

REVIEW

OCTOBER
2022

njea.org



an education and advocacy resource



Wash and Learn

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1. Members of the **Mercer County Education Association (MCEA)** along with the CURE Arena and Hot Wheels Monster Truck show participated in a book drive last spring. They collected dozens of books to be distributed throughout Mercer County schools. Pictured in a special box at the truck show are members of the East Windsor Education Association, Robbinsville Education Association and Lawrenceville Education Association with their families.

2. On Sept. 7, the **Wall Township Education Association** posted photos of members wearing orange in solidarity for a future world free from gun violence. They encouraged others to also wear orange on Wednesdays. From left: WTEA Vice President for Professional Staff and Grievance Chair JaimieLynn Campbell, WTEA Co-President Gail Maher, and WTEA Treasurer Allison Cadigan.

3. On June 5, NJEA's officers, members and staff joined the LGBTQIA+ Pride celebration in Asbury Park.

FEATURES



20 | LITERACY PROGRAM HELPS FAMILIES "WASH AND LEARN"

A teacher and paraprofessional in New Brunswick have partnered with a local laundromat to build a literacy program. With the help of their principal, a local police captain and the Handy Street Laundromat, they created a space at the laundromat where they could house a permanent book collection and run monthly reading activities and other educational programs.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



24 | ELECTIONS 2022

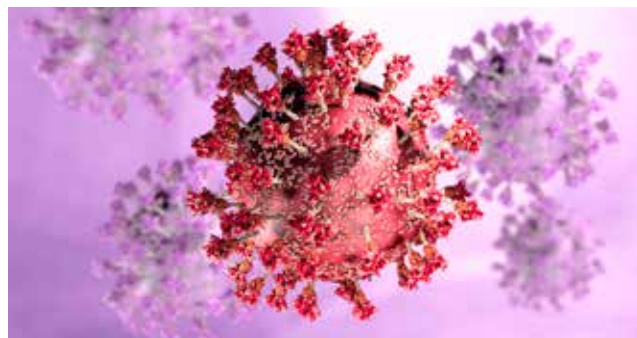
By Nov. 8, whether in-person or by mail or drop-box, New Jerseyans will have voted to elect 12 representatives to Congress. Learn more about the NJEA PAC endorsement process, and read a statement from each PAC-endorsed candidate.



28 | CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

The climate crisis is one of the most critical threats to the planet, and its effects are especially pronounced in New Jersey. To make the transition to a low-carbon, more resilient future, we need to incorporate educational solutions. Working with the nonprofit SubjectToClimate, New Jersey teachers have created exemplar lesson plans that can be found at the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub. The easy-to-follow, interdisciplinary lesson plans show users how to integrate climate change into the topics they already teach in the classroom.

BY RANDALL SOLOMON



34 | POST-PANDEMIC OUTCOMES

Two professors from Rider led a grant initiative to support school districts and students with disabilities through the implementation of trauma-informed instruction and sensory supports. While they found some success in alleviating trauma among students, they learned more about the unexpected outcomes of the pandemic that plagued schools and educators.

BY DR. DIANE CASALE-GIANNOLA AND DR. LAUREN DELISIO



38 | JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

NJEA is affiliated with over 40 professional and career associations. Find out how you can become involved with the ones most suited to your work.

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The number: 33 years

Operating under state oversight since 1989, the New Jersey State Board of Education voted to return to Jersey City control its public schools.

Source: "Jersey City Regains Control of Public School District," NJ Spotlight, Sept. 15, 2022.



GOOD NEWS

New Jersey is the nation's top public school system

Education Week ranks New Jersey public schools as the #1 state system in the nation.

Source:
Education Week. "Nation Gets a 'C' on Latest School Quality Report Card, While N.J. Again Boasts Top Grade." September 2021.



On the cover



Roosevelt Elementary School in New Brunswick has an innovative program that brings literacy to the laundromat. From front: Parent liaison Maritza Acevedo, Principal Gisela Cancia, and teacher Ann-Marie Riveaux McMahon.

PHOTO BY
Kathryn Coulibaly

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NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW

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President: Sean M. Spiller | Vice President: Steve Beatty | Secretary-Treasurer: Petal Robertson

Executive Director: Steven Swetsky | Deputy Executive Director: Kevin 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*

Advocating for our students and our profession

By this point in the school year, we are really hitting our stride. The school supplies have been cleared from store aisles to make way for fall decorations and candy, and we are in the midst of an exciting election season.

Elections are always important, and we emphasize that fact throughout the year. As citizens and public employees, we know that an engaged electorate makes our schools, communities and nation stronger. Too many people have fought for our right to vote to take it for granted or worse, not to exercise it.

As you know, NJEA members determine who has earned an NJEA Political Action Committee (NJEA PAC) endorsement. You can learn more about that endorsement process in this issue and see who has earned an NJEA PAC endorsement at the congressional level.

Voting—and supporting pro-public education candidates—is a critical part of safeguarding your profession. Another way you can strengthen your practice, and the profession, is by joining a professional association. In this issue, you will find contact information for a number of professional associations who work collaboratively to address different areas. Joining one of NJEA's affiliated groups can help you network, build your skills and receive discounts on trainings directly related to your subject area or your job title. It can also help to amplify your voice on a specific issue, a powerful tool when you need to advocate for yourselves and your students.

Thank you for the work you do, each and every day, to advocate for your profession, your students and your colleagues. New Jersey's public schools continue to be the best in the nation thanks to you and the work you do, as voters, public employees and educators.

OFFICERS ONLINE

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: This past weekend, we held our first-ever NJEA Members of Color Empowerment Conference I was honored and humbled to attend such a transformative conference. Our NJEA members are the MOST dedicated educators in the nation, and our union will continue to be intentionally inclusive of ALL voices. #WEareNJEA #MembersOfColor #UnionStrong

On Sept. 20, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller shared photos as he reflected on the NJEA Members of Color Empowerment Conference. The conference drew hundreds of NJEA members from across the state, creating a space for everyone's voice to be heard and valued. Members left energized and ready to make changes within their union and their school districts.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@Steve BeattyNJEA: What a terrific story – The Guttenberg Education Association voted unanimously last year to re-affiliate with NJEA after 17 years! These are members who understand the unparalleled level of service, advocacy, and inclusion that the NJEA provides ... Punctuated by a great three-year settlement this June, there is a new vibe running through the Guttenberg EA, led by dynamic leaders, President Erin Mooney and VP Kathryn Traflet. And all made possible by the tireless work of field rep, Ed Stephens. Wonderful to be with them today to celebrate their membership and commitment to the organization that has committed to them—and all of our locals! Thank you, Guttenberg EA!

On Sept. 7, NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty attended an event with the Guttenberg Education Association, which voted unanimously to reaffiliate with NJEA after 17 years. Beatty celebrated this notable moment and shared his appreciation for all the leaders involved in the reaffiliation. Beatty concluded by sharing his excitement that these new NJEA members' voices will help steer the work of the statewide association.

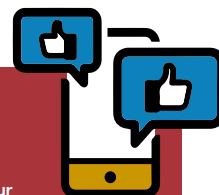
PETAL ROBERTSON

Facebook

@petalfornjea: Celebra con nosotros el comienzo del Mes de la Herencia Hispana. Hoy y cada día del mes reconoceremos las contribuciones de nuestros hispano-americanos a la cultura estadounidense. ¿Cómo vas a conmemorar el Mes de la Herencia Hispana?

Join me as we begin the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. Today, and everyday may we recognize and appreciate the contributions of our Hispanic Americans. How will you honor Hispanic Heritage Month?

On Sept. 14, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson began the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month with a thoughtful recognition, in Spanish and English, of the contributions of Hispanic Americans to our schools and unions.



KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

APPLY FOR SUBSTANTIAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Relief available for household incomes earning up to \$250K; applies to both homeowners and renters

Applications are now available for New Jersey residents to apply for up to \$1,500 in property tax relief. The Affordable NJ Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) program has mailed application instructions to eligible residents. The state estimates that over 1 million homeowners and 900,000 renters will qualify. Most NJEA members are among them.

ANCHOR was made possible when Gov. Phil Murphy, Senate President Nick Scutari and Assembly Speaker Craig Coughlin worked together to fully fund the program in the Fiscal Year 2023 state budget.

Homeowners with incomes up to \$150,000 will receive \$1,500 in relief. Homeowners with incomes between \$150,000 and \$250,000 will receive \$1,000. Renters with incomes up to \$150,000 will receive \$450 to help offset rent increases.

To be eligible for this year's benefit, homeowners and renters must have occupied their primary residence on Oct. 1, 2019 and file, or be exempt from, New Jersey income taxes.

Payments will be issued in the form of checks or direct deposits and sent no later than May 2023 to allow time for application processing and validation. Payments will not be subject to federal or state income tax.

Eligible homeowners can apply online, by phone, or via paper application, which can be downloaded online and returned by mail. Renters can apply online or download the application from the Division of Taxation website and return it by mail. There is no phone application option for tenants, as this is the first time this group will be eligible for property tax relief.

For more information, visit nj.gov/treasury/taxation/anchor or call the ANCHOR hotline at 888-238-1233.

The deadline for filing is Dec. 30, 2022.

BEWARE OF STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS SCAMS

Recently, an announcement was made by the White House stating that many college graduates will be eligible for "Student Loan Relief." See Page 18 for more information on student loan forgiveness.

But this welcome news there has been an unwelcome

surge in phishing scams targeting those who may be eligible. The scammers call or email, pretending to be from the person's student loan provider or a federal government agency overseeing student loans. They then ask for confidential/identifying information such as address, date of birth, Social Security number, federal student aid account login and bank account information.

Hang up the phone and delete those emails. The FSA (Federal Student Aid) office will never call and ask for confidential information.

Here are some examples of false claims that may come across:

- "Act immediately to qualify for student loan forgiveness before the program is discontinued."
- "Your student loans may qualify for complete discharge. Enrollments are first come, first served."
- "Student alerts: Your student loan is flagged for forgiveness pending verification. Call now!"
- "You are required to pay an amount upfront to ensure you are eligible for the program."

Visit studentaid.gov/articles/avoid-student-loan-forgiveness-scams for more information. And see Page 18 to learn the new student loan relief measures mean for you.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES

Oct. 18

Voter registration deadline for general election

Online registration and printable registrations forms can be found at vote.nj.gov. Not sure if you're already registered? Visit 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.

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. 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 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. 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.

NJEA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS

Enter your association's communications efforts

At the NJEA Communications Tools Workshop on April 22, 2023, local and county associations will be recognized for excellence in three award categories:

- Most Effective Use of Communications Tools to Achieve a Goal
- Best Website
- Best Newsletter (print or electronic)

To be eligible for consideration, entries must come from local or county associations affiliated with NJEA, NJREA or NJEA Preservice.

Associations may submit one entry for each award category within one of the following six divisions based on size and association type:

1. Local associations (500 or fewer members)
2. Local associations (501 or more members)
3. County associations (8,000 or fewer members)
4. County associations (8,001 or more members)
5. County NJREA organizations
6. NJEA Preservice campus-level associations

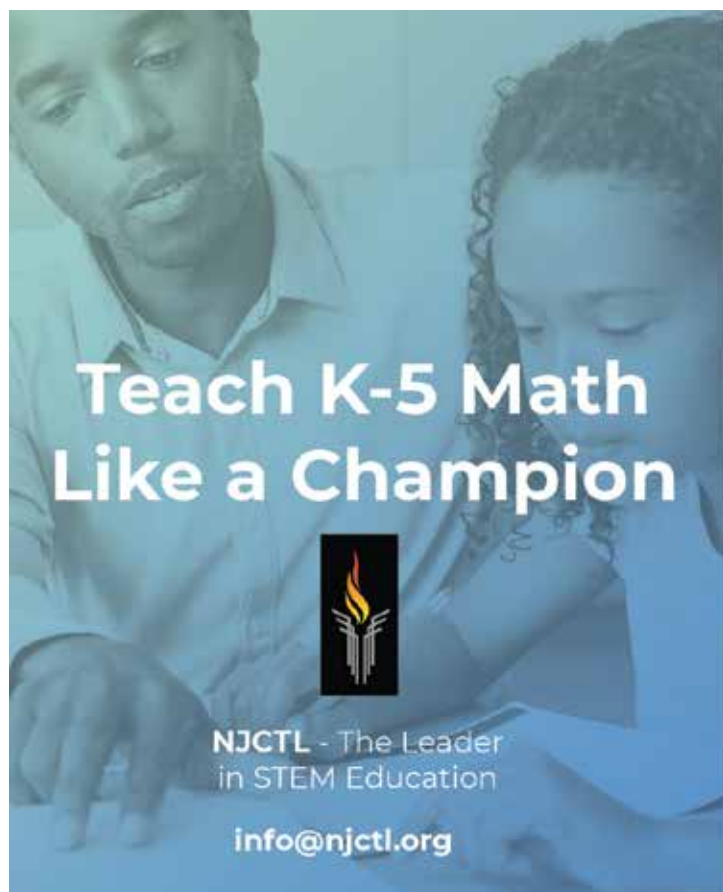
Local associations representing members working at institutions of higher education would compete in the appropriate local association division based on size. Preservice organization entries must be submitted by campus-level NJEA Preservice chapters that are recognized by their respective New Jersey institutions of higher education and are affiliated with NJEA.

In all instances, submitted materials must have been developed and created by members of the association entering the awards program during the 2021-22 or 2022-23 school years.


How to enter:

Visit njea.org/commawards for details entry forms.

The deadline to enter is Jan. 15, 2023.



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njctl.org/K5

COOL STUFF



HONOR YOUR MEMBERS WHO ARE VETERANS

Order free certificates of appreciation

Veterans Day is Nov. 11. Nominate any fellow NJEA member who has served in the military to receive a special certificate of appreciation. Email the veteran's name and local association to Meredith Barnes at mbarnes@njea.org by Oct. 21 and a certificate will be mailed to the veteran.

If you prefer to present the certificate in person at an association meeting, Veterans assembly or other event, indicate that in your email and include your preferred mailing address so that NJEA can mail them to you instead.



NJEA PATRIOTS ALLIANCE VETERANS' BREAKFAST AT CONVENTION

NJEA members who have served or are currently serving in the military are invited to a breakfast at the NJEA Convention on Thursday morning, Nov. 10. Email Meredith Barnes at mbarnes@njea.org to hold your spot.



NJSIAA'S A COACH FOR ALL SEASONS ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

The New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) is once again looking to hear from your school. Each month, NJSIAA features a deserving coach who generously gives of their time throughout the school year, coaching multiple sports over multiple seasons. Take a minute to consider anyone throughout your athletic programs who fits that description and nominate them at bit.ly/njsiaa-cfas and share the link widely.



MOCK TRIAL AND COURTROOM ARTIST COMPETITIONS

Registration is open for the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Vincent J. Apruzzese High School Mock Trial Competition and the Courtroom Artist Contest for public and private high schools (grades 9-12) in New Jersey.

Mock trial competition

Registration closes Oct. 26, 2022, for the high school mock trial competition. County contests will take place in January and/or February, followed by regionals and semifinals in late February and March. The winning team will represent New Jersey at the National Mock Trial Championship in May.

A workshop to help teachers participate in the mock trial competition will be held at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick on Oct 25. Professional development hours will be provided.

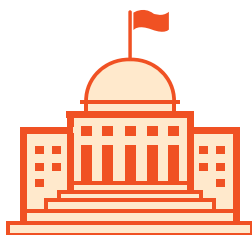
Courtroom artist contest

New Jersey high school students are encouraged to participate in the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Courtroom Artist Contest where they will sketch students in action during county mock trial contests and submit illustrations for judging. Register to enter the contest by Dec. 9, 2022, with image submissions due after each county competition. Winners will be recognized in an award ceremony at the High School Mock Trial Competition Finals on March 20, 2023. The winning artist will have the opportunity to accompany the winning New Jersey Mock Trial team to the National Championship in May.

A free webinar to help teachers prepare their art students for the courtroom artist contest, led by expert award-winning courtroom illustrators, Elizabeth Williams and Aggie Kenny, will be held on Oct. 13 from 10-11:30 am. Professional development hours will be provided.

Registration and more information

For more information about both programs and to register for the upcoming workshops, visit njsbf.org/mock-trial.



DOWNLOAD NJSBF'S CIVICS CURRICULUM GUIDE

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Civics Curriculum Guide can help teachers of grades 3-6 educate students about law through the foundation's Law Fair Competition.

The downloadable eight-page guide contains N.J. Student Learning Standards

- Activities
- Assessment tools
- Videos
- Quizzes
- Matching game
- Mock trial cases

Download the guide at bit.ly/njsbf-civics-guide.



NEW JERSEY STUDENT MOCK ELECTION

The annual New Jersey Student Mock Election will be available for students in grades 4 -12 to practice the habit of informed voting this Oct. 17-Nov. 4. This year's voting focuses on the important midterm elections for the House of Representatives. Help your students understand the importance of exercising their right to vote in every election.

To register go to njmockelection.org. Student privacy is protected. Teachers are provided with randomly generated anonymous codes, which their students can then use to vote online. Teacher resources to help teach about elections are available online.

Results are tabulated automatically and mapped by legislative district and grade band. The election is sponsored by the New Jersey Social Studies Supervisors Association, the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies, and the New Jersey Center for Civic Education.

Questions? Contact the organizers at njmockelection.org/contact-us.

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.

Visit sustainablejerseyschools.com/grants/njea-cycle for the grant application details.

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



NEW JERSEY WE THE PEOPLE HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS COMPETITION

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution provides an understanding of the political philosophy underlying our Constitution and Bill of Rights and their impact in history and relevance to current-day issues. The materials include critical thinking exercises, activities and cooperative learning techniques to develop participatory skills, while increasing student knowledge of the institutions of American constitutional democracy. There is a culminating activity in the format of simulated legislative hearings with the opportunity for high school classes to compete in annual state and national competitions. The state hearings will be held on Jan. 25, 2023.

For information and to register, email Robert O'Dell at ro205@scarletmail.rutgers.edu.

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18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: **Patrick M. Runkner, Editor** Date: **9/1/22**

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18. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: **Patrick M. Runkner, Editor** Date: **9/1/22**

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A calling to care for children

Meet Mercer County ESP of the Year Linda McRae



Linda McRae had accomplished a great deal in her professional life before her career in public education. She first worked with ETS (formerly Educational Testing Service). In 1978, she moved to California where she worked for that state's Department of Social Services and then for Hughes Aircraft Company. Upon her return to New Jersey she worked for the Urban League of Metropolitan Trenton as an AIDS facilitator/administrative assistant.

After working at NJM insurance company since 1998, she took an early retirement and was running her own business. Then a friend asked her to consider working in education.

"I'm a very caring person," McRae said. "I do a lot of volunteering in our community, but I never thought about going into education."

She first worked for the Trenton Board of Education as a substitute teacher, but after one month the position was transferred to Source for Teachers. McRae worked for that company until the Trenton Board of Education started hiring paraprofessionals in special education. She applied and got a position.

After five years with Trenton Public Schools she was laid off, but two years later she was called back, along with a few of her colleagues.

"When I came back, it was at almost half of my salary," McRae recalled. "I came back for the kids, but my experience through all of this helped me understand the union a bit more. I got a lot more involved. I joined the Pride Committee and the ESP Committee."

By going to association workshops and conferences, McRae said she began to see that the union was really doing a lot for its members.

"Most people don't know what's going on, they just pay their dues," McRae said. "But if you want to know what's happening, you have to get involved. And once I got involved, the association saw what I was doing in the community and that I was an asset to them."

McRae retired at the end of the 2021-22 school year.

As a paraprofessional, McRae worked with special education students, including those with learning disabilities, cognitive impairments and autism.

"I would re-teach students," McRae said. "Paraprofessionals mirror the teachers and reinforce the lessons with students who have difficulty understanding the subject. I really liked working with children because I felt they really need me. It's not just academics; it's more social and emotional learning, life skills, and trauma-informed learning. I wanted to help them as much as I could."

McRae, who has a grown child of her own, felt an immediate connection with the students she taught.

"I got hooked," she remembered. "I started loving the kids and the kids loved me back. I felt that some of the children I was working with really needed that love."

McRae was inspired to continue her education in order to better assist her students.

"In the educational community, you're constantly learning and growing, so I went back and finished my degree in organizational management," McRae said. "Once I finished that, I wanted to continue learning. I kept taking professional development classes. As the kids are learning, you're learning, too."

McRae is honored to have been named the 2022 Mercer County ESP of the Year.

"I was really surprised," McRae said. "At school and in the community, I try to do the best I possibly can, and someone else saw that, too."

McRae looked ahead to retirement at the end of the 2021-22 school year but had no plans to end her union involvement.

"I want to continue to be involved with the union, even after I retire, as an NJREA member," she said.

NJEA Report

Trenton Education Association burns its mortgage Owning its office enhances TEA's role as a member and community resource

Under the leadership of Trenton Education Association President Talithea Duncan, TEA reached an important milestone when it held a mortgage burning ceremony on May 19 at its office on 1415 Chambers Street. The association had first moved there in 2007. The late Thomas J. Moore was TEA's president when the building was purchased. Fifteen years later, in January 2022, TEA made its final mortgage payment. Janice Williams, a longtime TEA member, took the lead in organizing the event to mark the occasion.

Duncan, assisted by former TEA President Naomi Johnson-Lafleur, did the honors of turning the mortgage to ashes.

The event was attended by active and retired members of TEA, the Trenton Paraprofessionals Association, the Trenton Educational Secretaries Association, and the Trenton Business and Technical Association. Also attending were Mercer County Education Association members, retired and active NJEA staff, and Trenton School District leadership. Sen. Shirley Turner, Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, and Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli presented TEA with a proclamation. Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora spoke at the event, congratulating TEA.

“Because of them, we did!”

The event carried the theme “Because of them, we did!” The “them,” Williams explained, includes TEA presidents. In fact, a wall inside the building is decorated with the plaques of all of TEA's past presidents.

“Because of them, we are,” Williams said. “Past members, past officers, past presidents—because of their hard work and their commitment to unionism and to the association—because of them we're still standing, we're still surviving, we're still doing the work that we should be doing as a union. We're still organizing. We're still working in the community. All

of those things we're committed to doing as educators and as union brothers and sisters.”

A time capsule

To further mark the occasion, TEA members gathered items to be placed in a time capsule. The capsule has been placed in a glass display case where it will remain unopened until no sooner than May 19, 2072. Williams would not list the items that were placed in the capsule as commemorations of TEA history, with one exception.

“The only item I'm going to tell you is in there—because we just had to put it in—is a face mask,” Williams said.

TEA has been affiliated with NJEA since Jan. 24, 1962—a date marked on the cornerstone of TEA's office. Prior to its Chamber Street office, TEA called 983 South Broad Street its home. Williams recalled that prior to that location, in the 1980s, TEA held its meetings in NJEA headquarters at 182 West State Street.

When Moore and other TEA leaders determined it was time to move out of their South Broad Street office, they met with then-NJEA Executive Director Vince Giordano and the UniServ Field Rep Jim Loper. With Loper's guidance and Giordano's support, NJEA assisted TEA with funds



TEA's office on Chambers Street in Trenton.

to help the local association close on the mortgage. Now retired, Loper spoke at the mortgage burning, congratulating TEA and telling a few humorous anecdotes.

Keeping up with the mortgage was not without its challenges.

When an adverse appellate court decision in Jersey City led to school districts across New Jersey challenging the full-time release president provisions found in some collective bargaining agreements, TEA found itself responsible for a whole new set of expenses it hadn't bargained for: the president's teaching salary, her health insurance and her pension contributions. The decision was ultimately reversed by the New Jersey State Supreme Court, but in the meantime the new costs were a financial hardship for TEA and other affected locals.

"We still had all the expenses of serving our members, maintaining our building and paying the mortgage," Williams recalled. "But we were committed to remaining in that location. We cut corners and did what we had to do because it was important to us to have a full-time president and still have the building maintained. We worked hard, and we continue to work hard."

Serving members and the community

With the building paid off, TEA can invest in upgrades to bring the building on Chambers Street up to 21st-century standards. It can also do what it does best: open its doors even wider to its members and the community.

In addition to being an office space, 1415 Chambers Street is a meeting place for TEA members—including a meeting room that holds up to nearly 70 members for monthly rep council meetings. Both Pride and FAST (Families and Schools Together) events are held in TEA's building. Others community partners meet there as well.

"We have a lot of local organizations that can come in and hold their meetings here, and that ties us directly to the community," Williams said. "That's a relationship you want to have—a direct relationship with parents and the community."



TOP: Current and former leaders (and a family member) of the local associations representing Trenton staff joined NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson by the cornerstone that marks TEA's affiliation with NJEA in 1962. From left: Naomi Johnson-Lafleur, Betty McNair, Talitheia Duncan, Connie Moore (widow of Thomas J. Moore), Cynthia Price, Twanda Taylor, Betty Glenn, Petal Robertson, and Janice Williams. MIDDLE: TEA President Talitheia Duncan prepares to turn the mortgage to ashes. BOTTOM: TEA President Talitheia Duncan speaks about TEA's achievements.

Meet New Jersey's 2022-23 County Teachers of the Year

NJEA is proud to join with students, school employees, parents and others in congratulating the 2022-23 New Jersey County Teachers of the Year.



1. **ATLANTIC:** Bre Baker
Absegami High School
Greater Egg Harbor Regional High School District

2. **BERGEN:** Gina DiMaggio
Lyndhurst School
Lyndhurst School District

3. **BURLINGTON:** Sarah Sherman
Rancocas Valley Regional High School
Rancocas Valley Regional High School District



4. **CAMDEN:** Michael Weppeler
Winslow Township Middle School
Winslow Township School District

5. **CAPE MAY:** Stephen Serano
Wildwood High School
Wildwood City School District

6. **CUMBERLAND:** Jennifer Carbone
ExCEL program
Bridgeton Public School District



7. **ESSEX:** Kristen Dunleavy
Redwood Elementary School
West Orange School District

8. **GLOUCESTER:** Lisa Dolby
Delsea Regional High School
Delsea Regional School District

9. **HUDSON:** Ariel Babcock
Weehawken High School
Weehawken Township School District



10. **HUNTERDON:** Brian Smith
Delaware Valley Regional High School
Delaware Valley Regional School District

11. **MERCER:** Leigh Cline
Parkway Elementary School
Ewing Township School District

12. **MIDDLESEX:** Leana Malinowsky
Private Nicholas Minue School
Carteret School District



13. **MONMOUTH:** Kimberly Grigoli
Spring Lake Heights Elementary School
Spring Lake Heights School District

14. **MORRIS:** Andrea Ritacco
Whippany Park High School
Hanover Park Regional High School District

15. **OCEAN:** Christina Girtain
Toms River High School South
Toms River Regional School District



16



17



18

16. PASSAIC: Emily Blumberg
Passaic Preparatory Academy
Passaic School District

17. SALEM: Erika Knorr
Elmer Elementary School
Pittsgrove Township School District

18. SOMERSET: Ian Evans
Hillsborough Middle School
Hillsborough School District



19



20



21

19. SUSSEX : Christine O'Brien-Mase
Sparta High School
Sparta School District

20. UNION: Candice Testa
William J. McGinn Elementary School
Scotch Plains-Fanwood School District

21. WARREN: Daryl Detrick
Warren Hills Regional High School
Warren Hills Regional School District

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. 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
Borgata	\$115	\$115	Oct. 10	GBNJE22
Caesars	\$110	N/A	Oct. 16	SC11FBM
Golden Nugget	\$64	\$129	Oct. 25	ANJEA22
Hard Rock	\$89	\$179	Oct. 10	GNJEA22
Harrah's	\$79	\$169	Oct. 16	SH11FB2
Resorts	\$67	\$149	Oct. 30	VNJEA22
Tropicana	\$75	\$150	Oct. 16	ST11FB2

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



TACKLE YOUR STUDENT LOAN DEBT

NEA Member Benefits offers a free member benefit that provides technical support for one year from student loan experts who can answer your questions. They can help you fill out and e-file a student or public service loan forgiveness application.

This personal assistance greatly increases the likelihood that you will successfully complete the process and, hopefully, reduce or eliminate some of your student loan debt.

To access this free benefit, tinyurl.com/neastudentdebt. Questions? Contact Beth Buonsante at bbuonsante@njea.org.



What the new student loan relief measures mean for you

By Kaitlyn Dunphy, Esq.

On Aug. 24, the Biden-Harris administration announced a new program for student loan debt relief. That program will automatically forgive up to \$10,000 of student loan debt for eligible borrowers, and up to \$20,000 of debt for recipients of Pell Grants.

Who qualifies for student loan forgiveness?

Borrowers who had an income of \$125,000 or less, for those who filed tax returns as individuals, or who had a household income of \$250,000 or less for either their 2020 or 2021 tax year will be eligible for this loan forgiveness program. This program applies to nearly all government-held federal student loans, most undergraduate and graduate Direct Loans, Parent PLUS and Grad PLUS, Federal Family Education Loans (FFEL) held by the Department of Education (ED), Perkins Loans held by ED, Consolidation Loans (disbursed on or before June 30, 2022), and defaulted loans (whether ED-held or commercially serviced subsidized, unsubsidized, parent PLUS, grad PLUS, and Perkins loans held by ED).

While FFEL loans held by private lenders do not automatically qualify, those loans can be consolidated into Direct Loans, which do qualify. ED is working toward expanding eligibility to privately-held FFEL loans without the need for consolidation.

How do I apply for student loan forgiveness?

Approximately 8 million borrowers qualify for automatic relief. In the event that your loans are automatically

forgiven, you will receive notification through the contact information you provided on *StudentAid.gov* and receive notice from the loan servicer when forgiveness is applied. Those with loans should review that their contact information is current on both *StudentAid.gov* and with their loan servicer.

Because there is no way to know if you qualify for automatic forgiveness unless you have received notice, we encourage you to submit the ED online application when it becomes available. The application is currently expected to go live in early October 2022. You can subscribe to receive a notification when the app launches by signing up at *ed.gov/subscriptions*.

When should I expect to receive student loan relief?

If not received automatically, ED is estimating that loan forgiveness will be applied four to six weeks after the submission of a completed application. Borrowers who want relief to be applied prior to the unpausing of student loan payments in January of 2023 should submit their application by Nov. 15, 2022. Otherwise, the application process is anticipated to be open for one year.

Does it cost anything to apply?

No. There is no fee associated with filing this application. Be on alert for scam calls or emails asking for personal, confidential information claiming that you need to act now in order to receive loan forgiveness. If you are unsure about whether a communication you receive is legitimate, or want to report a potential scam, visit *studentaid.gov/articles/avoid-student-loan-forgiveness-scams* for more information.

What happens if I have a remaining balance after loan forgiveness?

Borrowers with a remaining balance after receiving student loan forgiveness who are repaying their loans under a standard, extended or graduated



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“Be on alert for scam calls or emails asking for personal, confidential information claiming that you need to act now in order to receive loan forgiveness.”

repayment plan will have their loan repayments recalculated. The re-amortization will potentially reduce your monthly payment. Your loan servicer will communicate any changes in your repayment plan.

Is there other student loan relief available if I don't qualify for loan forgiveness?

Yes, there are several other measures being taken as part of the student loan relief package. First, the student loan pause that was first put into effect on March 20, 2020, as part of COVID-19 emergency relief has been extended through Dec. 31, 2022. This will be the last extension of this forbearance measure. Loan payments and accrual of interest will resume on Jan. 1, 2023.

Second, there are proposed changes to income-based repayment plans. Instead of borrowers on income-based repayment plans paying no more than 10% of their

discretionary income, they would pay no more than 5% of their discretionary income on repayment of student loans.

There would also be changes to the calculation of nondiscretionary income under the proposed regulations. No borrower earning under 225% of the federal poverty level—about the annual equivalent of a \$15 minimum wage—would have to make a monthly payment. Loan balances of \$12,000 or less would be forgiven after 10 years of payments, instead of 20. Additionally, if monthly payments are made, the loan balance would not grow because of interest rates.

Lastly, temporary changes to the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program are expanding eligibility of payments and loans that qualify for that program. To take advantage of this limited-time waiver, applications must be filed by Oct. 31, 2022.

Where can I get further information and assistance?

For more information about the student debt relief plan, visit StudentAid.gov, or attend one of NJEA'S monthly "Degrees Not Debt" webinars by registering at njea.org/dndwebinars. Additionally, NEA offers the Student Debt Navigator powered by Savi, reachable at 833-615-1376 or neamb.com/savi.

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Sometimes, it's easy to trace the origin of a great idea.

In November 2019, Roosevelt Elementary School first-grade bilingual teacher Anne-Marie Riveaux McMahon saw a tweet from Chelsea Clinton about a laundromat literacy program in New York City. The program provided books and resources to children and parents while they did their laundry.

That one tweet inspired McMahon and her co-worker, Maritza Acevedo, a parent liaison at Roosevelt Elementary School, to develop New Brunswick's Wash and Learn program.

Working closely with Roosevelt Elementary School Principal Gisela Cancia, the two educators had long been working to encourage greater parental involvement and closer ties to the community.

"We love working with families," McMahon said. "We would meet at the library after school and over the summer with the same four to six interested families. We started board game projects and incorporated strategies to help students with math, reading, and social emotional learning. Over time it grew, and we were inspired to move it into other areas of the community in the hope of attracting even more families."

"When Mrs. McMahon approached me about creating this opportunity to enhance our students' education by meeting their parents where they are, I immediately jumped on board," Cancia said. "This type of community program benefits all of its participants. Not only are parents and students delighted with the program, but the teachers and community participants are energized as well."

Help from the community

The two educators connected with Capt. Michael Bobadilla of the New Brunswick Police Department who introduced them to Hector Martinez, operator of the Handy Street Laundromat.

Together, they developed a space at the laundromat where they could house a permanent book collection, including books and a bookshelf donated by the police department, as well as run monthly programs for children and families.

"We are so appreciative of the New Brunswick Police Department," Acevedo said. "They donate books that children can take home to build their own libraries. And the Handy Street Laundromat is so generous to provide us with this space, along with other incentives to encourage families to participate."

The hour-long program is held on Wednesdays and



First-grade bilingual teacher Anne-Marie Riveaux McMahon was inspired by a tweet to create the Wash and Learn literacy program for New Brunswick students and families.

is advertised through the schools, police department, municipal website and at the laundromat. While structured, the program provides plenty of opportunities for children and families to interact with school staff.

The first 15 children to arrive get to choose a game, craft, or STEM activity to take home and do with their families. During the first 15-20 minutes of the workshop, teacher volunteers help students "shop" for books to take home at no cost. After that, teachers read with the children one-on-one. For the last 40 minutes of the workshop, McMahon or a guest reader leads a group reading aloud followed by an activity in art, music, history or science that relates to the story.

NBEA support

The New Brunswick Education Association provides \$200 a month for anything they need. Acevedo and McMahon scour stores such as Five Below for games, puzzles, art supplies, science materials, and crafts.

"We use all these materials to run programs that help students build their skills with literacy, math, collaboration and reading comprehension," McMahon said.

During the workshop, McMahon explains to parents how

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Roosevelt Elementary School Principal Gisela Cancia works closely with McMahon, parent liaison Maritza Acevedo, and many corporate, community, and municipal partners on the Wash and Learn program.

they can use games such as Guess Who? to develop critical thinking skills. McMahon also demonstrates how parents can use bingo to help their children learn numbers, practice place value, and increase their focus and listening skills.

There is time for shared reading, and the police department donates extra copies of the books that are provided for students.

A 'book desert'

The literacy outreach is vital to the community. New Brunswick is considered to be a "book desert." According to endbookdeserts.com, a book desert is "a geographic area where reading materials are difficult to obtain. The term was coined by Unite for Literacy to call attention to structural inequalities that compromise children's reading development."

"Once the pandemic hit, teachers were very concerned about the students' reading," McMahon said. "Having books available at the laundromat that they can take home with them is a great way to get books in their homes."

Throughout the pandemic, volunteers from all around the community continued to refill the bookshelves and children were encouraged to take as many books as they would like.

"It's so wonderful to walk into the laundromat and see kids reading," Acevedo said.

Wash and Learn provides books for younger and older children, and when books for adults are donated, program volunteers encourage parents and older family members to take them.

"If kids see their parents and other role models in their families reading, then it becomes a family habit," McMahon said.

Connecting with families

In addition to the literacy program, McMahon and Acevedo work with the police department to run programs on safety. They also recorded police officers reading children's books and made the video available to students. The New Brunswick Police Department also works closely with the school safety patrol.

Other guest readers have included Claudio Mir, a muralist and senior program coordinator at Rutgers University Collaborative Center for Community-Based Research and Service.

Periodically, Acevedo runs technology workshops for parents. She shows them the apps and websites for the schools and helps them navigate various technology platforms so they can better communicate with the schools.

"We've had high school volunteers go over different technologies with parents," Acevedo said. "They help them with their phones and show them how to access Google Meet and Google Classroom."

"We thought people were too busy or not interested, but a lot of parents just weren't sure how to connect or what to do," McMahon said. "Connecting with the community has really changed our perception of what the barriers are for parents. Assisting them to navigate the technology has made a huge difference."

More than 50 parents and children participate in the program monthly, and McMahon and Acevedo are enthusiastic about continuing to grow the program.

"We're having fun," Acevedo said. "We love planning it and being there. We feel so good doing something so positive for the community."

The program benefits parents and families in other ways, as well. Wash and Learn and the Handy Street Laundromat provide detergent and laundry cards to parents who participate. The programs are bilingual, with books available in English and Spanish to better serve families.

Community partners and supporters

McMahon and Acevedo are appreciative of their many community partners and supporters, including the Hidden Gems Literary Emporium, which donated "tons of books" and a computer. The Arts Institute of Middlesex County has become a major supporter, as well. During the 2022-23 school year, the institute has committed to providing the families who participate in the Wash and Learn program with excursions to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), East Jersey Old Town Village, and other places in the community. These excursions will not only give families memorable experiences, but also help students build background knowledge, a key factor in improving reading comprehension.

In addition to books and games, Acevedo accepts donations of scooters, bikes, karaoke machines, and computers that are raffled off prizes to parents and kids. This generates excitement and participation. But the most important element is being there with the children and families and spreading the word about reading.

"By talking and reading with our children, we help them learn, share ideas, become critical thinkers, and create lifelong memories that strengthen our bonds with each other," McMahon said.

Wash and Learn is accepting books!

To donate books to
New Brunswick's Wash and Learn
program, please contact
Anne-Marie Riveaux McMahon at
anne-marie_mcmahon@nbpsnj.net
and Maritza Acevedo at
maritza_acevedo@nbpsnj.net.

Too Small to Fail

As the *Too Small to Fail* project has demonstrated, laundromats are a prime space for literacy programs. *Too Small to Fail* is a Clinton Foundation initiative that partnered with the LaundryCares Foundation to create the Laundry Literacy Coalition, the program that was the subject of Chelsea Clinton's tweet.

According to Brian Wallace, president and CEO of a Chicago area coin laundry association, on average, families who use laundromats spend about two and a half hours there every week. They're also a space uniquely suited to literacy activities. Studies of the six New York area laundromat literacy programs have shown that children who visit them spend an average of 47 minutes per visit on literacy activities. The children were so engaged with the literacy activities, they ignored the available televisions.

As educators know, research shows the importance of early brain development. According to research compiled by the National Library of Medicine, "neural and behavioral research studies show that exposure to language in the first year of life influences the brain's neural circuitry even before infants speak their first words." This early exposure impacts their language and prereading abilities in the second, third and fifth years of life.

Literacy programs like New Brunswick's Wash and Learn have never been more important to children and families. The pandemic caused disruption in almost every area of life and the repercussions will be felt indefinitely. According to several outlets, that is certainly true when it comes to literacy. Several new studies have revealed startling results. Some estimate that one-third of children in early elementary grades are missing reading benchmarks. In Virginia, early reading skills were recorded at a 20-year low.

According to *New York Times* reporter Dana Goldstein in the article, "It's Alarming: Children are Severely Behind in Reading," published in March 2022, "Children in every demographic group have been affected, but Black and Hispanic children, as well as those from low-income families, those with disabilities and those who are not fluent in English, have fallen the furthest behind."

According to *Education Week*, more than one in three children in kindergarten through third grade need intensive reading help and are unlikely to be reading at grade level by the end of the school year.

Programs such as Wash and Learn, and organizational initiatives such as The Laundry Literacy Coalition, are working hard to bring literacy programs into the community, where they can be the most effective and reach the widest audience.

"As the *Too Small to Fail* motto puts it, talking is teaching," McMahon said. "Our goal is to provide resources for the community and learning opportunities for children and their families." 🌱

UNDERSTANDING NJEA PAC'S ENDORSEMENT PROCESS

By Nov. 8, New Jersey voters will have elected 12 members to the United States Congress. The federal and state governments have a profound impact on what happens in New Jersey's schools. That's why the NJEA Political Action Committee (PAC) carefully screens candidates for public office.

NJEA PAC prides itself on having a sound, fair and democratic process leading up to the endorsement of a candidate. The purpose of the process is to identify the candidates most supportive of public education and those who work in our state's public schools. Endorsing and electing such candidates significantly increases the association's ability to pass favorable legislation and stop negative legislation.

THE SCREENING PROCESS

Establishing a screening committee

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

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

Evaluating the candidates

Screening committees invite candidates for an interview, typically early in the summer. Prior to meeting the candidate, the committee reviews completed NJEA questionnaires submitted by the candidate and if the candidate is an incumbent, their voting record is included.

Each candidate screening session lasts about an hour, allowing time for candidates to make a presentation

and answer questions from the screening committee. Questions are based upon issues in public education and concerns of the members in each of the respective counties.

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

Endorsing the candidates

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

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

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

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

For congressional endorsements, NJEA PAC's recommendations are sent to the National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education for final endorsement.

The endorsement process during COVID-19

Despite the challenges imposed by the global pandemic, NJEA PAC maintained its standards and practices for endorsements. Candidates responded to the questionnaire about their public education and labor priorities, and they were invited to attend either a virtual or in-person screening with members of their local screening committee.

NJEA PAC-ENDORSED CANDIDATES 2022

By Nov. 8, Americans will have voted to elect their representatives to the United States Congress. New Jersey voters will elect 12 members to the House of Representatives. NJEA and NEA have endorsed candidates in 11 congressional districts.

Candidates were screened in their congressional districts (CD) by a committee of NJEA members who analyzed their responses in an interview and on a written questionnaire. For incumbents, voting records were reviewed by the committee.

The committee's recommendations were submitted to the NJEA PAC Operating Committee for consideration. NJEA PAC's recommendations for the U.S. House of Representative were then sent to the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education for final endorsement.

Endorsed candidates were invited to submit a brief statement for publication in the *NJEA Review*.

CANDIDATES FOR THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CD-1: DONALD NORCROSS, D

donaldnorcrossforcongress.com



"As a former labor leader, I believe that teachers and educational support professionals need a seat at the table. As a member of the Education and Labor Committee, I led the charge in passing the PRO Act in the House, introduced historic legislation providing \$100

billion in investments for school construction, and have championed expanded investments in Grow-Your-Own programs and teacher mentorship programs."

CD-3: ANDY KIM, D

andykimforcongress.com



"I want to start by thanking you for all you do. I'm a New Jersey public school kid. I would not have accomplished what I have if it wasn't for education. Now my little boys are going to public school. I will do everything I humanly can as a father and public servant to ensure our

children have the best education and that our teachers and educational support professionals have what they need to be successful."

CD-2: TIM ALEXANDER, D

timalexanderforcongress.com



"I am so honored to have the NJEA and the NEA endorsements. Our children represent the future, and the educators we entrust to shape their minds have been disrespected for far too long. I look forward to working with NJEA and NEA to correct that after November's win."

CD-5: JOSH GOTTHEIMER, D

josh4congress.com



"As the son of a teacher, I know how important public education is to our families and communities. We're proud to have some of the best schools in the country, including the public school I attended and that is no small part because of our educators. I've worked hard in

Congress to support our teachers and educational support professionals to make sure our schools and children get what they need to shape the minds of our children."

CD-6: FRANK PALLONE, D

pallonefornewjersey.com



"As teachers and educational professionals have faced unprecedented political attacks over the last few years, I continue to stand with them by advocating for more federal school funding, better benefits and pay, as well as commonsense gun safety laws to keep classrooms safe."

CD-7: TOM MALINOWSKI, D

malinowskifornj.com



"New Jersey has the best public schools in the nation thanks in good measure to the advocacy of NJEA. Support for our educators is an investment in the future of our children, and I will never stop fighting to ensure they are treated with the dignity they deserve."

CD-8: ROBERT MENENDEZ JR., D

robmenendez.com



through their hard work and dedication, and in Congress I will always be in their corner."

"NJEA's endorsement reflects our campaign's commitment to teachers and educational support professionals and affirms the virtues instilled in me by my mother and grandmother, both educators. Public school educators and educational support professionals are strengthening families every day

CD-9: BILL PASCRELL, D

billpascrell.com



school districts through the landmark American Rescue Plan. I will continue to fight for a stronger education system that includes more education funding and will always support the right of our teachers to organize."

"As a former public school teacher, I know investing in our educators is essential to a prosperous society and future generations. Our educators did a herculean job during the pandemic. To support our schools, I was proud to help secure over \$2.7 billion to be invested in New Jersey

CD-10: DONALD M. PAYNE JR., D

paynejr4congress.com



training to strengthen teacher quality pipelines and to protect employees' rights and benefits."

"Public education provides an opportunity for all students in America. Therefore, we must ensure that adequate resources are available to support students, especially those most in need and to make college more affordable. We must also provide the necessary

CD-11: MIKIE SHERRILL, D

mikiessherrill.com



create a talented workforce, and every child deserves the opportunity to reach their full potential."

"New Jersey public schools are one of our most valuable resources and our teachers and educational support professionals must be supported in their mission to provide the highest quality education. Doors open with a great education, exceptional schools

CD-12: BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN, D

bonnieforcongress.com



and resources."

"There is nothing greater for our children than our extraordinary teachers and school support staff. One of my priorities is to ensure that every possible resource is provided to our school employees so that they have the tools to deliver the excellent education our students



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Educators integrate climate change instruction into the classroom

By Randall Solomon

The climate crisis is one of the most critical threats to the planet, and its effects are especially pronounced in New Jersey. To make the transition to a low-carbon, more resilient future, we need to incorporate educational solutions.

Climate change education works. When students learn about the effects of climate change and develop a personal connection to climate solutions, their daily behaviors and decision making change, reducing their carbon footprint.

When the State Board of Education adopted the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in June 2020, New Jersey became the first state in the nation to incorporate K-12 climate change education across all content areas. New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy is a dedicated supporter of climate change education and has played an important role in the state's leadership in this area.

In March 2021, the New Jersey Climate Change Thought Leadership Committee convened to create a plan for implementing the Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards, resulting in the "Report on K-12 Climate Change Education Needs in New Jersey." To address the recommendations from the report, the New Jersey School Boards Association, Sustainable Jersey, The College of New Jersey, New Jersey Audubon, National Wildlife Federation and SubjectToClimate formed the New Jersey Climate Change Education Initiative. This initiative created the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub to support schools as they integrate climate change into their curricula.

Climate change resources for NJ educators

The New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub, launched in June 2022, equips educators with teaching materials aligned to the new Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards. Found at NJClimateEducation.org, it is searchable by grade level and subject area. This free hub has exemplar lesson plans

written by New Jersey educators, a database of more than 1,500 teaching resources, professional learning opportunities and guidance for school boards.

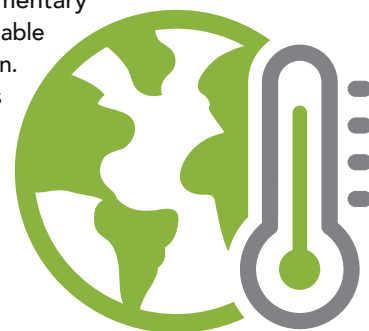
Lesson plans by NJ teachers for NJ teachers

Working with the nonprofit SubjectToClimate, teachers created the exemplar lesson plans provided on the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub. The easy-to-follow, interdisciplinary lesson plans show users how to integrate climate change into the topics they already teach in the classroom.

Each lesson plan is carefully reviewed using a rubric designed with input from New Jersey stakeholders, such as those who are members of the New Jersey Climate Change Thought Leadership Committee. The review process includes self-review, peer-review and review by the SubjectToClimate chief learning designer and chief content officer. A climate scientist checks all the materials.

Sustainable Jersey for Schools is a certification program for pre-kindergarten through 12th-grade public schools. It provides guidance and support to schools that implement steps to be sustainable in their operations and proactive in preparing students for the challenges they will face in the future. Many schools that have achieved certification with Sustainable Jersey for Schools are already incorporating climate change education into the classroom. Teachers from certified schools are helping to create the lesson plans provided on the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub.

George L. Catrambone School, Egg Harbor High School, Highland Park Middle School, Hopewell Valley Central High School and Stillwater Elementary School have achieved Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification. Teachers from these schools were selected to develop some of the lesson plans available on the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub.



Randall Solomon is the executive director of Sustainable Jersey. He can be reached at solomonr@tcnj.edu.



A Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant supports the Stillwater Elementary School garden and greenhouse. From left: SJS Program Manager Véronique Lambert, teacher Elaine Makarevich, and NJEA Associate Director for Organizational Development Eric Jones.

Find the tone in the zone

For over seven years, Yen-Yen Chiu, Ed.D., has taught at Highland Park Middle School in Middlesex County. All four schools in the Highland Park School District are certified with Sustainable Jersey for Schools.

Chiu grew up in Southern California, where she experienced firsthand the impacts of severe weather and the challenges of conserving water in periods of drought. Chiu's expertise in curriculum development made her an ideal candidate to work with SubjectToClimate to develop curriculum.

The lesson plans available on the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub that Chiu developed include:

- Evaluating Personal Perspectives: Climate Change Effects
- Find the Tone in the Zone
- Climate Change Local Research
- Gaming and Climate Change
- Desalination Exploration

These plans are for grades 9-12 and span content specific and multidisciplinary curricula aligned to the New Jersey Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards in English language arts, math, social-emotional learning, computer science and engineering.

Grants and technical assistance programs

SustainableJerseySchools.com/grants

Sustainable Jersey offers multiple competitive grant and technical assistance opportunities funded by program underwriters and partner organizations each year.

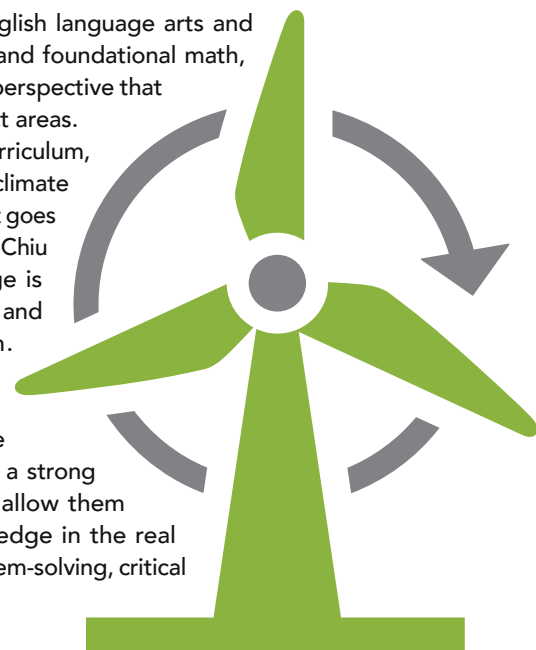
Since 2009, Sustainable Jersey has awarded over \$6.5 million in grants to participating municipalities, schools and school districts. The Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant program underwriters are NJEA, the Gardinier Environmental Fund and the PSEG Foundation.

For the 2022-23 grants cycle, NJEA is contributing \$180,000 to support the Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Program. The funding supports efforts to implement Sustainable Jersey for Schools actions that make progress toward a sustainable future and earn points towards certification. The application deadline for the NJEA grants cycle is Nov. 21 at 11:59 p.m.

"As I created the lesson plans, I was constantly asking myself: Would this work in my classroom and with my students?" Chiu explained.

As a teacher of English language arts and algebra, pre-algebra and foundational math, Chiu brings a unique perspective that spans different subject areas.

"By creating this curriculum, we are showing that climate change is a subject that goes beyond science class," Chiu said. "Climate change is also a social, political and economic problem. By incorporating climate change into all subjects, the students will develop a strong set of skills that will allow them to apply their knowledge in the real world, including problem-solving, critical





Highland Park teacher Yen-Yen Chiu worked with SubjectToClimate to develop climate change curricula.

thinking, teamwork, negotiation and more.”

Chiu is hoping to partner with other teachers on her sixth-grade teaching team at Highland Park Middle School to cover a lesson plan across two subjects and classes. She also noted that whatever the school’s favored teaching approach—exit ticket, creative time, independent process, the “do now”—each lesson plan works well with each style.

Chiu said that her lesson plan, Find the Tone in the Zone, is a good example of the use of climate change information within the context of an English language arts class. In this lesson, students learn the five climate zones in New Jersey and interpret facts into a poetic voice from the point of view of nature.

“I don’t think most people in New Jersey know that we have five climate zones,” she said. “After the student learns about each zone, they are asked to write couplets about one area. You approach the subject of climate change from a new lens when you incorporate poetry and creativity. I am glad these resources are available on the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub for all teachers to use.”



New Jersey Student Climate Challenge

bit.ly/NJStudentClimateChallenge

The New Jersey Student Climate Challenge encourages public, middle, and high school students to identify and complete a school or community project to address a cause or impact of climate change. Students then create a short digital story video to share what they have accomplished.

The winners are recognized at an awards event. In addition, the schools with winning submissions receive a grant to support their climate education initiatives. The 2022–23 school year Climate Challenge will launch in early October 2022.

“ At the NJEA Convention, New Jersey Climate Change Teaching fellows will present their exemplar lesson plans and assist participants in exploring how to integrate climate change education into their existing lesson plans.

Art and climate action

Carolyn McGrath is a teacher of visual arts at Hopewell Valley Central High School and a highly regarded sustainability leader in the Hopewell Valley Regional School District. For over 18 years, McGrath has been an environmental club adviser working with students on issues such as recycling, composting, waste reduction and, more recently, climate change. She is a co-facilitator of the Hopewell Valley Regional School District Green Team.

Working with SubjectToClimate, McGrath created four lesson plans:

- The Art of Climate Change
- Art and Climate Action
- Youth Climate Action
- Youth Climate Hero Portraits

These lesson plans are for middle to high school students and aligned to the New Jersey Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards in art.

“I’m very proud of the work we are doing in Hopewell Valley through our district and school-based green teams. We have demonstrated the ability to take on challenging environmental issues and follow through with meaningful action,” McGrath said. “This is important because our students understand what is at stake. They are ready for us to address the climate crisis head on. As adults, we can’t just hand over the problem. It’s our job to work side by side with young people to create a better future for everyone.”

McGrath served as the teacher mentor to the Hopewell Valley Central High School team that received first place in the 2022 New Jersey Student Climate Challenge statewide contest. Her student team authored a 28-page Climate Action Proposal for the Hopewell



Resource Recap

NJ Climate Change Education Hub
NJClimateEducation.org

Sustainable Jersey for Schools
SustainableJerseySchools.com

NJ Student Climate Challenge
bit.ly/NJStudentClimateChallenge

Sustainable Jersey Grants and Technical Assistance
SustainableJerseySchools.com/grants

New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub

NJClimateEducation.org

Exemplar lesson plans: Developed by teachers, each lesson plan is New Jersey-centric and aligned with New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) so users can teach to the climate change education standards of tomorrow.

1,500+ teaching resources: The online resource database is searchable by keywords, subjects, grade level, NJSLS and more. A scientist and a teacher have reviewed all resources.

Professional learning: Educators can find the right professional learning opportunity for their school, whether it is a workshop for curriculum development, courses or articles to guide teachers on how to teach about climate change.

Guidance for school boards: School boards have access to guiding documents to support schools implementing the climate change education standards.



With their Environmental Club adviser Carolyn McGrath (at left), Hopewell Valley Central High School students were awarded first place in the 2022 New Jersey Student Climate Challenge statewide contest.

Valley School District that addresses clean energy, clean transportation, sustainable food use, sustainable school grounds and more. The school received a \$2,500 grant that can be used for future sustainability-focused projects.

What about bees?

A dedicated teacher and sustainability leader, Elaine Makarevich has taught at Stillwater Elementary School in Sussex County for 29 years. As green team coordinator, Makarevich led her team to achieve Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification and successfully funded sustainability initiatives by securing \$26,000 in grants through the Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant program.

Makarevich supported the creation of a student-led Cafeteria Connection Recycling Team, in partnership with school staff and the municipal recycling center. The group developed a recycling plan for the lunchroom and educated students about proper recycling practices. Lessons about waste management, recycling and sustainability were integrated into the

curriculum.

"I'm proud of the real impact we have had on reducing waste through these efforts," Makarevich said. "The best part is that the students have led the way."

Makarevich used a Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant to support the creation of the Stillwater Schoolyard Garden and Greenhouse. The facility, which also has a gazebo, serves as an outdoor classroom for the students.

"I'm glad our students can be outside and enjoy beautiful Stillwater as part of their school day," Makarevich said. "The uses for the space are endless and both teachers and students have enjoyed learning in it."

Makarevich used her experiences teaching in the Stillwater School Garden when she created her lesson plans for the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub. Working with SubjectToClimate, Makarevich created three Hub lesson plans:

- What About Bees?
- Plants Without Soil?
- Los Animales y el Clima

These plans are for grades K-5 and span content specific and multidisciplinary curricula aligned to the New Jersey Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards in



science, English language arts, health and world languages.

In the lesson plan *What About Bees?*, students learn about the importance of bees to humans and the food supply and how to create a healthy habitat for bees. With assistance from the teacher, students create an action plan for how they will help bees in New Jersey, and they will learn how climate change is impacting the bee population.

"The lesson plan encourages students to think about how humans have affected the bees' habitats here in New Jersey and around the world," Makarevich explained. "Through the creation of an action plan, students are empowered by the understanding that they can make a difference, even at a young age, right in their own New Jersey schoolyards or backyards."

Cleaner, more sustainable future

With the implementation of the Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards, New Jersey will better equip its students to combat the climate crisis, thrive in the green economy of the future and become the leaders who will accelerate the state's progress toward a cleaner, more sustainable future. The New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub provides educators with the resources needed to integrate climate change into the classroom.

Thank you to the more than one thousand schools that are participating in Sustainable Jersey for Schools and the dedicated teachers who are leading sustainability efforts at the local level. 🌱

New Jersey Climate Change Teaching Fellows

For standards to be effectively implemented, the New Jersey Climate Change Education Initiative recommended that teachers be supported with adequate resources. New Jersey teachers were recruited to join the inaugural class of New Jersey Climate Change Teaching Fellows. The teaching fellows who created exemplar lesson plans for the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub include:

- Yen-Yen Chiu, Ed.D., Highland Park Middle School, Highland Park School District
- Christa Delaney, Egg Harbor High School, Egg Harbor Township School District
- Suzanne Horsley, Hopewell Valley Regional School District
- Elaine Makarevich, Stillwater Township Elementary School, Stillwater Township School District
- Carolyn McGrath, Hopewell Valley Central High School, Hopewell Valley Regional School District
- Kelly Stone, George L. Catrambone School, Long Branch Public Schools District

At the NJEA Convention this Nov. 10-11, fellows will present their exemplar lesson plans and assist participants in exploring how to integrate climate change education into their existing lesson plans.



POST-PANDEMIC OUTCOMES

Dr. Diane Casale-Giannola and Dr. Lauren Delisio

As we enter a new school year, we should take a look at the differences between the expectations placed on teachers and students and the actual realities of the post-pandemic classroom last year, or should we say, the “transition pandemic year.”

With great optimism, Gov. Phil Murphy mandated in-person school instruction for the 2021-22 school year. While schools opened with masked students and faculty in September 2021, the mandate for in-person education was an optimistic move toward ensuring socialization and relationship-building between teachers and students, which are critical components of a strong learning community and a positive school environment.

It seemed to be the year schools were expected to close the “pandemic gap.” In the prior academic year (2020-21), there was still a mix of remote and hybrid teaching across the state, and many schools still had a choice regarding delivery models of instruction, often forcing teachers to

teach both modalities (face-to-face and a virtual/online class) simultaneously.

In 2021-22, the hope was that we could return to normalcy. With the vaccine widely available, we could rest assured that most of the school population was vaccinated, and those adults who were not vaccinated were tested weekly to ensure they were attending school without the risk of COVID-19 exposure or transmission.

While students and teachers were still wearing masks, a return to in-person or face-to-face education marked a progressive milestone in the pandemic since March 2020. Educators and school districts sensitive to the emotional needs of their school community created by the remote learning and the aftermath of the pandemic, such as lost loved ones, lost income, and increased anxiety and trauma, implemented a social-emotional curriculum, often referred to as social-emotional learning (SEL).

Some schools offered increased counseling opportunities and mindfulness activities for both staff and students. Despite good intentions and preparation, it seems that the aftermath of the pandemic continued to create further unforeseen issues.

Discovering unexpected outcomes

Last year, we led a grant initiative to support two school districts and students with disabilities through the implementation of trauma-informed instruction and sensory supports. During this experience, participating school districts were provided with professional development. The school districts also were given funds to purchase sensory tools to develop calming sensory experiences for students including items such as fidgets, weighted materials, special lighting, flexible seating, tents, multiple textured items, and other tools to help students relax, reduce anxiety, refocus,

Dr. Diane Casale-Giannola is a professor and the director of Graduate Special Education in the College of Education and Human Services at Rider University. She has been an educator and administrator at the secondary level in general and special education. Her research and publications are on inclusion and global education.

Dr. Lauren Delisio is an associate professor of special education at Rider University. She taught special education and general education at the elementary level, and currently conducts research related to Universal Design for Learning, educational technology, and interventions for students with autism spectrum disorder.

They can be reached at dgiannola@rider.edu and ldelisio@rider.edu.

“ We learned more about the unexpected outcomes of the pandemic that plagued our schools and educators.

attend, and self-regulate. Such practices help students, both those with and without disabilities, to self-regulate and participate more appropriately academically and socially with their peers and others.

While our efforts were somewhat successful in alleviating trauma among students, we learned more about the unexpected outcomes of the pandemic that plagued our schools and educators. Such surprises, challenges and hurdles made us realize that returning to “normalcy” or a pre-pandemic school experience might take years—and there may never be a return, but a “new normal” instead.

At both the elementary and secondary levels, teachers reported problems related to severe teacher shortages, absences, and staff turnover. Teachers and other staff who experienced COVID-19 symptoms and/or possible COVID-19 exposure led to high absenteeism rates. Many teachers retired, leaving the system early due to remote learning challenges and health risks related to the job.

The 2021-22 school year began with classrooms that did not have full-time, assigned teachers. Additionally, substitute teacher shortages left school staff—sometimes those who were not certified teachers—to cover classes, which exhausted all school human resources, both literally and figuratively.

In the winter months, many schools closed intermittently with new COVID strains, such as Omicron, and spikes in COVID-19 rates. This led to even more disruptions related to both the academic and social-emotional growth of students. Wearing masks may have reduced COVID-19 transmission risks but led to further isolation and social limitations in the learning process.

Many teachers reported students acting younger than expected and other unusual behaviors. They attributed such behavior to missed developmental milestones as students remained isolated from peers. Teachers reported a loss of nonverbal communication and relationship building, critical to the positive learning experience. Teachers could not see smiles, grimaces, or signs of interest, wonder, or boredom that often helped them assess the learning process and meet student needs.

Some teachers shared that while remote instruction had its own challenges, teachers could at least see their students’ faces. Masks also hindered sound. Trying to understand students and teachers was difficult, and many times students just gave up trying to repeat themselves in order to be understood. In lower grades, emergent readers struggled to learn new sounds because they were not able

to decode and encode words without the visual support of imitating the teacher’s mouth and sounds clearly.

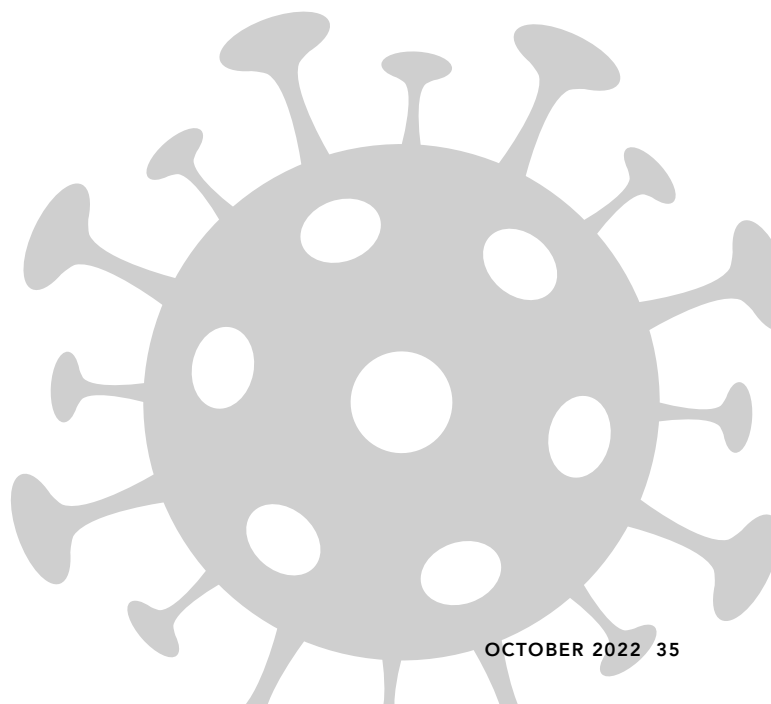
Struggling to regain interest and motivation

In a time when it was more important than ever to foster or regain the relationships between students and teachers, those teachers who typically might have an “open door policy” for lunch and other meetings had to suspend these invitations as students had to be in assigned locations for tracking purposes. In the second half of last year, when the mask mandate was lifted, we asked teachers if they renewed their open-door policies and they simply told us “no.” They felt so mentally burnt out that they had to save any possible down time to collect themselves in order to finish out the rest of the day.

At the elementary schools, teachers purchased tents, which became places where students could isolate, sit and refocus. We learned the staff were using the tents on their own time in order to decompress.

To further exasperate teachers who were already feeling overworked and underappreciated, both districts coincidentally struggled with administrative problems that required union intervention. One district had a shortage of paraprofessionals to support students with special needs, a legally binding accommodation in their individualized educational programs. Another school was in the midst

“ Many teachers reported students acting younger than expected.



“ More time will be needed to heal and develop permanent change.

of collective bargaining. This heightened tensions between association members and administrators, leaving staff to feel unappreciated during negotiations.

Overall, the greatest challenges were seen at the high school level. While there was a sense of urgency last year to prepare secondary students for college or employment after graduation, teachers found students who were once motivated to excel in college preparation and Advanced Placement courses, were now checked out and burned out. It seemed the teachers felt the urgency, but the students remained uninterested and unmotivated.

Teachers attributed such lax attitudes and work ethic to the lack of accountability and social promotion accepted during remote learning, often referred to as “crisis teaching.” It seems students struggled to regain interest and personal responsibility for their performance once they returned to in-person school.

More time needed to find equilibrium

When discussing the effectiveness of social-emotional supports provided by the schools, teachers across all grades appreciated initiatives and efforts, sharing anecdotal gains in some circumstances, but overall, teacher expectations were not met. All realized that the losses incurred during pandemic learning experiences were now deeply rooted in the fabric of student performance and behavior.

Additional support such as sensory equipment and SEL lessons were welcomed but took time away from competing academic goals and high-stakes testing preparation, which remained constant. The equipment and lessons provided only a “Band-Aid” for deep wounds. There were always competing goals for time before but adding pandemic initiatives to support students’ emotional stability added just more to the teacher’s plate without the class time to address these additional needs.

Toward the end of the school year, new societal issues further exacerbated tensions and anxiety in the school community. Students’ concerns about the war between Russia and Ukraine, soaring inflation, an economic recession looming, and the loss of many goods and services, and most critically, the baby formula shortage that affected the families of many staff and students were often discussed. Most devastating was the number of massacres, especially the Uvalde school tragedy. All of these concerns continue to bring fear and trepidation to a community already working so hard to return to pre-pandemic stability.

One of the greatest lessons learned this year is that much more time will be needed to heal and develop permanent change, and greater appreciation and support for educators and school communities are necessary. For many, the “new normal” has not yet been defined, but as one teacher reflected, “We tried, but we just could not go from surviving to thriving.”

Closer to the end of the school year, ceremonies such as awards and honors, proms, and school ending celebrations that were now fully reinstated, often for the first time, helped to lift the school community’s spirits. Students and staff looked forward to the rest and renewal of the summer break to start again in the fall. 🏠



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JOIN YOUR PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

Connect with others in your job description

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

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

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

Corrections?

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

Find your professional organizations here.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

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

www.the-naea.org

AEANJ supports a full range of educational options for students whose needs are not being met in the traditional school setting. Membership is open to those working in alternative education or those interested in the development of alternative education options. AEANJ disseminates information relating to research, produces a publication, promotes programs in alternative education and holds a spring conference. Members receive workshop announcements, consulting services and resources.

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

ART

ART EDUCATORS OF N.J. (AENJ)

aenj.org

The Art Educators of New Jersey (AENJ) is the state's professional association for visual arts educators teaching in public, private, parochial and charter schools, colleges/universities, museums and art centers. AENJ provides quality professional development and advocates for visual arts educators throughout the year. This includes an annual conference, lectures and workshops, publications, member and student exhibition opportunities, and scholarships and grants to arts educators and their students.

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

Contact: Contact: Teresa A. De Sapio Diaz;
membership@aenj.org

BUSINESS/TECHNOLOGY

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

njbtea.org

NJBTEA advocates for business/technology education and provides opportunities for professional growth leading to quality business/technology education programs including, but not limited to, a fall convention, conferences, workshops, tours and seminars, newsletters, and award programs for students and professionals.

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

Contact: Robert Carson; njbtea@comcast.net

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

njaet.org

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

Dues: Membership is free.

Contact: Sharon Julien; sjulien@njaet.org

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

njteea.org

NJTEEA is a professional organization for K-12 design, technology, engineering and other STEM educators that promotes the goals and objectives of technology education and technological literacy as well as STEM initiatives. NJTEEA provides various high-impact, hands-on professional development opportunities at model schools as well as at supportive industry locations. It also provides email updates to members three to four times a month, a STEM Boot Camp in the beginning of the academic year and an annual conference and expo.

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

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

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS

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

atsnj.org

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

Dues: \$65; \$20 for students

Contact: Keir Livingston; *Livingstonk@atsnj.org*

CLASSICAL STUDIES

NEW JERSEY CLASSICAL ASSOCIATION (NJCA)

njclassics.org

NJCA is an organization for educators working to advance the cause of classical studies, the Latin and Greek languages and the study of Greco-Roman mythology. Members are teachers from elementary grades through college in public, private and parochial schools. Members' benefits include fall and spring meetings, scholarship offerings, materials, resources, mentoring and a placement service.

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

Contact: Marlene Weiner; *marweiner@aol.com*

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

N.J. COOPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSN. (NJCEA)

njcea.org

NJCEA is a statewide association that provides professional programs, services, and opportunities to Cooperative Education and Work Based Learning (WBL) Coordinators. NJCEA is at the forefront of workforce education issues, working in concert with the New Jersey Department of Education, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and New Jersey Safe Schools.

NJCEA provides three membership meetings in various locations annually offering relevant presentations and professional development. Members may also be invited to join executive committee meetings throughout the year.

Dues: \$30

Contact: John Hillard-President, *jvhillard74@yahoo.com* 856-220-8457 or Rob Carson-Membership Chair, *rcarson@njcea.info* 609-387-1713, ext. 6069

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

njceca.org

NJCECA is an organization for instructors involved in student job placement. NJCECA membership provides guidance, resources and outreach for teachers to enhance their work-study and transition programs and collaborate in program planning. Meetings are held at sponsor sites the third Thursday of each month. Presentations are given by guest speakers to provide two hours of professional development. The meetings are fun and informative and offer an environment of camaraderie and professionalism.

Dues: \$25

Contact: Gerry Carroll, *gercar@bergen.org* or 201-343-6000, ext. 4603

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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

njtesol-njbe.org

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

and keeps members informed through newsletters and online discussion of hot topics in ESL/bilingual education. The organization is very involved in advocacy/political action and collaborative activities with other professional organizations.

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

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

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCE

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

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

Dues: \$25

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

GIFTED CHILDREN

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

njagc.org

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

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

Contact: Contact: Michelle Falanga, vice president of advocacy, advocacy@njagc.org

HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

THE COUNCIL OF HOLOCAUST EDUCATORS (CHE)

CHE is a professional development organization for educators who teach about the Holocaust, genocide and human rights. CHE is committed to instilling in our students a sense of the importance of recognizing and respecting the value of each individual human life and the human dignity of all people as a deterrent to future genocide and to foster a peaceful world. CHE provides opportunities for networking and professional development designed by teachers for teachers. On Facebook search for Council of Holocaust Educators.

Dues: None

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

KINDERGARTEN

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

njake.net

NJAKE is an organization of kindergarten and early childhood educators. It promotes strategies to strengthen communication with the public regarding the intellectual, emotional, physical and social values achieved through developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs. Membership provides opportunities for networking on issues and questions pertaining to early childhood education through newsletters and workshops.

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

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

LANGUAGE ARTS

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

njcte.org

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

Dues: \$15 for preservice teachers and retirees; \$25 for in-service teachers.

Contact: Denise Weintraut, vice president, njctemembership@gmail.com; Valerie Mattessich, president, njctepresident@gmail.com

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

NJLA is a professional network of educators and individuals (prekindergarten to adult levels) interested in advancing literacy, promoting effective practices and encouraging appropriate assessment through advocacy, collaboration, and professional development. NJLA provides annual conferences, workshops and opportunities for communication among educators who share common interests in literacy education.

Dues: Free

Contact: Nicole Mancini, missnicolemancini@gmail.com

LIBRARY/MEDIA

N.J. ASSN OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS (NJASL)

njasl.org

NJASL is a professional organization of school librarians teaching in public, private and parochial schools, prekindergarten to college level. It advocates high standards for librarianship and library programs to ensure that students and staff become effective users of information. NJASL inspires excellence in the school library program by providing school librarians with educational opportunities and current information through workshops and a conference. As allies and partners in teaching students, NJASL encourages teachers, administrators and other educational colleagues to join, with benefits including professional development and collegial networking.

Dues: \$65

Contact: Angela Coxen; njea@njasl.org

MATHEMATICS

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

amtnj.org

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

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

Contact: Mark Russo, info@amtnj.org

MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

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

njamle.org

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

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

Contact: Tina Monteleone, tmonteleone@njamle.org. Follow NJAMLE on Twitter at @njamle, and like NJAMLE at facebook.com/njamle.

MUSIC

N.J. MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSN. (NJMEA)

nafme.org

NJMEA is an organization of general, choral, and instrumental music educators, prekindergarten through college in public, private and parochial schools. The organization sponsors a variety of professional development opportunities and advocacy efforts that focus on emerging trends and issues in music education. Members' students may audition for region ensembles, as well as All-State Chorus, Orchestra, Band and Jazz Ensemble. Members may also choose to participate in other NJMEA-sponsored performance activities as applicable.

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

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

NURSES

N.J. STATE SCHOOL NURSES ASSOCIATION (NJSSNA)

njssna.org

NJSSNA provides direction for leadership and advocacy in school nursing. It promotes professional and ethical standards and guidelines through research, education and communication. Members of NJSSNA include certified

school nurses, faculty at New Jersey's universities charged with preparing certified school nurses, and registered nurses working in early childhood programs or in New Jersey's private and parochial schools. NJSSNA communicates frequently with members, sponsors an annual statewide conference featuring nationally known speakers and provides timely educational programs at the NJEA Convention and throughout the year.

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

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

OFFICE PROFESSIONALS

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

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

Dues: \$20

Contact: Dawn M. Leek, president, at leekd@hamiltonschools.org or jeffdawnleek@gmail.com; Brigitte Walters, vice president at bwalters@mullicschools.com.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/HEALTH

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

njagc.org

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

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

Contact: Carol Ciotto;

executive_director@shapenj.org; 732-918-9999

Contact: Michelle Falanga, vice president of advocacy, advocacy@njagc.org

PRESERVICE EDUCATORS

N.J. PRESERVICE EDUCATORS. (NJEA)

njea.org/preservice

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

Contact: Marguerite Schroeder, mschroeder@njea.org

PSYCHOLOGISTS

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

njasp.org

NJASP is dedicated to serving and advocating for the mental health and educational growth and development of all children, the maintenance of high standards for school psychologists and the advancement of the profession. NJASP offers two professional development conferences (winter and spring), regional workshops, a quarterly newsletter, and updates on political and current trends.

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

Contact: NJASP.membership@gmail.com

RETIRED EDUCATORS

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

njea.org/njrea

NJREA, the state's largest and oldest retiree organization, promotes the professional, economic and social well-being of retired educators and support professionals under a unified dues agreement with NJEA, NEA-Retired, and our 21 County Retired Education Associations (CREA) in New Jersey. Annual events include fall and spring informational meetings/luncheons, a convention in Atlantic City in November, and CREA meetings and workshops throughout the year. Members receive up-to-date information on pension and health benefits at county meetings/luncheons, through our award-winning quarterly newsletter, as well as county mailing, websites, webinars and emails. The NJEA/NEA Member Benefits program offers retirees numerous discounts on insurance, travel, and major appliance purchases. While in-person

meetings are preferable, many committee and county meetings may be held virtually.

Dues: Annual professional dues in NJREA/NJEA/NEA-R and CREA are approximately \$100. ESP dues are approximately \$60 and may be paid by check or credit card. An automatic renewal option is available. Lifetime and pre-retirement membership in NJREA, a very popular option for active members, is available and may be paid in installments.

Contact: NJREA President Joan Wright, jwright@njea.org, or NJEA's Membership Division: 609-599-4594, ext. 2352.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

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

njsca.org

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

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

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

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

SPEECH/LANGUAGE

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

NJASLS advocates for students with communication disabilities that affect their educational performance, helps to secure conditions necessary for maximum efficacy of the speech language specialist, advances the standards of the profession of speech language pathology in an educational setting, actively promotes the interests of members and provides professional development at the NJEA Convention.

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

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

SCIENCE

N.J. SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSN. (NJSTA)

njsta.org

NJSTA strives to support and recognize science educators at all levels for their dedication and professionalism, advocates high-quality science instruction in varied and diverse settings. It seeks to generate public interest in science and science education. During the pandemic, NJSTA provided distance learning and science resources for all grade levels as teachers worked remotely while implementing the new science standards. NJSTA sponsors and co-sponsors various activities including NJSTACHats, N.J. State Science Day, the NJSTA Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award Summer Institute, the New Jersey Science Convention, NJSTA membership meetings, the NJSTA spring meeting, the and NJEA Convention. NSTA maintains a website, newsletter and social media platforms.

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

Contact: Guida Faria; njstapresident@gmail.com

SOCIAL STUDIES

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

njcss.org

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

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

Contact: Dayna Orlak; orlakt@waldwickschools.org

SOCIAL WORKERS

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

njasp.org

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

Contact: admin@njassw.org or natlcswhotmail.com

SPECIAL EDUCATION

N.J. ASSOCIATION OF LEARNING CONSULTANTS (NJALC)

newjerseyalc.org

NJALC is concerned with the continuing professional development and working conditions of learning consultants in public, private, and parochial schools, as well as in private practice. NJALC provides two conferences, regional workshops, newsletters, a journal, the Main Book Summaries, grants and a registry for LDT-Cs in public and private practice. In addition, NJALC advocates for special education issues at the state level in affiliation with NJEA.

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

Contact: Maureen Mahon; president@newjerseyalc.org

N.J. COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN (NJCEC)

njcec.org

NJCEC is the state division of the Council for Exceptional Children, the international/national board for special education. NJCEC/CEC is the professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. This organization acts as an advocate and guide in matters of federal legislation, professional standards, professional development, education of school personnel and families, effective classroom practice, and resources for effective professional practice. NJCEC/CEC maintains high standards and provides professional development. In addition, CEC has 17 divisions for specialized information, sponsors journals and newsletters, and hosts conferences and conventions at the local, state and national level. NJCEC offers an annual conference, a professional publication(s) and newsletters that keeps members aware of national issues and current teaching strategies, professional and student recognition programs including scholarships for high school seniors with special needs, and selection of a teacher of the year.

Dues: Premier membership \$205; Full \$115; Basic \$65 a year through International CEC.

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

SPEECH AND THEATER

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

stanj.org

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

Dues: \$65

Contact Officers: President Juliannna Krawiecki, stanjboard@gmail.com; President-elect David Marconi, DSMarconi@gmail.com; Vice President Dan Paolucci, dcpaolucci@gmail.com

STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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

asapnj.org

ASAP-NJ is an organization of individuals employed in schools, agencies or school-based programs whose functions include advocating and developing a school-based student assistance/substance awareness program. The group meets the needs of youth in the education, prevention, intervention and referral services for high-risk behaviors, including substance abuse and violence issues. A major portion of ASAP-NJ's work in schools involves mental health issues and substance abuse issues, emotional and psychological support services, crisis intervention, and referrals to mental health facilities. Members can attend a state conference, county monthly meetings and workshops. ASAP-NJ provides specialized training on student assistance programs, substance use prevention, mental health issues, bullying and related topics.

Dues: \$50

Contact: President Pamela L. Felder, asapnjboard@gmail.com

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

CTEANJ provides educational leadership in developing a competitive global workforce by fostering excellence in career and technical education; advocating for national, state and local public policies that benefit career and technical education; and acting as a clearinghouse for education and information relating to all aspects of career and technical education. We provide professional development through programs, workshops, conferences, services and opportunities that will ultimately benefit all students. CTEANJ creates public awareness of career and technical education and its importance in developing a competitive global workforce. CTEANJ hosts an annual scholarship program. Thanks to unification with the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), members receive additional benefits, including trade publications, national advocacy for career and technical education, legislative updates and the opportunity to attend national CTE conventions.

Dues: \$100 (CTEANJ membership is united with ACTE); Retired: \$41 (also unified membership)

Contact: John Hillard, president, jvhillard74@yahoo.com or 856-220-8457; Rob Carson, vice president for program, rcarson@burltwpsch.org or 609-387-1713 or 856-220-9157.

WORLD LANGUAGES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATORS OF N.J. (FLENJ)

flenj.org

FLENJ represents world language teachers (kindergarten through college). It promotes the teaching of world languages, literatures and cultures. FLENJ offers professional development workshops as well as statewide meetings in the spring on topics of interest to the profession and developments in methodology, materials and technology. It also offers mini-grants for teachers, a student video contest, an education abroad program scholarships, teacher and student awards as well as senior scholarships.

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

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

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

njaatsp.org

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

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

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

ARE JOB-RELATED *HAZARDS* AFFECTING MEMBERS' HEALTH?

Health survey time!

By Dorothy Wigmore

The return to school after summer break is a great time to get a handle on job-related hazards that may affect members' health—and start getting them fixed.

"We have people who find that when they go back to work, they suddenly don't feel well, like they do at home," says Marianne Pace, the Hamilton Township Education Association health and safety committee chair. Pace is also the HTEA second vice president.

It's not unusual, and often indicates a hazard at work. Renovations could have been done. Air conditioning and ventilation systems might not have been used often during the summer. Old leaks might have been ignored or new ones started. New equipment or chemical products may have been introduced.

The hazards may be linked to immediate health issues. Some also may lead to illnesses or diseases that show up years later. If something unusual seems common, members may ask about possible causes, especially for scary diseases like cancers or reproductive health issues.

If so, it's time to find out what's going on, and prevent harm or, in some case, prevent more harm.

There are two approaches. Health and safety committees can look for problems (i.e., the hazards)—information about chemicals, walk-throughs/inspections. Confidential health surveys investigate what's happening to people. Both hazard identification and member surveys are organizing tools, not just information collection devices.

It can be overwhelming with many members in a local association. Pace turned to NJEA's health and safety representative who brought in a New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC) occupational hygienist.

"I had a call with them, got their suggestions, wrote

down the questions that we need to find out. Plus, Allen [Allen Barkkume from WEC] sent me this survey. So that's where we're starting," she says. HTEA is trying to do it with the administration but are prepared to make it a union-only effort.

"It's related to their own illnesses: how they feel at work, when it started, how many years. Have they worked in their specific room, their specific building? It's pretty detailed as far as what their symptoms are," Pace said.

Surveys can focus on specific issues too.

"When members raised concerns about HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) issues in their classrooms,

What about "cancer clusters"?

Cancers usually have a long latency period—the length of time between a person's first exposure to a hazard and the appearance of the disease. Real clusters are unusual and often difficult to confirm.

All cancers must be reported to state registries when they're diagnosed. Information collected then includes the person's current address and something about their current job—not where they lived or their workplace/job earlier.

"Registry data are often incredibly limited to answer occupational health questions," says Lowell Center for Sustainable Production project manager, Molly Jacobs. "It's only through people on the ground who are connecting the dots that raises the alarm." (See Resources on Page 47.)

Answers take an epidemiological study, looking at the "dots," time, space and possible hazards. Whatever the results, there still can be hazards—with other effects—to fix.

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

we wanted to find out how many others had the same issues,” says Alison Pohlman, Waretown Education Association president.

“So we created an online survey asking for feedback. Members responded with the locations and issues they were experiencing.


“Online surveys ensure the association knows about members’ health and safety concerns and enable the committee members to communicate issues to the administration,” she says. The results also help inform inspections and walk-throughs.

It's not a one-time thing or the last step.

“Our health and safety committee will keep surveying our members throughout the school year,” Pohlman adds. “They also plan to meet the administration every other month to discuss reported health and safety concerns and do building walk-throughs with them.”

If results are concerning, and there's no obvious hazards, there's help from those trained to investigate job-related

hazards and their effects.

NJEA might bring in an epidemiologist—someone trained to study disease patterns—or request a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) free health hazard evaluation. NIOSH specialists study job-related health effects and hazards. (Health departments often understand little about work-related hazards, lack relevant specialists and/or rely on incomplete data – see side box.) 

What can health and safety committees do?

Start collecting information informed by experience and members’ knowledge, but without assumptions.

- Ask the school nurse about their data, going back as far as possible.
- Hold events (e.g., brown bag lunches) to discuss questions/concerns, using body maps to start conversations, see patterns.
- Use the NJEA Health and safety Manual health survey or others in the resources—electronically and/or briefly train members to distribute it personally.
- Set due dates with one or two reminders (see the StressAssess protocol).
- Have events to help focus members on filling in the survey and their mutual responsibility to take action to get results.
- Get help to interpret the results from NJ WEC and/or NJEA representatives (they can go further afield if needed).
- For a serious concern, work with the union to alert the state health department (but don't leave it there) and request a NIOSH Health Hazard Evaluation (HHE) when the cause is uncertain or difficult to determine.
- Keep track of hazards (e.g., workplace maps).
- Push for fixing hazards using the precautionary principle.
- Support members’ workers’ compensation claims.
- Document, document, document—and follow-up, always

Resources

Hazards

Occupational cancer/Zero cancer:
A Union Guide to Prevention bit.ly/3BIZklt
Also, search “cancer” at hazards.org.

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees

Surveys as organizing tools bit.ly/iatse-surveys

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

Health Hazard Evaluations:
cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/default.html
Hazard information: cdc.gov/niosh/index.htm

NJEA

Health and Safety Manual: njea.org/download/1784

NJEA Review

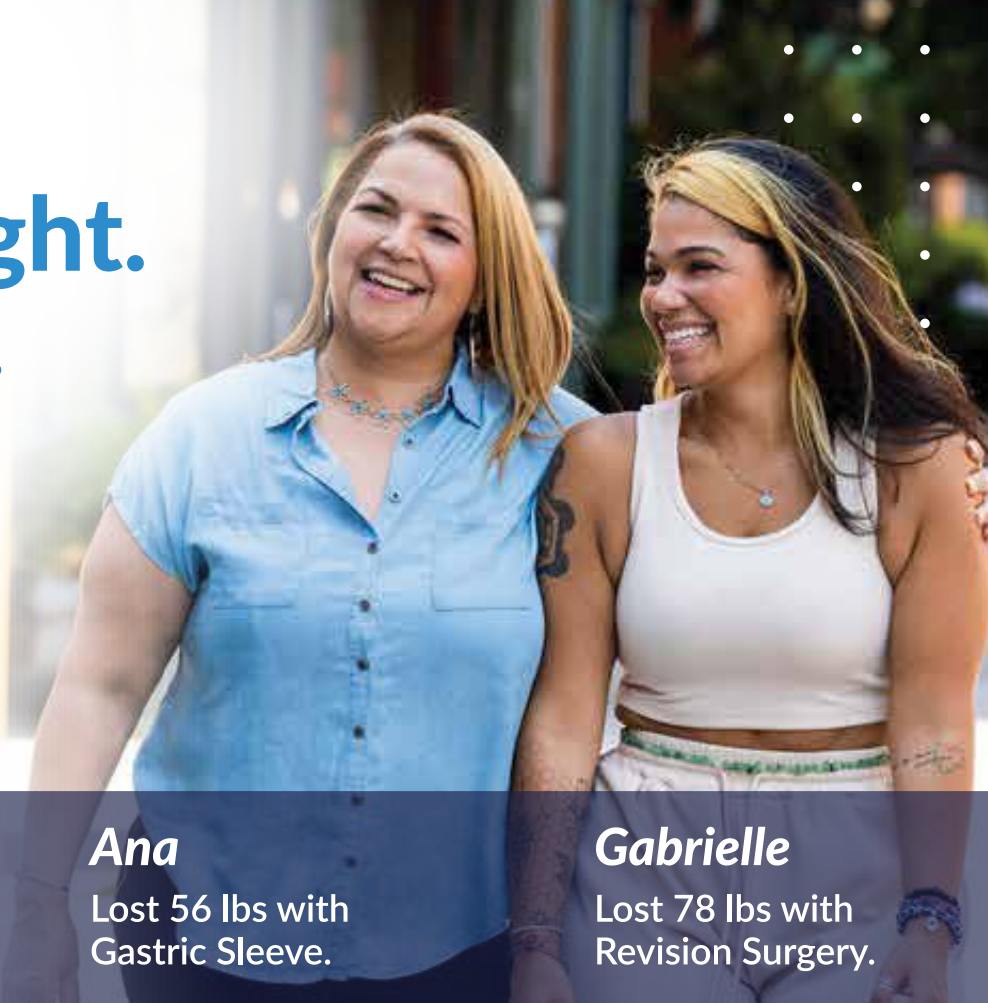
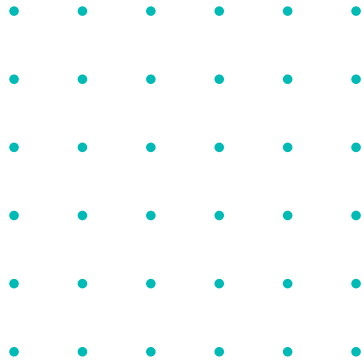
“Better reporting, better results”
njea.org/better-reporting-better-results
“Health and safety committees. Knowledge + Action = Change” njea.org/hscomm-kac

Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers

HazardAssess app and information
ohcow.on.ca/resources/apps-tools-calculators/hazardassess

StressAssess app and information stressassess.ca

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The obsession with tests **CONTINUES**

By Dawn Howlen

The first few days of school are magical. They bring new hopes and ambitions for a fantastic school year. Students and educators begin to build connections and relationships that will sustain them throughout the school year. In one of the schools where I taught, my administrator was adamant about using the first few weeks not to instruct but to learn about our students. Those weeks were crucial because they allowed me to build community within my classroom. This made all the difference as the year progressed and challenges arose.

Last year, that community-building was interrupted by the Start Strong Assessment. As students gathered in my classroom, we reviewed all the necessary information and instructions, and they took the assessment. While the assessment is touted as a shorter version of the New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA), it elicits all the same emotions.

Students were anxious, nervous and visibly dejected. I encouraged them and told them this assessment did not reflect who they were as a person but where they were academically at this moment in time. With that, they pressed on and finished the assessment. After all, they would only have to take the assessment once.

To be clear, this was not the only assessment my students took as I collected data and began to get a complete picture of the children who would become “my kids” over the school year. The difference between the Start Strong assessment and the assessments I gave was that I could use the data from my assessments to modify and differentiate instruction for my students. Unfortunately, I never received the data from the Start Strong assessment.

As a former literacy specialist, I know that a good data set is integral to the success of a student, their teacher and their school. Without it, there can be no real change. It’s like trying to build a plane without any instructions; it’s pointless.

Fast forward to September 2022: Students and educators across New Jersey were met with the second mandatory administration of the Start Strong assessment. When the NJDOE released its assessment calendar for the 2022-2023 school year, I was shocked to see the Start Strong assessment on the schedule. After all, it was clear that the 2021 assessment would only be used to report data to the federal government since the NJSLA was not given during the spring of 2021.

Herein lies the problem: The Start Strong was given four months after the NJSLA. As of Aug. 26, the NJSLA data from Spring 2022 has yet to be added to the NJDOE website, which is running very close to the date of the opening of the assessment window for the 2022 Start Strong of Aug. 31. To further complicate the situation, most schools in New Jersey begin after Labor Day, a week after the window opens, which puts those schools at a disadvantage.

We see issues with the Start Strong assessment that could have quickly been addressed. For one, the window could have been more flexible. It would have allowed students, educators and school districts to settle into their rituals and routines before they were inundated with schoolwide assessments and assessment preparations. This small gesture would have taken some of the stress out of the start of the first “normal” school year since 2019.

I imagine my former sixth-grade students settling into their new schools, making new friends and building lasting relationships with their teachers. I hope they remember that they are more than a test score and that the best way to start the school year is with a strong mind and spirit.

Dawn Howlen is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She can be reached at dhowlen@njea.org.



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Future educators take on Chicago

NJEA Preservice represent New Jersey at NEA Aspiring Educators Conference

This past July, several NJEA Preservice members had the opportunity to go to Chicago, where they attended the National Education Association's Aspiring Educators Conference. They all thought it was a beneficial experience. Some of them even wrote about their experiences.

Devon Schermerhorn, Seton Hall University

"I absolutely loved meeting people across the nation and listening to speeches from members of NEA and from aspiring educators who share the same passion for quality education for all students. Not only was this passion strengthened, but I feel I learned so much of how to work toward this goal in my own classroom. I learned to do my part to achieve a quality education for students nationally. I am beyond excited to put what I have learned into practice and to encourage all educators around me to do the same."

Esther King, Stockton University

"It was incredible to meet so many people from different states and learn about their education systems. It was eye-opening to see the various requirements the teachers must meet to get certified. It truly felt like the representatives at the conference from each state bonded and united within our future profession."

Jenna Cooper, Stockton University

"The Aspiring Educators Conference in Chicago was a life-changing experience. Through attending I learned how to be a well-rounded advocate for my students, how to provide a safe and welcoming space for all students, and how to plan lessons that meet every student's needs. I also learned about the benefits of community schools, how to deal with stress, and so much more. I am beyond grateful to have had this opportunity to expand my learning and to gather ideas with future educators from across the United States."

Bianca Nicolescu, TCNJ

"The Aspiring Educators Conference has had a true impact on my self-identity as a future educator. Taking part in inspiring workshops allowed me to challenge my perspectives and learn about powerful movements in social, racial and educational justice. As I learned more about community schools, how to better support undocumented and LGBTQ+ students, and as I considered the impact of grading policies in the classroom, I found a medium through which I can now pursue my own research and implement newfound knowledge in my future pedagogy. Finally, the opportunity to connect with other aspiring educators gave me a new support system, which will pave the way for continued collaboration and advocacy work for our nation's schools. "

Victoria Gladstone, TCNJ

"The invaluable time I spent at the Aspiring Educators Conference reshaped my thinking as a future educator and as a person living in 2022. Not only was I exposed to numerous leaders within NJEA as well NEA and given the opportunity to form bonds with education majors from students around the U.S., I learned a great deal about the current education system through America's teachers. After teaching virtually through the pandemic to facing social injustice issues head on, teachers hold great strength to succeed in their endeavors. I was pleasantly surprised to meet so many of these wonderful people and hear about their strategies on how to stay motivated and compassionate through one's career as an educator. "

As noted above, all of these students found this experience beneficial. Stay connected with NJEA Preservice throughout the year to learn about more opportunities like this.



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LEARNING DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

Amy Moran, Ph.D. and Kate Okeson

In our continuing commitment to an intersectional approach on LGBTQIA+ topics in education, we are drawing attention to people—whether students, colleagues or community members—who live at the intersections of multiple identities, who may experience greater challenges in educational settings, or for whom the complexity of a multifaceted identity is a gift. Our hope is to open conversations and encourage approaches that acknowledge the multitudinous nature of identity and increase acceptance and affirmation of all.

In this second month of school, we're settling into the rituals and routines in our classrooms and getting to know our students more deeply with each conversation, each activity and each assessment. In doing so, we're deepening our awareness of each student's unique learning styles and honing our pedagogies to address the breadth of learning needs to the best of our abilities.

By October, many of us have learned our students' personal pronouns, have made our support of the LGBTQIA+ community visible in our classroom decor and audible in the affirming things we say about different people's identities. We've also read through IEPs and worked collaboratively with general- and special-education teachers as well as child study team members in order to enact best practices for teaching the individual learners in our classrooms.

October is Learning Disability Awareness Month, and we're able to acknowledge that 2.5 million students in the U.S. have specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, dysgraphia or dyscalculia. Six million have been diagnosed with ADHD.

At the same time, nearly 2 million 13-17 year olds in the U.S. identify as LGBT, so we can extrapolate that over 7 million school-aged kids, ages 5-17, identify as LGBT nationwide (whether or not they're able to self-identify as such just yet). In fact, 55,000 13-17 year olds identify as LGBT in New Jersey alone.

An often overlooked portion of New Jersey's LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum mandate is the "...and persons with disabilities..." portion. It's critical that educators understand students can be part of both of those communities, and also have a tough time accessing one or the other due to lack of representation, affirmation,

“In my experience, students with disabilities [who are queer] demonstrate a desire to have pride in an identity other than their disability.”

– JoAnn Johnson, former Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant, Point Pleasant Borough School District

and/or inclusive language in classrooms and schools.

This challenge was the topic of a conversation between Kate Okeson and JoAnn Johnson. They discussed how students with disabilities who are also members of the LGBTQIA+ community sometimes lean in more toward their queerness than students in general education might. Queer students with disabilities may be able to access social connection and supports through queer community building—like in the context of a GSA—in ways that associations with their sometimes-stigmatized disability diagnosis don't replicate.

"At the high school level, it is a little more acceptable to be LGBTQIA+ than to say you have a disability, and that demonstrates the gap in our understanding of disability as an identity," Johnson says.

This provides a call to action for learning professionals to elevate disability visibility, pride, and disabled persons' contributions to our culture and society, just as we continue to do so for people in the LGBTQIA+ community.



This is a condensed version of the full Rainbow Connection column. Type 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.

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IT ALL STARTED WITH A CONVERSATION

BY EFRAIN MONTERROSO



Early Career Network

The environment discouraged even those who could overcome the barriers from pursuing a career in education, causing today's teacher shortage.

Every preservice and early-career teacher I meet is never in it for the money. They are in it for the lasting impact they can make on future generations. But how can we do that when the certification process does not support those who wish to pursue that life goal?

During my first year of teaching, I told my local association president, Ellen Ogintz, that I was committed to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and well-trained teaching force that reflected the multicultural population of the students we served. I also wanted to connect with a group of people who did policy work. Soon after, I was introduced to the Mercer County Education Association's Legislative Action Team (MCEA LAT)—a dedicated group of people who are strong advocates for federal and state education initiatives as well as ardent supporters of NJEA PAC-endorsed candidates.

After hearing stories from early career members, MCEA Legislative Chair Lisa Rizziello organized a virtual town hall

As a minority early-career member, I quickly noticed the unjust treatment of those entering the profession. Through previous presidential and gubernatorial administrations, ill-advised policies were put into place. These poor decisions erected barriers to studying education and gaining certification as a teacher.

that gave early career members the opportunity to talk to legislators from legislative districts 14, 15 and 16. On that call, I was able to speak about how edTPA is hurting the recruitment and retention of a diverse and well-trained teaching force to support our students.

Through the hard work of many, a bill to eliminate edTPA passed unanimously in the state Senate and Assembly. But we cannot declare victory yet as we wait for Gov. Phil Murphy to sign the end of the edTPA requirement into law.

I understand that the work we do in the classroom can sometimes seem overwhelming, but we cannot continue to allow those who are not in the classroom with our students to make all the decisions. As early career members, we need to share our experiences in order to improve the professional experience of ourselves and those to come!

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Efrain Monterroso was a Spanish teacher at Hightstown High School and a member of the East Windsor Education Association. Now he is a master's degree candidate in Education Policy and Analysis at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. When he was teaching in New Jersey, he was a Mercer County Education Association Legislative Action Team Co-chair and served on the NJEA Congressional Contact Committee.

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD



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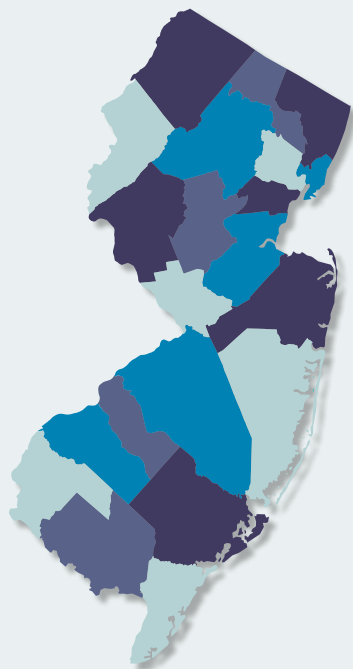
Visions has partnered with the NJEA and committed \$1 million over the next 10 years in support of their members and mission. The NJEA has started by focusing these resources on building Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in New Jersey Public Schools.

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SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and conferences

highlights

Climate change and civics

CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP SERIES FROM RVCC

The Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) offers a series of workshops for K-12 teachers and supervisors on how to support students as they investigate and make sense of climate change related phenomena. Attendees will explore how K-12 educators can meet the increased focus on climate change in the revised New Jersey Students Learning Standards for Science (NJSLS-S). Participants will learn how to identify grade-appropriate climate change related phenomena and how students can investigate them.

Nov. 30: Teaching About Climate Change in Grades K-12: Part 1

Jan. 25: Teaching About Climate Change in Grades K-12: Part 2

These workshops below are for K-12 educators with a solid understanding of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). RVCC also offer workshops to support K-12 educators in translating the vision behind the NGSS/ NJSLS-S into effective classroom instruction and assessment according to the following schedule:

- Nov. 2: Using Core Ideas to Construct Explanations for Science Phenomena
- Dec. 7: Engaging Students in Practices Using Performance Tasks
- Feb. 8: Making Crosscutting Concepts Explicit
- March 1: Using Explanation and Argument to Assess Student Learning
- March 29: Defining Problems and Designing Solutions for Engineering Phenomena

The workshops will be led by Dr. Wil van der Veen, author and a nationally recognized expert on the NGSS and

science education. Participants will work in small groups that are facilitated by experienced classroom teachers from our NGSS Teacher Leader Program.

The workshops, which are all scheduled for Wednesday, 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 hours for completing each workshop.

To register online use tinyurl.com/RVCC-REG22-23 or visit our website at raritanval.edu/ngss. For more information contact Tina Gandarillas at tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu or 908-526-1200, ext. 8942.

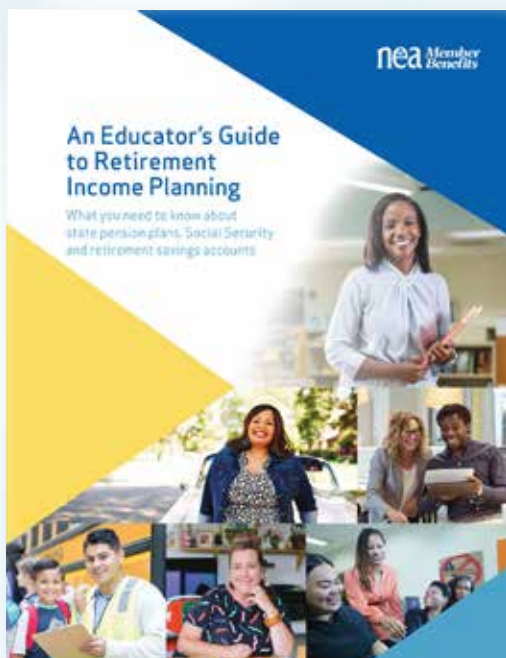
This workshop series is supported by a grant from the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium.

NJCCE FOCUSES ON MIDDLE SCHOOL CIVICS MANDATE

The New Jersey Center for Civic Education (NJCCE) is offering free, full-day (9a.m.-3 p.m.), in-person workshops on Oct. 10 and Nov. 8 at Rutgers University Busch Campus in Piscataway to assist teachers and administrators as they implement the new middle school civics education mandate. Sample materials will be provided, as well as breakfast and lunch. NJCCE will keep registrants posted regarding any COVID requirements. In order to ensure that all teachers who wish to attend have an opportunity, please register for only one workshop. Register by clicking on the links below:

Oct. 10: bit.ly/njcce-oct10

Nov. 8: bit.ly/njcce-nov8



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WHAT IS INCOME PROTECTION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Attend our free webinar on Nov. 2 at 4:30 p.m. Register at njea.org/mbwebinars.



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NJREA CELEBRATES STUDENT SUCCESS



Elizabeth Allen Four-Year Scholarship

Charles Devine is the recipient of the Elizabeth A. Allen Four Year College Scholarship. Devine's grandparents were teachers, which he says influenced his work ethic and impulse to be of service. He was president of the National Honor Society and captain of the varsity cross country team at Allentown High School. During his four at Allentown, Devine was president of the Plumsted Youth for Nature and Environmental Club. He now studies computer and information science at the University of Notre Dame. Through information technology, he hopes to do his part to improve social justice and solve environmental conflicts.



Fred Aug Two-Year Scholarship

Gabrielle Mavrin is the recipient of the Fred Aug Two-Year Scholarship. For as long as she can remember, Mavrin has been interested in brain development and psychology. At Pennsville Memorial High School, Mavrin participated in Jumpstart, a partnership with Salem Community College that enabled her to complete coursework in the Licensed Practicing Nursing program at the college while attending high school. At Pennsville, Mavrin was an active tennis player and honor roll student. Her skills in leadership and problem solving earned the respect of Mavrin's peers. Beyond Salem County Community College, she plans to attend Rowan or Rutgers to earn her bachelor's degree in nursing and master's degree as a nurse practitioner.



Isabelle Hickman Four-Year Scholarship

Gabriella Bravo is the recipient of the Isabelle Hickman Four-Year Scholarship. She is a National Advanced Placement Scholar with Distinction, and now studies biology at the University of Pennsylvania. While at Passaic Academy for Science and Engineering, Bravo was known for her hard work, commitment and focus. She was active in the Spanish National Honor Society and the Health Occupations Students of America. She plans on using her degree to create better access to health care in Hispanic and Black communities. Witnessing firsthand the impact of poverty on access to quality health care, Bravo sees a degree in biology as her first step into a career in medicine and her opportunity to diminish injustice.



Walter Krichling Vocational/Technical/Career Scholarship

Scott Brindley is the recipient of the Walter Krichling Vocational/Technical/Career Scholarship. Brindley graduated from Ocean County Vocational Technical High School's Marine Service Technology Program and Southern Regional High School, where he was active on the track and cross-country teams. He has also participated in many community service projects, both as a Boy Scout and as an honor roll student. For his Eagle Scout Project, Brindley built recycling cans from monofilament for Barnegat Lighthouse State Park. Monofilament, the line used in fishing, can tangle and trap birds, fish and other shore animals. Brindley now studies marine technology and mechanics at the New England Institute of Technology. Brindley hopes to one day open a marina where he can harbor, operate, and repair boats and their engines.

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.

CAMDEN COUNTY REA

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

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.

Dec. 6: Holiday meeting/luncheon at Four Star Event Catering in Wenonah. Cost is \$30, payable by check to GCREA. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 570-710-5514. Donations of cash or canned goods for local food bank appreciated.

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.

Dec. 13: Holiday luncheon/meeting at Molly Pitcher Inn in Red Bank. Cost is \$35. Meeting will be food and toy drive. To attend, call Sue Shrott 732-995-7754 by Dec. 2.

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.

Dec. 8: Holiday meeting/luncheon at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. Cost is \$28. To attend, call Barbara Miller at 732-477-1711 by Nov. 25.

PASSAIC COUNTY REA

Dec. 7: Holiday meeting/luncheon at The Brownstone in Paterson. Cost is \$35. 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 N.J. Office on Aging. Cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-467-4795 by Oct. 10.

Dec. 12: Holiday meeting/luncheon at the Woodstown Diner. The Woodstown High School Chamber Choir will be singing. Cost is \$17. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-467-4795 by Dec. 5.

SUSSEX COUNTY REA

Dec. 5: General meeting/luncheon at the Farmstead Golf and Country Club in Lafayette. Topic will be Harmony in Motion Singers. Cost is \$TBD. To attend, call Sharon Mullen at 908-852-1221.

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Family Bonding – Led by educators at Hopatcong’s Tulsa Train Elementary School, more than 50 students and parents participate in Family Bonding, a science night that encourages them to participate in one of several projects, such as designing a playground, designing and building learning games with electricity, improving the street hockey program in town, or making better tasting cookies for the cafeteria. Materials are differentiated to meet the needs of all students and translated into other languages to encourage maximum participation.

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OCTOBER & beyond

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

OCT 07-08	FRI & SAT Health and Safety Conference	NOV 09	WEDNESDAY Executive Committee meeting	NOV 12	SATURDAY Delegate Assembly meeting
OCT 12	WEDNESDAY Executive Committee meeting	NOV 09-10	WED & THURS NJREA Convention	DEC 07	WEDNESDAY Executive Committee meeting
OCT 21-22	FRI & SAT Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit	NOV 10-11	THURS & FRI NJEA Convention	JAN 06	FRIDAY Executive Committee meeting

for more information go to [NJEA.org](https://www.njea.org)

MEMBER BENEFIT PLAN REPORT AVAILABLE

This is a summary of the annual report for the New Jersey Education Association Member Benefit Fund, Employer Identification Number 21-0524390, Plan No. 510 for the period from Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2021. The Plan provides for group insurance and other welfare benefits. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

Insurance information

The plan sponsor, NJEA, has a group contract with Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay temporary and long-term disability claims incurred under the terms of the plan. The premiums under this contract are paid by those NJEA members who chose to select coverage under the contract. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending September 30, 2021 were \$35,016,863.

Basic financial statements

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the Plan was \$1,930,100 as of Sept. 30, 2021, compared to \$2,165,177 as of Oct. 1, 2020. During the Plan year, the Plan experienced a decrease in its net assets of (\$235,077). During the Plan year, the Plan had total income of \$410,036, including earnings from investments of \$211, and other income of \$409,825.

Plan expenses were \$645,113. These expenses included \$257,971 in administrative expenses and \$387,142 in membership benefits paid on behalf of participants and beneficiaries.

Your rights to additional information

You have the right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, on request. The items listed here are included in that report: an accountant's report; financial information and information on payments to service providers; insurance information, including sales commissions paid by insurance carriers; assets held for investment; and transactions in excess of 5% of plan assets.

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of Beth Schroeder Buonsante, NJEA, Member Benefit Fund, 180 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211, Phone: 609-599-4561. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$5 for the full annual report, or \$0.15 per page for any part thereof.

You also have the right to receive from the plan administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the plan and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover the copying costs given above does not include a charge for the copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.

You also have the legally protected right to examine the annual report at the main office of the plan at the address above or at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C., or to obtain a copy from the U.S. Department of Labor upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department of Labor should be addressed to Public Disclosure Room N 1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

THERE'S SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE AT THE NJEA CONVENTION

The NJEA Convention is one of the largest annual gatherings of educators in the world, bringing together New Jersey's teachers, educational support professionals (ESP), and educational service professionals from all over New Jersey. It also draws workshop presenters, speakers, textbook publishers, college and university representatives, and educational vendors from across the United States and sometimes the world.

Among those speakers is a lineup of exciting keynotes: LeVar Burton, Nyle DiMarco, Nikole Hannah-Jones and David Hogg. There are over 150 workshops on the third and fourth floors of the Atlantic City Convention Center and rich, immersive experiences on the Exhibit Hall floor.

Visit the NJEA Consortium Area for representative book giveaways, student spotlights, and supports for teaching Amistad, Holocaust, LGBTQIA+, Persons with Disabilities, and Asian American Pacific Islander curricula. Check out the Health and Wellness area for guided meditation, sound therapy, therapy/service dogs, healing circles, and African drumming practitioners, and more in the expanded Health and Wellness area.

The convention also features nearly 70 virtual sessions that members can access from anywhere. In addition, three of the four keynotes will be livestreamed.

And for the first time, the NJEA Convention will deliver three in-person workshops and one virtual presentation in Spanish.

Expanding your professional community

The NJEA Convention provides ample opportunity for members to interact professionally and socially.

Professional associations affiliated with NJEA sponsor workshops at the convention and have booths in the Exhibit Hall. No matter what you do for a living, you do it better when you have the opportunity to meet and interact with people who do the same kind of work you do—this holds true whether you drive a school bus, manage an office, teach public speaking at a community college, serve as a classroom aide in a charter school, or teach AP



physics at a traditional public high school. The in-person, professional connections made with colleagues outside of your school district but in your field, enhance what you bring back to your students and colleagues at home.

Finally, there are the events at the NJEA Convention that enhance the experience of all members.

The Celebration of Excellence introduces the State Teacher of The Year, the NJEA ESP of the Year, and celebrates members who have received grants from the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education.

Acting Commissioner of Education Angelica Allen-McMillan and several members of the State Board of Education will hold a panel discussion where you can ask questions and share your perspectives from the school and classroom level.

Student performances by the New Jersey All-State Jazz Ensemble and Honors Jazz Choir and the New Jersey All-State Chorus and Orchestra take place on Thursday and Friday evenings. Also on Thursday evening, the NJEA Equity Alliance, Early Career Network and NJEA Preservice are co-sponsoring a social networking event at Borgata. (Check the NJEA Convention Program for details.)

The NJEA Convention is free to all members and is an important benefit of your membership. Come to Atlantic City on Nov. 10 and 11 to learn and grow with your colleagues. 🏡

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