0580               | 153,476           | 150,000           | 155,000             | 3.33%              |
| Insurances 0585                         | 338,857           | 398,500           | 434,000             | 8.91%              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                            | <b>14,601,691</b> | <b>15,612,400</b> | <b>18,088,800</b>   | <b>15.86%</b>      |

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# SEPTEMBER & beyond

In-person or virtual status of any meeting is subject to change.

|                     |   |                     |   |                     |  |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| SEP<br><b>09</b>    | <b>FRIDAY</b><br>Executive Committee<br>and County Presidents<br>Council meetings | SEP<br><b>23-25</b> | <b>FRI TO SUN</b><br>Educational Support<br>Professionals<br>Conference | OCT<br><b>21-22</b> | <b>FRI &amp; SAT</b><br>Collective Bargaining<br>Summit                              |
| SEP<br><b>10</b>    | <b>SATURDAY</b><br>Delegate Assembly<br>meeting                                   | OCT<br><b>07-08</b> | <b>FRI &amp; SAT</b><br>Health and Safety<br>Conference                 | NOV<br><b>09</b>    | <b>WEDNESDAY</b><br>Executive Committee<br>and County Presidents<br>Council meetings |
| SEP<br><b>16-17</b> | <b>FRI &amp; SAT</b><br>Members of Color<br>Empowerment<br>Conference             | OCT<br><b>12</b>    | <b>WEDNESDAY</b><br>Executive<br>Committee meeting                      | NOV<br><b>09-10</b> | <b>WED &amp; THURS</b><br>NJREA Convention   |

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

## deadlines

- 9/9** Nominations for Collective Bargaining Award  
Go to [njea.org/cbaward](http://njea.org/cbaward).
- 9/11** Nominations for NJEA ESP of the Year  
Go to [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).
- 9/26** Collective Bargaining Summit registration  
Event date: Oct. 21-22
- 9/30** Health and Safety Conference registration  
Event date: Oct. 7-8
- 10/23** Nominations for ESP Career Achievement  
and Friend of ESP awards  
Go to [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).
- 10/31** Nominations for Equity Alliance Awards  
Go to [njea.org/equitynominations](http://njea.org/equitynominations).



### Employment Opportunities at NJEA

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# STANDING UP FOR WHAT'S ***RIGHT***

On March 21, 1925, Tennessee Gov. Austin Peay signed the Butler Act into law. The act made it “unlawful for any teacher in any of the universities, normals [schools of teacher education] and all other public schools of the state ... to teach any theory that denies the story of the divine creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.”

In the throes of a panic in the early 20th century over the teaching of evolution, 20 states considered similar laws. Ultimately, six states passed such laws. When the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated those statutes in 1968, only Arkansas and Mississippi still had laws banning the teaching of evolution.

A Dayton, Tennessee high school teacher, John T. Scopes, was charged and convicted with violating the Butler Act. He was fined \$100. While the Tennessee State Supreme Court later threw out Scopes’ conviction on a procedural technicality—the jury, not the judge, was supposed to determine the fine—the court upheld the constitutionality of the Butler Act.

“Inherit the Wind,” a heavily fictionalized play and movie about what became known as the “Scopes Monkey Trial,” contains a line that applies as much today as it did when the play debuted in 1955.

“You don’t suppose this kind of thing is ever finished, do you?” lawyer Henry Drummond, the fictionalized counterpart to Clarence Darrow, says to Bertram Cates, Scopes’ fictional counterpart. “Tomorrow it’ll be something else—and another fella will have to stand up. And you’ve helped give him the guts to do it!”

Here in New Jersey and across the nation, we are living in that “something else” time. The something else now is the implementation of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health and Physical Education and teaching the full, unvarnished history of the United States.

Unlike Scopes, who intentionally violated an unjust law, today’s educators are under attack for following the law and state standards. In that effort, NJEA wants to make sure you have all the tools you need to stand up for honesty and inclusion in education. That’s why the association created the NJEA Center for Honesty in Education ([njea.org/edhonesty](http://njea.org/edhonesty)).



We will not sit silently while anyone tries to control and limit what other people’s children are allowed to learn. The NJEA Center for Honesty in Education aims to combat disinformation, regressive policies, and dangerous rhetoric in local school districts by giving local and county associations the tools necessary to forge constructive partnerships with parents and other community stakeholders, discredit bad actors who seek to politicize our public schools and—above all—keep our education community focused on continuing to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for every single student.

NJEA proudly stands against book banning and for teaching the truth. We stand against the exclusion of children or school employees who some perceive as too different to be accepted. We stand for safe, inclusive and compassionate environments for all students and school employees.

This might be threatening to people who rely on fear and falsehoods to drive political agendas, but we are committed to truth-telling because we are committed to preparing students to be thoughtful, informed and engaged citizens. Politicians who try to stoke anger for their own political ambitions only prove how little they know or care about our students and schools. Our children deserve better.

This is important work, and NJEA members have, as “Henry Drummond” says, the guts to do it, empowering the next generation to stand up for the “something else” of their time. 

# School meals drive academic success.

**Good nutrition is integral to learning.**

Today's students face many obstacles to learning – **hunger should not be one of them.** When you support consistent school meal access, all students are assured greater opportunities to focus, learn and grow.

American Dairy Association North East sincerely thanks you for your ongoing efforts to help every child succeed, every day.

**Contact us to learn more about school meal solutions: [schools@milk4u.org](mailto:schools@milk4u.org)**



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