

REVIEW  
JANUARY 2023

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW

JANUARY  
2023  
njea.org



*an education and advocacy resource*



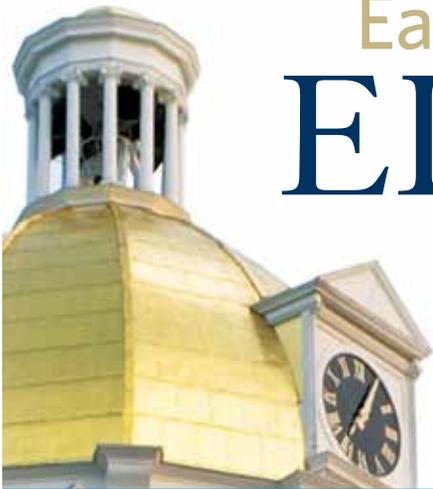
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DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING

**28** NJEA ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

**NJEA**  
*welcomes*  
**Guttenberg**



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[centu.org/njea-2022](http://centu.org/njea-2022)



**1: Essex County Education Association (ECEA)** celebrated National Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Day on Nov. 16. Antoinett Hall, the 2023 Essex County ESP of the Year, was honored. Middlesex County EA President Lois Yukna, NJREA President Joan Wright, and NJEA Field Organizer Kim-Scott Hayden (the 2021 NEA/NJEA ESP of the Year) were featured speakers. Sabina Ellis chairs the ECEA ESP Committee.

**2:** On Oct. 7, the **Manchester Township Education Association (MTEA)** held its Excellence in Education Celebration. Teachers, educational support professionals, and education services personnel were honored. The Friend of Education Award was given to HTJ Landscaping for its donated time, materials and labor to upgrade the Fallen Hawks Memorial Garden. Stefani Mercer, a teacher at Whiting Elementary School was honored. From left: MTEA Association Rep Colleen Goetz, Mercer and Whiting Principal Evelyn Swift.

**3:** NJEA members attended the **National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA)** Fall Conference in Salt Lake City. They engaged in meaningful workshops and learning opportunities and worked together with other members of the East Region to discuss important issues and collaborate with their colleagues. Standing from left: Tonya Scott-Cole, James Frazier, Keith Coston, Kelee Mitchell-Hall, Chris Cannella, Lois Yukna and Brenda Brathwaite. Seated from left: Christine Sampson-Clark, Lauren Greenfield, Christine Candarella, Jean Jackson and Sharon Ortiz.

# FEATURES



## 18 | NJEA WELCOMES GUTTENBERG

After a nearly 20-year hiatus, the teachers and educational support professionals at Anna L. Klein School in Guttenberg have rejoined the NJEA family. The statewide association’s resources have empowered local association leaders with the tools and information they need to effectively advocate for their members—and for members to confidently advocate for themselves.

BY PATRICK RUMAKER



## 22 | NOURISH YOUR “WHY”

Finding professional resources to continue learning, and exploring activities that invigorate personal strengths, serve as fuel to keep teachers energized about their careers. There are many ways that teachers can recharge their batteries and lift themselves up professionally to reignite their spark.

BY LEANA MALINOWSKY



## 24 | SOLUTION-BASED DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING

Problem-based learning (PBL) engages and excites students about subject matter and helps them develop the skills necessary to be successful in their future endeavors. Solution-based developmental learning (SBDL) includes all of the components of quality PBL but adds real-world connections and solutions to local and global problems. Facilitated by their teachers, students select the real-world problem they wish to address.

BY DR. STEPHANIE D’ALESSIO AND JOHN P. HENRY



## 28 | NJEA ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

NJEA is a member-driven organization. As a union, we serve one another through the governing bodies, the committees and the staff that make up our association. Learn who’s who in NJEA among each of these groups and connect with them to communicate your priorities.

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## The number 42%

The percentage of New Jersey's students who benefit from free or reduced-priced school lunches.

Source: "The challenge to make school lunch menus tasty and healthy," NJ Spotlight News, Dec. 13, 2022. ([njspotlightnews.org](http://njspotlightnews.org))



## GOOD NEWS

### Number One in World Languages

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

**Source:**

American Councils for International Education. "The National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report," 2017 and Raychaudhuri, Disha. "Why N.J. students dominate the U.S. in learning foreign languages" NJ.com, Sept. 5, 2018.



Guttenberg EA President Erin Mooney (l) and Vice President Kathryn Traflet are blazing a new trail as the local association reaffiliated with NJEA after a nearly 20-year hiatus.

**PHOTO BY**  
Jennifer Marsh

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# REVIEW

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

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

Executive Director: Steve 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 (Cumberland,  
Gloucester and Salem  
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*

## Happy New Year!

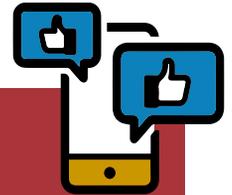
Every year, in the January edition of the NJEA Review, we print the Organizational Directory to give you details about the structure and function of your statewide education union. We know that the more informed members are about how our union is structured, the more likely they will be to get involved. After all, the success of our union relies entirely upon our members contributing their time, skills and talents as well as their opinions, values and priorities.

I hope you will spend some time reading through the Organizational Directory and familiarizing yourself with the Executive Committee, the Delegate Assembly, NJEA's many committees as well as the staff and consultants who make up our association.

There are so many ways to become more involved in our union at the local, county, state and national levels. If you are interested in learning more, start with your local association, or attend an NJEA or county advocacy conference. You will be amazed at how welcoming and helpful people will be to share what they know and to encourage you to venture further into union activism.

Many people have found that becoming more involved in their union energizes them and empowers them to share more information and resources with colleagues and parents. NJEA has so much to offer; we need your help to spread the word!

Since this is a time for resolutions, let's all resolve that in 2023 we will continue our efforts to provide an excellent education for every student in New Jersey public schools, and to continue to support each other as colleagues and advocates. As always, thank you for all that you do for our students and our communities.



### SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerforNJEA: School librarians are more important than ever! It was my honor to join the New Jersey Association of School Librarians at their conference last week. #StrongerTogether #UnionStrong

On Dec. 12, NJEA President Sean M. Spiller shared photos from the 2022 New Jersey Association of School Librarians (NJASL) Convention. Spiller, who has publicly acknowledged the importance of school librarians in the face of book challenges, pointed out that the role of school librarians is critically important to a vibrant democracy.

### STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: We grow stronger by embracing all members ... Over a relatively short time, we have seen our Association work with intention to engage in new ways and with ALL of our members—many of whom never saw themselves represented or even felt welcomed. Tonight was a great celebration of how far we've come, and the promise of great opportunity yet unfulfilled as two counties, Somerset County Education Association and Union County Education Association, had their NJEA Members-of-Color Network holiday celebration ... Thank you presidents Dan Epstein and James Frazier and organizers, Tonya Cole and Marisol Ruiz. And a special shout out to Eric Jones for leading unapologetically in the work!

On Dec. 7, NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty shared photos of himself with NJEA members at the NJEA Members of Color (MOC) event held in Somerset and Union counties. He praised the work of all those involved in growing the scope and power of the NJEA MOC Network.

### PETAL ROBERTSON

Facebook

@petalfornjea: Love to my NJEA family that bundled up and came out to support the Starbucks Workers United of Montclair. Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic, and Union counties and your NJEA officers represented! #UnionStrong #NJEA #petalforthepeople

On Nov. 18, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal Robertson shared a video of NJEA members who joined her as she supported Starbucks Workers United of Montclair, who are pushing to unionize in their stores. Robertson has repeatedly declared that all working people are stronger when they stand together, and her attendance at this event embodied that spirit.

OFFICERS ONLINE

# KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

## BECOME AN NEA RA DELEGATE

### The 2023 NEA RA to be held in Orlando

Over 9,000 delegates typically attend the annual National Education Association Representative Assembly (NEA RA). Delegates are charged with setting policy for the 3 million member organization. New Jersey sends between 500 and 600 delegates to the NEA RA., which will be held in Orlando from July 2 to July 6. Delegates are expected to arrive in Orlando on July 1 and depart on July 7.

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

Delegates will elect members to the NEA Executive Committee as well as at-large positions on the NEA Board of Directors. If any vacancies occur in NEA officer or other Executive Committee positions, these may also be filled at the NEA RA.

### Delegates must be elected

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

Each local association may elect one delegate to the NEA RA for every 150 members, or major fraction thereof. If a local affiliate has fewer than 76 NEA members, it may join with one or more other local affiliates, each with fewer than 76 members, to form units for the purpose of representation. Allocation of delegate credentials is based on active membership in NEA as of Jan. 13.

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

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

To complete the online self-nomination form, go to [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections) between Feb. 1 and Feb. 28.

### Ensuring ethnic-minority representation

NEA Bylaw 3-1.g requires each state affiliate to develop a plan to send a state delegation to the NEA RA that reflects the state's ethnic-minority proportions. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, 48% of New Jersey residents identify themselves as part of an ethnic-minority group. Thus, it is NJEA's goal to achieve at least that level of ethnic-minority representation in its delegation.

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

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

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

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

For complete rules and procedures, and to self-nominate for state delegate and minority-concerns positions, visit [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).

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## NJEA NOMINATION PROCEDURES AND ELECTION RULES

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

All self-nominations for the NEA RA will be conducted online. Members wishing to self-nominate will go to [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections) to be linked to the self-nomination site. Self-nomination begins on Feb. 1 and concludes on Feb. 28.

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

For all election-related procedures visit [njea.org/NJEAelections](http://njea.org/NJEAelections).

## NJEA ELECTIONS CALENDAR 2023

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

### Jan. 13 – Official Membership Count

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

### Jan. 23 – Election Committee Mandatory Meeting

- Rules, procedures, and calendar reviewed and finalized
- Announcement of membership numbers, governance and RA positions by county/unit
- Review of nominating committee requirements, filing dates, electronic nomination process
- Jan. 24 – inclement weather back-up

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

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

### Feb. 24 – Deadline for county and unit nominating committees to convene

#### Feb. 28

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

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

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

### March 6

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

### April 1 to April 15 – Balloting

- Ballots due by noon April 15, 2022, at the address supplied with the ballots
- April 27 – Election Committee mandatory meeting to validate election results
- Election dispute hearings on challenge of actions related to the elections

### May 1 – 2023-24 election cycle begins

#### All dates are subject to change.

#### Note:

- Failure of a candidate to properly validate their nomination online will result in disqualification.
- Local NEA RA election results MUST be received at NJEA HQ no later than Monday, April 15, 2023.
- In accordance with NJEA Bylaws, the Elections Committee may change the balloting period.
- In the event the balloting period is changed, the new balloting period will be published in the March issue of the *NJEA Review* and posted [njea.org](http://njea.org).

## NOMINATE AN OUTSTANDING N.J. PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE

Since 1984, NJEA has presented Awards for Excellence at the NJEA Convention to New Jersey public school graduates who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in their fields of expertise. To be eligible, the nominees must have graduated from a New Jersey public high school, be well-known, considered highly successful in their fields, and have a pro-union point of view.

If you would like to make an Awards for Excellence nomination, send the information described below to Janet L. Royal at [jroyal@njea.org](mailto:jroyal@njea.org) by Feb. 28.

Include the nominee's name, mailing address, phone number, public high school from which they graduated, and a brief description of their achievement.

Also include your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address.

Nominations received after the Feb. 28 deadline will be considered for subsequent conventions.

## INTERESTED IN PRESENTING AT THE 2023 NJEA CONVENTION?

### Presenting at convention

The Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division (PDII) of NJEA is now accepting presenter proposals for the 2023 NJEA Convention to be held Nov. 9-10, 2023. All proposals to present at the NJEA Convention and at Digital Boulevard must be submitted electronically. The deadline for submission is March 31, 2023.

Please review your proposal carefully before submission. Once you click on the submit button, you will not be able to make any changes.

#### Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Your request for audiovisual equipment must accompany your proposal submission. NJEA may not be able to provide equipment requested at a later date.
- NJEA does not provide computers.
- NJEA does not reproduce any program materials and will not reimburse you for reproduction costs.
- If you are a member, please have your PIN and password ready.

### Presenting on Digital Boulevard

PDII is also accepting proposals for Digital Boulevard at the 2023 NJEA Convention. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how you use state-of-the-art technology to enhance classroom instruction.

NJEA members can apply to present in the Teacher to Teacher Learning Area. This is an informal demonstration area for educators to network with other educators. Programs are two 50-minute sessions.

### Submit your proposal

To submit proposals, visit [njea.org/conventionproposal](http://njea.org/conventionproposal). Check [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org) for updates.

Please contact Janet L. Royal at [jroyal@njea.org](mailto:jroyal@njea.org) or 609-310-4322 with questions.



# FAST Track to Your Community Outreach

## F.A.S.T. Showcase – Feb. 18, 2023

8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (breakfast & lunch provided) – space is limited; register early!

NJEA's FAST program (Families and Schools Together Work for Children) encourages families to be involved in their children's education, providing strategies to enhance children's academic progress, and help families feel welcome in public schools.

Topics will include:

- NJEA FAST Intro
- Guidance for First-Year coordinators
- Building Community Partnerships
- Overview of required paperwork
- Latino Institute

For more details and to register to attend (deadline is Feb. 10, 2023), visit [www.njea.org/FASTshowcase](http://www.njea.org/FASTshowcase)

Join us at Princeton Marriott at Forrestal, 100 College Rd. East, Princeton, NJ

# COOL STUFF



## NEW JERSEY MAPPING CONTEST

New Jersey is participating in a national online mapping competition for high school (9-12) and middle school (4-8) students. Students work alone or in pairs using their school's ArcGIS Online organizational account—free to schools at [bitlylinks.com/kihUwfy6U](https://bitlylinks.com/kihUwfy6U)—to create a Story Map based on an investigation of their choosing. New Jersey may award up to ten \$100 prizes to teams or individuals. A Story Map is a presentation mode that incorporates maps, text, photographs, videos, and more to tell a geographic story. Students can collect their own data or use the abundant data available on the online mapping site. The key is to tell a New Jersey-centered story that has a geographic component. Past examples have included an investigation of the loss of seagrass beds in Barnegat Bay and a study of food deserts in the state. For more information, to sign up for an instructional webinar, and to register for the contest visit [bitlylinks.com/9gauXp9ZO](https://bitlylinks.com/9gauXp9ZO). The deadline for entries will be the first week of May.



## SHARING NETWORK FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

The Sharing Network Foundation has multiple scholarships available for graduating high school seniors. The scholarships are awarded to students who have been affected by organ and tissue donation and transplantation and/or are advocates for life-saving mission of the Sharing Network. The application is available at [SharingNetworkFoundation.org/Scholarship](https://SharingNetworkFoundation.org/Scholarship). For questions, contact [scholarship@njsharingnetwork.org](mailto:scholarship@njsharingnetwork.org). All submissions must be received by the end of the day on Monday, Feb. 27.



## NJDCF PROVIDES FAMILY SUCCESS CENTERS

Family Success Centers offer a warm and welcoming home-like environment that provides family friendly activities and resources within communities to strengthen families. There is no cost to access the services they provide.

Program Services include:

- Access to information on child, maternal and family health services, economic self-sufficiency and job readiness.
- Information and referral services (connection to off-site public social services and private resources).
- Life skills training, housing services, parent education, parent-child activities, and advocacy

There are 57 Family Success Centers in New Jersey. To locate a program near you, visit: [nj.gov/dcf/families/support/success](https://nj.gov/dcf/families/support/success).



## FREE CIVICS CURRICULUM GUIDES

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) has released free civics curriculum guides to help teachers participate in our Law Fair and Law Adventure mock trial competitions. Law Fair and Law Adventure help to fulfill the new state-mandated civics education requirements. In these competitions (entry deadline is Jan. 31, 2023), students and their teachers write original mock trial cases according to rules NJSBF provides. In addition to the curriculum guides, other resources include competition rules booklets; speakers' PowerPoint from our October 28 Law Fair/Law Adventure workshop; quizzes, videos and past winning cases. Access all this at [njsbf.org/mock-trial](https://njsbf.org/mock-trial).



## SHARING NETWORK FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

The New Jersey State Bar Association's Minorities in the Profession Section (MIPS) is sponsoring an essay contest in celebration of Black History Month. New Jersey high school students are invited to write original essays (1,500 words or less) on topic questions provided by MIPS. There is no charge to enter. Scholarship prizes will be awarded for the top three essays. The submission deadline is Jan. 31.

Essay topics, contest rules and more can be found at [bit.ly/njsba-bhm-essay](https://bit.ly/njsba-bhm-essay).



# Whatever the weather, she's got it covered!

## Meet Ocean County ESP of the Year Lori Paton

After college, Lori Paton was juggling her own career with her role as the wife of a U.S. Coast Guard servicemember, a challenge complicated by life as a military family.

"I've been a military girlfriend, wife and mother for more than 40 years," Paton said. "I have a degree in business administration with a minor in law. I was following my husband around while he was pursuing his career in the military, and then we had our children.

Paton was working in retail management, and had successfully climbed the corporate ladder, but the hours were extremely demanding and challenging, taking her away on nights, holidays and weekends. A neighbor told her there was an opening at the school district that was five minutes from her house, so she pursued it.

"My hope was that this would help us reclaim our family life, which was very important to me," Paton said

Twenty-one years ago, Paton was hired as a shared secretary, splitting her time between the Transportation and Athletics offices. She learned the ins and outs of both positions, information that was invaluable when her job was later split again, and she continued as the administrative assistant for the Athletic office at Central Regional School District.

"Our Athletic Office is responsible for both high school and middle school sports—grades 7-12," Paton said. "We take care of every season of sports, for every grade level.

Paton assists the athletic director in scheduling the sports events for the entire district. She handles the scheduling of busing and officials, types certificates for every child in the sports programs offered each season, as well as banquet planning and tournament entries. In addition, Central



Regional is one of the few districts that still conducts sports physical exams for students, facilitating for more than 500 children over a two-day period.

Along with balancing these responsibilities, Paton is also the facility use coordinator for the school district. She coordinates the use of the high school and middle school buildings and grounds for the administration and staff as well as the community.

"This is a very logistics-based position," Paton said. "I really like that because I'm a numbers person. This is a unique position. You have to keep track of the changes that occur—weather-related and, during the last few years, COVID-related."

During the 2020-21 school year, the sports season schedule had to be scrapped and redone three times.

"If you're not on point with everything, you're going to end up with a team standing there without a bus or a team

**“ Support personnel are the engine that runs the education train.”**

“**Paton encourages students to get involved in school activities—any activities—to help them build connections and find their community.**”

standing there without an official,” Paton said.

Paton has developed excellent working relationships with the athletic office staff in the conference in which Central Regional competes—an irony considering that even though they maintain a close relationship, they also foster a healthy rivalry.

“Athletics never sleeps,” Paton pointed out. “You’re closing out one season and starting another, but there’s no reprieve with athletics. There’s never a downtime, and we’re never bored!”

In high school and college, Paton played field hockey and tried crew. She encourages students to get involved in school activities—any activities—to help them build connections and find their community.

“Their education is the most important thing,” Paton said. “But sports and activities can keep students motivated about coming to school. It can boost their attendance and help improve their academics.”

The number of activities now available to students is impressive.

“I love athletics, and I’m excited about all the programs we have and how we’ve built it up,” Paton said. “In the winter, a student can bowl, swim, there’s so many things. If you have a child who doesn’t want to play basketball, they have lots of other options. Tennis and golf are sports they can take into their later years. Not every child needs to play a sport. They might love to sing or dance or join a club. It’s one of the few times in your life when you’re with that many people your age on a daily basis.”

Paton and her husband, Jim, who is now retired from the U.S. Coast Guard, have two children. Their daughter, Jamie, has a master’s degree in media studies and son, Daniel, is a major in the U.S. Marine Corps who graduated from the United States Naval Academy. Paton has been a resource for students interested in pursuing their education at one of the military academies.

At the same time, Paton has been very involved in her union. She has been on the negotiations team for five contracts, is a strong advocate on health benefits issues, and has served as the association’s social chair.

“I really feel it’s important for members to understand that all the things they enjoy every day—from the number

of minutes they work to their sick time to duty-free lunch time to personal days—these are not a gift from the district. It’s all because of years and years of negotiating. The quality of your health care, prescription benefits, these are things that you don’t have to think about until something happens. But throughout the life of the school district, these things have been negotiated. And every time you negotiate, there’s something new, good, and positive that the membership gets to benefit from. I think sometimes people don’t give any thought to it. They accept what it is, but they need to understand the background.”

Paton is honored to be the 2022 Ocean County ESP of the Year.

“Support personnel are the engine that runs the education train,” Paton said. “Teachers are the conductors. We work together to make things the best they can be for our students. I’m extremely appreciative and honored to be the Ocean County ESP of the Year, especially because we all work so hard to contribute to the well-being of our students each and every day.” 🧑🏻‍🎓

## Join ESPAN

The Educational Support Professionals Advocacy Network (ESPAN) collaborates to develop strategies and initiatives to protect ESP members’ rights, benefits and careers, regardless of their job category and worksite. In 2021, ESPAN welcomed like-minded members from all 21 counties to serve as “captains,” with a primary focus to introduce ESPAN to their peers.

In 2022, ESPAN was recognized by NJEA as an official “affinity group” of the organization, and it continues to gain momentum as it seeks to provide a stronger, more dedicated advocacy structure for ESPs throughout New Jersey.

To learn more about ESPAN visit [njea.org/ESPAN](https://njea.org/ESPAN).

# NJEA Report

## White House Conference on Nutrition, Hunger, and Health

By Catherine Grano PhD, RN, CSN-NJ

On Sept. 28, I had the honor of attending the White House Conference on Nutrition, Hunger, and Health, the first of its kind in over 50 years. The Biden-Harris Administration announced a national strategy aimed at driving “transformative change in the U.S. to end hunger, improve nutrition and physical activity, and close the disparities surrounding them.” The national strategy includes five pillars:

- Integrate nutrition and health.
- Improve food access and affordability.
- Empower all consumers to make and have access to healthy choices.
- Support physical activity for all.
- Enhance nutrition and food security research.

More information can be found at [bit.ly/3X9tr4j](https://bit.ly/3X9tr4j).

The conference brought together government leaders, experts, activists and individuals from all walks of life to participate in engaging conversations toward ending hunger, increasing physical activity, and reducing diet related disease. Included were the voices of community leaders, individuals affected by social inequalities such as poverty, hunger, and unsafe communities—and youth actively leading change. President Joe Biden, Ambassador Susan E. Rice, Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack and Chef José Andrés declared their commitment to the efforts while panels of community experts shared experiences and successes within their communities.

As we know, social determinants of health affect individual and community health, functioning and quality of life. Lack of access to nutritious and affordable food, and to safe outdoor spaces, along with a lack of physical activity opportunities contributes to hunger, diet-related diseases, and health disparities. We must address inequalities and

promote equitable access to services that support healthy living. Success of the national strategy requires that all Americans come together, those from all political parties, and all sectors of society, both public and private.

The conference was inspiring and the mood infectious. If we could bottle the energy from the conference and spread it throughout the country, hunger would be eliminated rather quickly. We have more than adequate quantities of food but need reliable and sustainable methods to implement distribution to those experiencing hunger and food insecurity.

As school professionals, we are committed to student health and academic achievement. We know that food insecurity can negatively impact learning and lead to poor health outcomes. Red Bank’s backpack food program, The Backpack Crew ([backpackcrew.org](https://backpackcrew.org)), promotes the slogan is “Because you can’t be awesome when you’re hungry.” How true!

The Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to expanding access to healthy, free school meals for children will support student health and learning and support an end to childhood hunger in the U.S. Providing universal healthy school meals to all students is one important goal of the National Education Association (NEA).

Students need the opportunity to be active throughout the day, every day of the year. Throughout the conference, ideas to increase physical activity such as access and safe space to play were abundant, including ideas regarding collaboration with community centers, development of safe walking paths and playgrounds, and summer activity programs. But again, we need sustainable planning, funding and human effort for implementation.

NEA supports student opportunities to move and engage in recess activities throughout the school day. As educators, we attempt to balance learning and achievement with psychosocial development and the mental health needs of our youth. Physical activity is an important part of this equation, positively impacting cognitive development, behavior and socializing, while also serving as an outlet for stress relief. Health benefits of exercise are well known—supporting a healthy body

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*Catherine Grano is a certified school nurse at New Monmouth Elementary School in Middletown Township. She is the education co-chair of the New Jersey State School Nurses Association and the 2021 New Jersey School Nurse of the Year. She can be reached at [cathyanne@hotmail.com](mailto:cathyanne@hotmail.com).*

mass index (BMI) and decreasing the risk of chronic illness and depression. Recess activities allow students to return to class recharged and refocused.

### Supporting physical activity for kids

I participated as part of Panel 4B: The Power of Play: Supporting Physical Activity for Kids, along with Kaboom CEO Lysa Ratliff, Sergeant Jermaine Harris, co-founder of Chicago Westside Police and Youth Sports Conference, and Ann Marie Krautheim, CEO of GENYOUth.

The focus of our panel was on ways to expand physical activity opportunities for youth in schools and communities. Our themes included barriers, strategies to overcome barriers and support equitable access, and identification of resources needed to support sustainability. As a nurse for 24 years and school nurse for 14, I was very excited to share ideas and experiences through a school focused lens.

You can view the panel at [bit.ly/wh-powerofplay](https://bit.ly/wh-powerofplay). Here are some key takeaways:

#### Barriers

- Lack of safe space to play, unsafe neighborhoods, fear for safety.
- Lack of time: The school day is full addressing academic demands; instructional time may include long sedentary periods or dependency on computer-based programs.
- Lack of knowledge regarding the benefits of exercise and how to incorporate it into daily life.
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence; lack of support or role model.
- Lack of motivation, with screen time and social media being a real distraction for students.
- Lack of transportation to participate in before or after school activities.
- Lack of access to nutritious food, necessary to provide energy and support physical activity.

#### Solutions

- Bring physical activity to the children, to their neighborhoods, schools and community centers.
- Reclaim unsafe spaces: Identify community spaces that can be used to support children and activity and work with community leaders to transform this space.
- Support relationship building between children and adults; develop mentor programs; role model healthy behaviors and respect while creating safe spaces for students.
- There are approximately 50 million children enrolled in U.S. public schools' grades PreK to 12. Shift school culture to make physical activity an integral part of the school day. (See sidebar.)
- Include children in creating solutions; peer leaders may drive participation. As Ms. Krautheim said,

we must engage the voice of youth in developing successful strategies.

- Accommodations for those that may feel uncomfortable or have low self-esteem: Offer alternate activities and support. Just like anything else, being physically active can take practice! Focus on lessons, programs, and support groups regarding self-image and self-esteem.
- Universal school meals and weekend food programs can provide nutrient dense food that supports physical activity and health

### It takes a village

An integral part of the discussion is community buy-in and sustainability. It is important that we assess the needs of the community and engage it in the planning process, including students, staff, families and local businesses. Engaging numerous individuals in the process can make the program more meaningful and manageable. We are more likely to see success if we all work together toward common goals. As Sgt. Harris said, "People Power is integral!"

Please, take a moment to reach out to your government officials and support the five pillars; engage in community discussions, and recruit those from both the private and public sector to take part. Share ideas and successes and turnkey these strategies to others. You may only be one person, but your actions can ripple into others and together we can do so much! It starts with YOU!

### Make physical activity a priority

Schedule activities throughout the school day keeping them simple, accessible, fun, and free.

Some ideas include:

- Short activity bursts, such as a morning march, brain breaks, or running/walking/rolling a lap at recess. They add up and improve concentration!
- Staff members move with the students and make it fun!
- Use physical activity as a reward for class accomplishments (extra recess!)
- Include wellness tips and physical activity challenges in school announcements.
- Weekly before-school walking/dance/fit clubs.
- Share a list/link of easy physical activity ideas with families.

# Retirees returning to the classroom

*By Sarah Favinger and Kaitlyn Dunphy, Esq.*

It is no secret that the country is currently experiencing educator shortages. As part of the response to this shortage, the state passed recent legislation that allows certain retirees to return to work while retired and collecting a full pension.

Please note that the information below does not apply to disability retirees. Disability retirees must adhere to a different set of rules and cannot work in any capacity related to the job they retired from.

## Teachers and other certificated professionals

Teachers and other certificated professionals have an opportunity to return to work if the district demonstrates to the commissioner of education that there is a critical need to employ a retiree. As of this past fall, 93 school districts have applied for this permission according to the New Jersey Department of Education. If approved, a district can offer the retiree employment for the 2022-23 school year (and previously, for the 2021-22 school year), with extensions beyond the 2022-23 school year with additional approval from the commissioner.

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*Sarah Favinger is an associate director in the NJEA Research and Economic Services Division. Kaitlyn Dunphy is an associate director of NJEA Legal Services and Member Rights in the NJEA Executive Office. To speak to an NJEA Pension Consultant, call 609-599-4561, ext. 2348.*

## Nurses

A separate law made special provisions for certified nurses. Certified nurses can continue to collect their pensions while returning to work if they had a bona fide retirement, and their re-employment is limited to a one-year contract, with a possible extension of an additional year.

## Coaches

For coaching positions, an individual who retired at the normal retirement age, which varies by pension tier, and is retired for at least 30 days after their retirement becomes due and payable, may return to work for a former employer as a coach. These retirees cannot earn more than \$15,000 per year for the employer.

Although the new laws made exceptions to the rules for returning to work in retirement, they do not negate the need to have a separation of employment prior to even arranging returning to work at a New Jersey school district. All public school district retirees must sever the employment relationship with their previous employer, with no prior arrangements to return in any capacity, including substitute teaching, volunteering, or working as an independent contractor or through a subcontracting service.

There must be a waiting period between retirement and reemployment. Those waiting periods, which begin from the date the retirement becomes due and payable, are represented in the chart on this page. Due and payable



means either more than 30 days after the retirement date or more than 30 days after the retirement has been approved by the board of trustees, whichever is later, as long as no changes were made in the beneficiary or option after the retirement date.

Return to work for...	Minimum wait
Former school district	180 days*
Another public school district or other public entity	30 days*
Private sector/Out-of-state service	No wait

\* For 10-month employees who retire on July 1 or August 1, the 180 and 30-day counts begin September 1

If a retiree makes any arrangements to return to public employment in any capacity (paid or unpaid) before there is a bona fide separation of service, the pension will be invalidated. The Division of Pensions will require the retiree

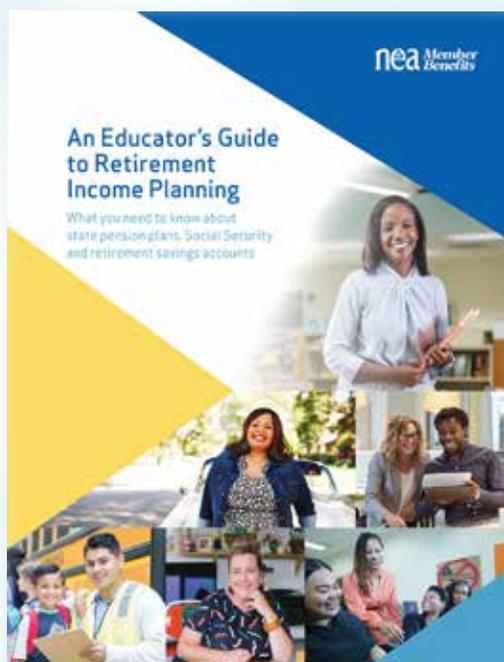
to return their retirement earnings to the state as well as the cost of health insurance paid by the state.

Typically, if a retiree with a valid pension is hired in a pension-eligible position, they may be required to “un-retire” by reenrolling in the pension system.

However, if the educator is returning to work under the new legislation recognizing the critical need for educators, they will not be required to reenroll and can continue to receive their pensions. Otherwise, reenrollment includes cancellation of the retirement and repayment of all pension benefits and health benefits received, potentially back to the retirement date.

Mandatory reenrollment in a Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) position occurs when a member works at least 32 hours per week; those who earn less than \$15,000 per year are not required to reenroll. Mandatory reenrollment in Teachers’ Pension and Annuity Fund (TPAF) occurs when a member works at least 32 hours per week, regardless of income.

Retirees who return to work are required to complete a form for the Division of Pensions; the employer must submit this form to the Division within 15 calendar days of the hire date. If there are questions regarding returning to employment, the retiree should reach out to the Division of Pensions and Benefits.



## Get An Educator's Guide to Retirement Income Planning to simplify planning for your financial future.



### The Retirement Guide breaks down:

- State pension plans
- Social Security benefits and qualifications
- Retirement savings account options
- Key financial planning considerations
- Next steps – with a personalized checklist for you

nea Member Benefits

VISIT [neamb.com/retireincome](https://neamb.com/retireincome) AND DOWNLOAD THE GUIDE to start putting your future first!



The NEA Retirement Program (“NEA Program”) provides investment products for retirement plans sponsored by school districts and other employers of NEA members and individual retirement accounts established by NEA members. Security Distributors and certain of its affiliates (collectively, “Security Benefit”) make these products available to plans and accounts pursuant to an agreement with NEA’s wholly owned subsidiary, NEA Member Benefits (“MB”), which markets the NEA Program. NEA and MB are not affiliated with Security Benefit. Neither NEA nor MB is a registered broker/dealer. All securities brokerage services are performed exclusively by the local sales representative’s broker/dealer and not by NEA or MB. NEA Retirement Specialists, when making recommendations to an NEA member, offer only Security Benefit products.

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# GETTING THE **ANSWERS** THEY NEED

NJEA welcomes Guttenberg to the association family

*By Patrick Rumaker*

Using the “Contact Us” link on most websites is a dicey proposition. The person sending the message never knows if a real human being is going to see it, and if they do, whether or not they’ll act on it.

But Kathryn Traflet, the former vice president of the Guttenberg Federation of Teachers (GFT)—now the vice president of the Guttenberg Education Association (GEA)—learned that when you contact NJEA, you get answers.

Her message, sent in May 2021 through the association’s “Contact NJEA” link, was simple and direct:

*Good morning,  
Our school—we are a one school district—currently belongs to AFT. We are looking into switching to NJEA. We want to get the ball rolling quickly. What is the process? Will someone be able to meet with us to explain the benefits of switching (either in person or virtually). I am not sure how we would go about all this.*

*Kathryn Traflet Guttenberg School District (Hudson County) GFT Union Vice President*

For the few school districts in New Jersey that have bargaining units represented by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), it’s not NJEA’s practice to entice staff in those districts to switch their affiliation to NJEA. However, when any bargaining unit seeks to explore an affiliation, NJEA will respond.

Traflet’s message found its way to NJEA UniServ Field Representative Ed Stevens, who assists local associations in Hudson County, where Guttenberg is located. Stevens was quick to respond and, as Traflet and then-GFT President, now GEA President, Erin Mooney learned, his accessibility was no fluke. Stevens would be there for them—not just guiding them through NJEA’s affiliation process, but as a trusted partner ever since.

## **A small town and a city**

Guttenberg is among the most densely populated municipalities in the most densely populated county in the most densely populated state in the U.S. In just under a quarter square mile, 11,500 people call Guttenberg home. It is four blocks wide and 13 blocks long. Wedged

GEA President Erin Mooney (l) and GEA Vice President Kathryn Traflet.



“The vote to affiliate with NJEA was 110-0.”

Guttenberg third grade educators celebrate the first day of school. From left: Barbara Encarnacion, Keri Moran, Ryan Clarke, Katie Osback, Yvette Perez and Sue-Ellen Castillo.



between West New York and North Bergen, those 13 blocks stretch down to the Hudson River, offering stunning views of Manhattan.

Like many such New Jersey communities, the wealth found along the riverfront does not necessarily extend inland. Nearly 14% of Guttenberg families live below the poverty line.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, 68% of residents identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino. For many students attending Anna L. Klein School, the district's only public school, Spanish is the primary language spoken at home.

Many GEA members live in Guttenberg, and the community is the kind of place where everyone seems to know everyone else. The school is the heart of the community.

"The kids like being here," Mooney said. "The little ones are more vocal about it—saying outright, 'I love school'—but even the middle schoolers want to linger in the hallways after school, talking to their friends."

Places like Joey's Corner, a market across the street from Anna L. Klein School, are gathering places for the tight-knit community.

"It's like a city, but it's also a small town," Mooney said. "It's a truly unique place that really catches hold of you."

### **Eighteen years with AFT**

Prior to 2004, Guttenberg's teachers and educational support professionals (ESPs) were represented by NJEA. That affiliation dated back to 1971. But in the early 2000s, some staff in Guttenberg came to believe that the AFT

would be more effective at bargaining their salaries. The potential relationship with AFT was enticing, in part, because the K-12 district to which Guttenberg's K-8 students attended high school was already an AFT affiliate.

By 2021, most Guttenberg staff were either unaware that Guttenberg had ever been with NJEA or were not clear on the details leading to the switch to AFT. As they mulled over contacting NJEA, Traflet and Mooney investigated why the change occurred.

"We found that they weren't happy with the contracts," Mooney said. "In those years, there wasn't a lot of funding going into school districts. I think it was just a tough time for every district."

On paper, the salaries in the nearby K-12 district seemed to be better than the salaries in Guttenberg. So, despite the bargaining challenges statewide, the Guttenberg staff hoped they would do better with AFT than with NJEA and voted to change affiliation.

Until 2021, they didn't look back.

### **Sorting through the issues**

Where bargaining concerns were the impetus for change in 2004, concerns of an entirely different sort brought change in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic, which closed school buildings in March 2020, brought anxiety and uncertainty.

"COVID was the big thing because, especially when we were under the lockdown and teaching from home, we felt like we were in the dark," Mooney recalled. "Things were changing so quickly, and we really could have used some representation to guide us."

As the majority bargaining representative in nearly every school district in the state, with field offices across the state and a tradition of "doorstep" service, the NJEA field reps and consultants are uniquely positioned to bring the

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Fourth grade Guttenberg educators get social for Halloween. From left: Briana Jimenez, Angely Reyes, Michelle Clarke, Jovita Sanchez, and Tamara Antomarchi Yearwood.

association’s resources—practical assistance, information and advocacy—to members and local leaders. Those resources—including a Trenton headquarters staff with expertise in research, government regulations, professional development, communications and member organizing—made it possible for NJEA help guide its members through the pandemic.

Traflet noted that most NJEA field reps brought another advantage: they were once teachers and ESPs themselves.

“Sometimes our AFT rep didn’t grasp what we saw as a big issue,” Traflet said. “That we don’t even get to go to the bathroom when we need to go, and how a seemingly minor change in a schedule could make that worse. It was hard for them to really understand. We just didn’t feel like we had the support we needed.”

Traflet noted that NJEA’s resources could have empowered them with the information they needed to advocate for members.

“We had a member who was retiring, and the district wouldn’t pay her for her unused sick time at the level she was entitled to—it was a difference of \$15,000,” Traflet said. “Our rep at that time said that she wasn’t entitled to it.”

Traflet explained that the rep was relying on a surface reading of a law, but without the deep legal expertise that NJEA could have brought to bear, the rep didn’t see that that law didn’t apply to the retiree in question. Traflet was left digging into the law by herself to sort it out.

“Traflet noted that most NJEA field reps brought another advantage: they were once teachers and ESPs themselves.”

“Before we switched to NJEA, we were essentially sorting through all the legal jargon ourselves, and we’re not lawyers,” Mooney said. “If it wasn’t for Kate’s tenacity, I don’t know if that member would have gotten the correct payout. We needed the support of someone who could answer our questions or, at least, guide us to find the answers.”

### Making the switch

Before putting affiliation with NJEA to a vote, Mooney and Traflet wanted to be sure their members had all the information they needed to make an informed decision. They invited Stevens and Tom DeSocio, also a UniServ field rep in the Hudson County office, to make several presentations to their members about what NJEA had to offer.

They also held several meetings with their members apart from Stevens and DeSocio to discuss the potential affiliation.

“People really reflected on it and were discussing it among themselves,” Mooney said. “Our members kept thinking back to COVID and how stressful it was. And it was stressful for us—not having the information we felt could help us guide our members through all the minutia.”

By September of 2021, Guttenberg was ready to take the vote necessary to disaffiliate from AFT and then vote to affiliate with NJEA. With about 120 members that year, the vote to disaffiliate from AFT was 109-1. The subsequent vote to affiliate with NJEA was 110-0.

“I was pretty proud of the turnout,” Mooney said. “There was excitement in the air. I think people felt empowered—they were taking this active step on their own.”

### Negotiating with NJEA at the table

The Guttenberg Education Association is an all-inclusive local, meaning they represent all of the bargaining units in the district: teachers and other certificated staff, paraprofessionals, secretaries and custodians.

“When we went to the NJEA Summer Leadership Conference, I heard this advice for local presidents: ‘Make the union work for you—you shouldn’t be the one person who is expected to do it all. Everyone needs to show up



On Sept. 7, NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty visited Anna L. Klein School in Guttenberg to welcome NJEA's newest local association. He snapped a selfie with some of the school's part-time special education aides. From left: Beatty, Hiba Harb, Lenny Hernandez, Paola Sanchez, Evelyn Tejada, Dina Gonzalez, and Maria Puma.

and push," Mooney said.

With that in mind as they prepared for negotiations, GEA surveyed members, held meetings to elicit what members valued most for their next contract, and hosted workshops on topics such as what is and isn't negotiable.

They also made sure that the GEA negotiations team more fully represented the membership. Rather than consisting solely of teachers, the team also included a custodian, a secretary, and a part-time aide.

Mooney noted that the part-time aides were "fired up" about the upcoming negotiations. One of the meetings with members to prepare for negotiations took place during the break between afternoon and evening parent-teacher conferences. The part-time aides came back for that meeting.

Among the items that part-time aides hoped would come out of negotiations was to receive a regular twice-per-month paycheck. Up to that time—rather than divide part-time aides' hourly pay evenly across 20 pay periods—paycheck amounts would vary based on the district calendar. A check would be smaller following the holiday break, for example.

"They wanted to be able to financially plan for their families," Traflet said.

In addition to reforming how aides are paid, GEA also negotiated a salary guide for aides. Until then, all aides received the same pay no matter how long they had been in the district.

"We have some really vulnerable students who need those one-on-ones aides, and they're wonderful. They care so much," Mooney said. "I think our longest serving part time aide has been here for 16 years, and they deserve

so much more than they have right now. That salary guide is a good step with, hopefully, many more to come in the future."

### Confident leadership

Mooney said that she feels more confident in her leadership following Guttenberg's affiliation with NJEA. In addition to negotiations assistance, she sees value in the day-to-day service that NJEA can provide.

"I feel very lucky to be part of NJEA, especially with Ed Stevens as our field rep," Mooney said. "Members come to me with questions and if I don't know the answer, I feel confident that I can get the answer quickly. I'm not playing phone tag for a week."

With their energized confidence, and this round of negotiations behind them, GEA leadership has what Mooney calls "a lengthy to-do list."

"Our big focus this year is member engagement and education—just making us feel like more of a community, building our communication networks, making sure people feel informed and that they know who to go to if they have questions," Mooney said.

She also wants her members to feel confident in following the contract and to stand-up for themselves and their colleagues when it isn't followed.

"We have more of a voice now, we have advocates like Ed on our side, and we're part of something bigger than our one town," Mooney said. "We're part of statewide community. After all, NJEA is 'it' when you think about education in New Jersey." 🇺🇸

# NOURISH YOUR “WHY”

Learning and growing as professionals

By Leana Malinowsky



Leana Malinowsky with her students at Minue School in Carteret

Teachers are asked countless questions throughout their career. These questions come from many different people—students, families, administrators, and still others who are not involved in the field at all. Perhaps the most popular question asked is “Why did you become a teacher?”

Still more predictable is the response that educators give: “I became a teacher because I want to make a difference in the lives of my students.” Other varieties of responses are—but not limited to—“I love to work with children,” “I want to help make society better for all and our future,” “I want students to feel safe and loved,” “I want to give students opportunities to learn and grow,” and the list continues.

It’s natural that teachers say this, after all that’s why someone chooses to be a teacher—for the students!

Educators should not feel guilty or selfish if they also love teaching because they love learning, growing and developing themselves as professionals. Teachers make all other professions possible, and continuing to learn, discover and pursue their professional goals, and develop their craft are ways they can better serve the students they teach. Finding professional resources to continue learning, and exploring activities that invigorate personal

strengths, serve as fuel to keep teachers energized about their careers.

There are many ways that teachers can recharge their batteries and lift themselves up professionally to reignite their spark and find purpose in teaching for themselves.

## Create content

Teachers have a lot of ideas for how to create and develop lessons and materials to go with them. The more lessons are taught, the better teachers get at figuring out what works best for students.

Why not share these ideas and materials with others who may benefit from them? Creating a Padlet, Wakelet or even creating materials for Teachers Pay Teachers offers educators opportunities to share their talents for creating content and receiving feedback on their work.

Choosing what to share also provides time for reflection to see what changes can be made with these materials. Sharing can also help you gather ideas from others on how to create different materials or what to change in a lesson.

Seasoned teachers can also show their leadership by serving on curriculum committees for their district, writing curricula for a subject they have expertise in.

## Write/publish

Whether it's a blog, an article, or even a children's book, teachers who enjoy writing can share their passion with others through their work. This connects with the idea of creating content.

Sharing content through a children's book offers the opportunity to focus on a topic and explain it just like it's shared in the classroom. Writing for other educators is empowering, and it helps guide teachers of all levels of experience to think of a topic from a different point of view.

## Join professional organizations

Many educators already belong to one, however, active participation takes membership to a whole new level. Networking with other educators who have joined the same organization is a way to learn more about the theme of that organization and discover ways to stay engaged. It's also an opportunity to meet like-minded professionals who share the same passions in education and build relationships with others around the world to embrace a global perspective on the field. Professional organizations that have affiliations with New Jersey educators can be found at [njea.org/affiliated-groups](http://njea.org/affiliated-groups).

## Present/speak

Many teachers share that presenting and speaking (to adults) make them nervous. It might take some time, but presenting on a favorite topic or speaking to other educators is a great way to share experiences and knowledge with other educators.

Start small! There are plenty of groups that serve preservice and novice educators who always look for experienced educators to speak to the next generation of teachers—both formally and informally at meetings or on a panel.

## Mentor

Connecting with speaking to preservice and novice educators, mentoring is a great way to “pay it forward” as an educator and have an impact on future teachers. Although many school districts have a formal mentoring program, most teachers who are in their first three years of teaching share that they wish they had more mentoring options.

Whether formal or informal, serving as mentor is gratifying and helps seasoned educators build connections

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*Leana Malinowsky is the 2022-23 Middlesex County Teacher of the Year. She is first grade teacher at the PVT Nicholas Minue School in Carteret. Teaching since 2008, she has over the course of her career taught at various grade levels. She can be reached at [lmalinowsky@gmail.com](mailto:lmalinowsky@gmail.com).*

with new teachers, and even learn what's new. It's a symbiotic relationship.

## Self-directed learning

Most middle and high school educators teach a subject area they feel personally connected to, and most elementary teachers, while they have to usually teach all subjects, tend to favor one or two. Learning about a different subject or further enhancing knowledge on an area of focus from before is the perfect passion project to feel excited to teach new with strategies and methods.

Attending conferences is another great way to feel inspired. Sometimes all it takes to reignite the spark for teaching is one weekend with other like-minded educators sharing stories and diving into learning. Seeking out professional development that is personally exciting is beneficial for teachers and therefore students!

## Awards

Teachers are humble about their work. All educators work hard every day, including days off, and go the extra mile for their students. Why not celebrate that? Although there is no guarantee that an award will be honored, it's worth the time to try for it. Awards and recognition can lead to new connections and possibilities to share ideas and expand teachers' networks.

## Keeping your cup full

When educators seek opportunities for self-growth, recognition, and activities that excite them, they automatically increase their skills and stamina to be even better in the classroom. Finding activities that nourish their “why” will make a great impact.

The professional side of the field often takes a back seat to delivering instruction to students and the daily routines of teaching. Getting lost in the same schedule can be disheartening and creates a fine line between surviving and thriving.

Educators need to continue to fill their own “cup” and find others who support their endeavors outside



the classroom, so they can continue to be the best they can be for their students, and each other. This positive cycle serves as a support system that naturally serves students through the work of the most important factor in their school careers—teachers. 🌱

# SOLUTION-BASED DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING

## A best practice in STEAM

*By Dr. Stephanie D'Alessio and John P. Henry*



Students from Arthur M. Judd Elementary School in North Brunswick and from Wallace Elementary School in Hoboken display their award plaques at the 2018 NJEA Convention. The award ceremony was the culmination of the months-long NJSBA/U.S. Army STEAM Tank competition.

Creating engaging experiential lessons that get students excited about learning is an integral part of lesson development and teaching and learning practices. Research has shown that student engagement is also an important part of retention. If you engage the student, achievement will follow.

Pedagogical practices such as direct instruction or compartmentalized teaching that lack or have limited connection to students' interests or their lives, can disengage the learner from participating and retaining the content taught. In addition, schools that focus on "teaching to the test" may not allow opportunities for student-centered, authentic problem solving and "hand-on, minds-on" learning, missing the opportunity to raise students' interest in their own learning.

Current research suggests a plethora of strategies that are deemed to be successful in getting students excited

about learning. One of the most effective pedagogical strategies is problem-based learning (PBL). Not only does this type of experiential learning engage and excite students about the subject at hand, but also helps students to develop the skills necessary to be successful in their future endeavors.

This article will discuss problem-based learning (PBL) and its current expansion into a new pedagogy called "solution-based developmental learning" (SBDL).

### **What are PBL and SBDL?**

PBL is a broad pedagogical approach to teaching that includes students working collaboratively to formulate solutions to real-world problems that are meaningful in their lives. It is usually introduced in the form of an open-ended activity or scenario where limited information is provided to the learners. Most activities are student

centered and collaborative, allowing for choice, voice and student ownership of the process and solutions.

A key difference between problem-based and project-based learning is that the latter is more structured and better suited for a learning environment that has time constraints. Project-based learning often concludes with a tangible product. However, this product may lack authentic learning opportunities. Nonetheless, project-based learning is still a good entry point for teachers and younger students.

Building on the PBL theory, SBDL includes all of the components of quality PBL but adds real world connections and solutions to local and global problems. Facilitated by their teachers, students select the real-world problem they wish to address.

This new pedagogy, created in collaboration by the authors, not only uses the foundational components of PBL but also includes developmental goals of morality and empathy. Switching the focus to student-developed solutions to real-world problems not only develops the cognitive skills needed to be successful in the world but also facilitates the teaching of universal principles of empathy for human rights, justice and equality.

### **The theory behind SBDL**

Theorists such as Aristotle, Dewey and Piaget first introduced the concept of hands-on, minds-on activities or what is commonly called learning from experience. In 1969, a group of medical students at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario first used problem-based learning addressing real life problems in the field of medicine. An effective PBL pedagogy and curriculum were used to construct meaning and solutions in the biomedical field. The university proved that using this teaching strategy would help their students to develop a pattern of problem-solving behaviors that supported lifelong questioning and solution formulation.

Recently, teachers across the globe have been using this pedagogical strategy in their classrooms to help develop critical thinking skills and the 21st-century skills needed to be successful in today's global economy.

What seemed to be remiss in this pedagogy was the holistic development of the student. SBDL offers a holistic approach to PBL. When students engage SBDL activities they not only incorporate design thinking and engineering practices, but they also learn holistically. This is a systems-thinking approach to learning so the student sees all the parts to a situation they are attempting to solve. They become empowered, they approach problems from multiple perspectives, and they take into consideration the emotional diversity and equity in the problems that they address.

Students can select situations that they have a direct



**Now NJEA President Sean M. Spiller congratulates an award-winning student at the NJSBA/U.S. Army STEAM Tank competition awards ceremony held at the 2018 NJEA Convention.**

emotional connection to, such as the environment and climate change, societal issues, the COVID-19 pandemic or other pertinent global issues. When students are learning science, technology, the arts, engineering and mathematics (STEAM) through SBDL, they are learning. They move away from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset, empowering them in a post-pandemic world to address challenges that are yet unseen.

SBDL theory expands on theoretical components such as Kohlberg's Moral Development. Kohlberg's theory links a person's moral development to their cognitive development. At the optimal level of development in

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Students displayed and discussed their NJSBA/U.S. Army STEAM Tank competition projects at the 2018 NJEA Convention.

this theory an individual has fully developed their moral beliefs and will defend those beliefs even if it means serious personal negative consequences. By solving local and global issues that support principles such as empathy for human rights, justice and equality, students develop a moral compass that allows them to grow holistically.

### **SBDL in practice**

The first step for educators is to provide students with broad problems to solve. The educator must decide to either create an interesting real-world problem that is relevant or meaningful to the student—this is best for younger students—or have the students independently select something they feel strongly about.

Educators should also consider the end goal. You must determine what you want your students to be able to know, understand and do. Alignment to the state standards are always included among the first steps. SBDL is not just an open-ended problem and solution activity; it can be strategically planned to help the development of critical career-readiness skills. SBDL also goes beyond content learning while addressing universal principles of empathy for human rights, justice and equality.

Early on, students should consider the end goal and determine benefits and consequences of their solutions. This is where students begin to learn about the design-thinking process and systems thinking. They become aware that every decision they make has benefits, consequences and trade-offs. This forces students to look at our world

and the many technological advances and determine if those technologies are really helping people or hurting the environment or our society in some way.

Educators should determine how much control they want to have. Teachers must decide if they want to direct every step of the process, which is less impactful. They may opt instead to allow it to be extremely open-ended, student-directed and teacher-facilitated, which increases student ownership and engagement. That decision will be based on circumstances of the individual school and other restrictions that teachers face.

For a classroom environment that needs more structure, the next step is for the educator to design a scenario or describe a situation for your students to solve. It is critical to ensure that the design of the activity:

- Is relevant and meaningful to the students' lives.
- Is aligned to the standards.
- Is manageable for the teacher and the students.
- Is based in the real world.

Has an emphasis on improving something and helping people, animals, the environment or an issue of international importance.

Another way to accomplish this step is to have the students select a global issue that they feel strongly about. This increases student engagement and interest.

Another essential component is for students to determine how this will help the quality of life for people, protect the environment and increase equity. This is not

**“ Students see things from multiple perspectives and as a result, create inspirational and innovative and long-term solutions instead of short-term quick fix solutions just to get a grade.**

a simple project-based learning activity where students create a poster on a topic and only look at one or two content areas. It is a deep dive for understanding how the solutions may impact people, ecosystems, the natural world and the species that live on our planet.

Another step is to consider the physical space in which students will work. The teachers should identify needed supplies and materials. Will any special technology and equipment be needed? What about storage capacity for student projects?

Teachers will often provide extensions to the learning beyond the four walls of the classroom. It is important for the teacher to know what the obstacles may be prior to the SBDL, even it is not always possible to identify every situation that may arise, especially if the students selected the problems to solve.

There are many other considerations: What impact will the school's daily schedule and the district calendar have? What about safety considerations? What if the students are unable to complete the SBDL? What costs are involved?

Transparent communication and rationale is key for the success of the SBDL. Informing the administration as to what you are doing in the classroom is important because it may look different than traditional instruction.

SBDL can also be implemented as a schoolwide initiative to help support student learning and collaborative teaching in a school district. SBDL fosters the opportunity for teachers to work together and support students while they explore solutions to situations that they have identified.

It is important to recruit subject matter experts who can expand the knowledge base beyond the individual teacher. It helps students connect with someone who is not from the school and has information that they need to help them solve the problem they are addressing.

This also places the student in the role of an entrepreneur. Students quickly realize that they don't have to know everything about the problem. They learn that they can find solutions through whatever means they have available. It takes away limiting beliefs of a fixed mindset of "I can't"

to a growth mindset of "I can." These experts could be your colleagues or may include parents or experts in the community.

### **STEAM Tank provides a model**

A comprehensive example of this pedagogy is the STEAM Tank Design Challenge. STEAM Tank is an open-ended entrepreneurial design challenge open to all K-12 students in New Jersey. It was created by the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) in collaboration with the U.S. Army.

Teachers of this program integrate SBDL principles into a framework of quality hands-on, inquiry-based STEAM programming relevant to students' lives. Students work collaboratively in teams to identify real-world situations to find resolutions.

Although the teacher will be responsible for facilitating the class time, space and materials for the program, students should be given choice and voice in what and how their projects are developed and presented. Students pitch their ideas to subject matter expert judges from the NJSBA, the U.S. Army, outside organizations and industry partners. Finals are held annually at the NJSBA workshop—the largest leadership conference for school boards and school officials in the state.

The winners of the final competition have been announced and recognized at previous NJEA Conventions.

Engaging students in real-world problem-solving activities promotes an engaging classroom experience for both educators and students. The possibilities of exploration and solutions to the issues at hand are endless and can be inspirational and impactful for each student and the class as a whole. Students create solutions that can be applied to myriad global issues.

You can learn more about the STEAM Tank Challenge at [njsba.org/services/isteam-2/steam-tank-challenge](https://njsba.org/services/isteam-2/steam-tank-challenge).

### **Putting Maslow over Bloom**

SBDL is holistic in nature, addressing many aspects of a situation. Students see things from multiple perspectives and as a result, create inspirational and innovative and long-term solutions instead of short-term quick fix solutions just to get a grade. At its core, SBDL teaches children to use empathy and compassion to drive their solutions. It connects students to greater good in society and builds ethics and morals. It teaches the whole child.

In a post-COVID world, putting Maslow over Bloom is a common practice. Using solution-based developmental learning expands on problem-based learning by focusing on the moral development and socio-emotional competencies that are important for the successful growth and development of every child. 🏠

## NJEA OFFICERS



**President**  
**Sean M. Spiller**



**Vice President**  
**Steve Beatty**



**Secretary-Treasurer**  
**Petal Robertson**

# NJEA ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The NJEA Executive Committee includes the three officers, plus one or more representatives elected from each county or equivalent unit of representation, based on membership enrollment. County and unit representatives serve for three-year terms, except as necessary to stagger terms of office. Weighted voting is utilized to reflect the one-person, one-vote principle. The committee meets monthly to conduct Association business.

Atlantic: Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen: Esther A. Fletcher, Robert M. La Morte; Burlington: Tamara Y. Beatty; Camden: Laurie T. Gibson-Parker; Cape May: Tammi J. Lee; Cumberland: Ashanti Rankin; Essex: Dr. Dawn A. Nichol-Manning; Gloucester: Ryan Griffin; Higher Ed: Peter A. Helff; Hudson: Ronald F. Greco; Hunterdon: Susan R. Vala; Mercer: Christine Sampson-Clark;

Middlesex: Marilyn Edge, Lois Yukna; Morris: Kerri Lee Farrell; NJEA Preservice: Sarah Adamo; NJREA: Joan M. Wright; Non-Classroom: Francisco Barquin; Ocean: Lisa M. Simone; Passaic: Susan S. Butterfield; Salem: Colleen Gilmartin; Somerset: Amy L. Salinger; State Officers: Steve Beatty; Petal T. Robertson; Sean M. Spiller; Sussex: Carla Mancuso; Union: Richard F. D'Avanzo; Warren: Janie Jones-Brown; NEA Director: Brenda Braithwaite, Laurie T. Gibson-Parker, Anita L. Kober, Robert M. La Morte, Temika Langston-Myers, Susan A. McBride, Peter Moran, Ashanti T. Rankin, Barbara B. Rheault, Stacy Yanko; Immediate Past President: Marie E. Blistan

## DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) formulates Association policies. The DA includes 123 representatives proportionately elected from the counties for two-year terms. Each county is represented by its affiliated county association president plus one delegate for each 1 percent of the state total of active members of the Association. In addition, one delegate each represents retired, student, and administrative members who do not otherwise have the representation through normal channels.

Atlantic: John-Fred Crane, Trisha Houck, Trina Jenkins, Stacy Yanko, Cassandra Montague, Barbara Rheault; Bergen: Kathleen Arlin, Susan Avallone, David Bradler, Rommy Buttafuoco, Mariann Kronyak, Cynthia Lota, Sue McBride, Shari Mendelson, Mary Ellen Murphy, Michael Warren, Michael Yannone; Burlington: Christopher Bowman, Lisa Chiavuzzo, Melissa Foremny, Catherine MacManiman, April Newman, Jason Pope, Anthony Rizzo; Camden: April Brown, Brittany Lamb, Sturrae Meyers, Charles Pildis, Ryan Strothers, Kimberly Taylor; Cape May: June Camizzi, Stacey Salerno; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati, April Stevenson-Kinder, Tiffanie ThrBak; Essex: Christine Candarella, Christopher Canella, Keri Giannotti, Lauren Greenfield, Keith Hinton II, Rocio Lopez, Sharon Ortiz; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity, Christina Dare, Christine Kosar, Roberta Rissling, Stephen Whitehead; Higher Ed: Michael Frank; Hudson: Danielle Curry, Lynn Fedele, Andrea Pastore, Anna Picca, Edwinta Rhue, Rosanne Versaci, Gene Woods; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto, Carol Rocha; Mercer: Talithea Duncan, Sandra Herrington, Grace Rarich, Daniel Siegel, Patricia Yaple;

Middlesex: Paul Bryant, Nicole Del Popolo, Noelle Ebler, Jennifer Herrick, Carolyn Muglia, Frank Paprota; Jeremias Salinas, Susan Waldron, Michael Wildermuth; Monmouth: Denise King, Steven Koumoulis, Gail Maher, Michael Marino, Sarah Reichenbecher, Michael Reilly, Mary Scott, Diane Vistein; Morris: Eugene Behme, Angel Cordova, Mark Eckert, Ann Marie Finnen, Amal Hussein, Kathleen Paterek, Laurie Schorno; NJEA Preservice: Sarah Adamo; NJREA: Roger Baker, Barbara James; Non-Classroom: Shareen Shibli; Ocean: Ronald Donnerstag II, Jaclyn Finnigan, Susan Morgan, Gina Pizzuto, Susan Wiemken; Passaic: Brenda Carswell-Avery, James Hornby, Patricia Kebrdle, Lori Lalama, Carolyn McKinney-Croix, Donna Reaver, Charles Wilson; Salem: Diana Castiglione, Carmen Porter; Somerset: Andrew Coslit, Daniel Epstein, Gayle Faulkner, Theresa Fuller, Mary MacRae; Sussex: Gerda Bakker, Susan Sawey, Ann Smith; Union: Lillian Alston, Michael Boyd, Keith Coston, James Frazier, Kayla Khaled, Gary Mazurek, Fern Perez-Gani, Ann Margaret Shannon; Warren: Erin Durkin, Ann Kaspereen; NEA Director: Anita L. Kober.

## DELEGATE ASSEMBLY ALTERNATES

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

Atlantic: Jean Gallagher, Lateefah Scott, Erica Walk Polito; Bergen: Stacey Brown, Jonathan Lancaster, Andrew Policastro, John Sassi, Thomas Schram, Lisa Veit, vacancy (4); Burlington: Yolanda Boyd, Tiffany Harris-Greene, Christine Hewitt, Andrew Jacobs, Stacey Williams; Camden: Ebony Freeman, Tyeisha Jefferies, George Kemery, Dali Kilpatrick, Katrina Squire, vacancy; Cape May: Catherine Krause, Cynthia Rosenberg, Cumberland: Nicole Kinsey, Damita White-Morris; Essex: Sharon Johnson, Louann Lobasso, Deborah Rees, Michael Tedesco, Fayette Weatherington, Renee Willis; Gloucester: Michael Acchione, Kimberly Crum, Eileen Healey, Chardae Ingram; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson: Andrew Bove, Melanie DeFilippis, John Marques, Irene Pyke, Beth Tomlinson; Hunterdon: Robin Kiefer; Mercer: Christopher Carpenter, Antoinette Hopkins,

Elizabeth McGlinchy, Twanda Taylor; Middlesex: Daniel Fields, Andrew Lewis, Tracey McGowan, Timothy Simonitis, Maureen Strzykowski, vacancy (2); Monmouth: Jo-Anne Montanti, Susan Morin, John Napolitani, Kathleen Sayers, James St. Angelo; Morris: Nanette Fandino Diaz, Vilmary Hernandez, Lisa Lamendola, Lisa Mangione, vacancy (2); NJEA Preservice: Matthew Yuro; NJREA: Linda Calandra, Joan Jensen, Joanne Palladino; Ocean: Ronald Donnerstag, Nancy Jubert, Richard Ryan, Kimberlee Shaw, Daniel Staples; Passaic: Dennis Carroll, Marvin Fields, Trent Johnson, Megan King, Responda Sims, vacancy; Salem: Denise Dawson; Somerset: Ryan Cullinane, Patrick Frain, Stefanie Myers, Jennifer Tuller; Sussex: Michelle Visco, vacancy; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall, Akia Roche, Catherine Sharp; Alissa Valiante; vacancy (3); Warren: Scott Elliott.

## NJEA COMMITTEES

### AFFILIATION

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

**Chair:** Gerard Campione

**Staff contact:** Cindy Matute-Brown

Atlantic: Heather M. Flaim; Bergen: Thomas Schram; Camden: Denise Jones; Cape May: Walter Johnson; Essex: Elaine Elliott; Gloucester: Felicia Siegel; Hudson: Keith Olkewicz; Middlesex: Gerard Campione; Monmouth: Maria A. Gabriele; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Barbara Toczko; Ocean: Beverly A. Figlioli; Somerset: Daniel Epstein; Union: Keith Coston

### BUDGET

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

**Chair:** NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Petal T.

Robertson, Essex

**Staff contact:** Karen Kryven

Atlantic: Melissa Tomlinson; Bergen: Thomas Papaleo; Burlington: Andrew Jacobs; Camden: Janelle Mungro; Cape May: Tammi Lee; Cumberland: Tiffanie ThrBak; Aaron Honaker; Essex: Christine Candarella; Gloucester: Melba Moore-Suggs; Higher Ed: Peter Helff; Hudson: Kevin Reed; Hunterdon: Susan Vala; Mercer: Sandra L. Herrington; Middlesex: Michael Wildermuth; Monmouth: Jo-Anne Montanti; Morris: Lisa Lamendola; NJREA: Tanya Mosley; Ocean: Beverly Figlioli; Passaic: Patricia Kebrdle; Salem: Susan Maniglia; Somerset: David Yastremski; Sussex: Debra Simmons; Union: Ann Margaret Shannon; Warren: Valerie Reynolds.

### CERTIFICATION, EVALUATION, AND TENURE

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

**Chair:** Dayna Orlak, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Elizabeth Yucis

Atlantic: Christine Brown; Erika Price; Bergen: Dayna Orlak; Burlington: Lisa Chiavuzzo; Camden: Darcy Lynn Fox-Fuchs; Cape May: Catherine Krause; Essex: Sharon Ortiz; Gloucester: Catherine Carter; Hudson: Charlene Bini; Mercer: Melissa

Watros; Middlesex: Hannah Pawlak; Morris: Mark Henaghen; NJEA Preservice: Wendy Diaz; Melissa McClymont; NJREA: Martin Sharofsky; Passaic: Megan King; Somerset: Fontella Best; Union: Chrystal Par-Allen

### CONGRESSIONAL CONTACT

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

**Chair:** Patricia Kebrdle, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Sean Hadley

Atlantic: Heather Flaim; Bergen: Stacey Brown, Christopher Sheridan; Burlington: Jason Pope; Camden: Jonathan Maxson; Cape May: Walter Johnson; Cumberland: Michael Morton, Damita White-Morris; Essex: Jennifer Bailey, Cameron Parke; Gloucester: Laurie Boyle; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson Rosanne Versaci; Hunterdon: Marie Corfield; Mercer: Sandra Herrington; Middlesex: Christopher Finnegan; Monmouth: Jacqueline Kruzik, John Napolitani; Morris: Christopher Hurd; NEA Directors: Brenda Brathwaite, Christopher Canella, James Frazier, Laurie Gibson-Parker, Anita Kober, Robert La Morte, Temika Langston-Myers, Sue McBride, Peter Moran, Ashanti Rankin, Barbara Rheault, Stacy Yanko; NJEA Preservice: Sarah Adamo, Brian Reilly; NJREA: Susan Clark; Ocean: Elaine White, Melisa Whitworth; Passaic: Tara Temprano; Salem: Jesse Stemberger; Somerset: Theresa Fuller; Sussex: Susan Davis; Union: Ezzio Bustamante

## CONSTITUTION REVIEW

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

**Chair:** Scott Elliott, Warren

**Staff contact:** Cindy Matute-Brown

Atlantic: Alphonso Harrell; Bergen: Cean Spahn; Camden: Clementine Williams; Cape May: Christopher Vitale; Cumberland: Heather Musto; Essex: Michael Tedesco; Gloucester: Dorothy Grieb; Hudson: Lynn Fedele; Hunterdon: Robin Kiefer; Mercer: Deborah Goodkin; Middlesex: Daniel Cyckowski; Valerie Nelson; Monmouth: Florence Byrne; Morris: Lee Brensinger; NJREA: Michael Kurczek; Ocean: Lorraine Griffin; Passaic: Tanisha Barkley-Johnson; Salem: Amy Tighe; Union: Alissa Valiante; Warren: Scott Elliott

## CONVENTION

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

**Chair:** Susan Davis, Sussex

**Staff contact:** Janet Royal

Atlantic: Cassandra Montague; Bergen: Susan Marinzulich; Burlington: Catherine MacManiman; Camden: Stuart Meyers; Cape May: Stacey Salerno; Cumberland: Jaclyn Conahey; Essex: Christine Candarella; Gloucester: Robert Sheridan; Higher Ed: Mickey Dickenson; Hudson: Nadine Collins; Hunterdon: Peter Moran; Mercer: Marlana Ventura; Middlesex: Devin Menker; Monmouth: Leah Hardaway; NJREA: Cynthia McCray; Passaic: Lauren Spiller; Salem: Rosemary Poliski; Somerset: Patrick Frain; Sussex: Lisa Fahrenfeld; Union: Tonya Scott-Cole

## DELEGATE ASSEMBLY RULES

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

**Chair:** Kathleen Paterek, Morris

**Staff contact:** Cindy Matute-Brown

Monmouth: Gail Maher; Morris: Kathleen Paterek; Passaic: Lori Lalama

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The Distinguished Service Award Committee considers and evaluates candidates for the

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

**Chair:** Danielle Clark, Camden

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Amy Gold; Bergen: Argine Safari; Camden: Ana Sanchez; Middlesex: Jennifer Olawski; Monmouth: Allison Connolly; Monmouth: Margaret Watkins; Morris: Kerri Lee Farrell; NJREA: Stacy Morgan Santo; Passaic: Brenda Carswell-Avery; Somerset: Mary Macrae; Union: Lillian Alston

## EDITORIAL

The Editorial Committee: 1. supervises the NJEA Review and other Association publications designed for internal communications with the membership, within the framework of policy laid down by the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Committee; 2. reviews printing contracts, advertising rates, and policies; 3. sets and maintains a continuing evaluation of standards for articles, illustrations, and style; periodically reviews standards to make sure they actively promote content submissions from diverse member voices and that the standards do not create barriers to content from diverse member voices; 4. determines and recommends issues and ideas to be addressed to the membership through the Association publications and the website by: reviewing survey and polling data to maintain awareness of NJEA's demographics to ensure equitable representation and identification of issues members wish to see addressed; staying abreast of trends in public education and union organizing; intentionally discussing publication and website content with members from diverse backgrounds and job categories; periodically reviewing content to ensure that diverse voices are represented; recommending strategies to amplify the voices of underrepresented members.

**Chair:** Lauren Greenfield, Essex

**Staff contact:** Patrick Rumaker

Atlantic: Alphonso Harrell; Bergen: Shari Mendelson; Camden: Steven Redfeare; Mercer: Hussain Haqq; Middlesex: Andrew Lewis; Monmouth: Steven Tetreault; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJEA Preservice: Victoria Gladstone; Kayla Kanarkowski; NJREA: Miriam Reichenbach; Ocean: Christine Smith; Passaic: Sonya Squitieri; Somerset: Daniel Cyckowski; Union: Tia Rei

## EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

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

training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Joann Houck, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Robert Antonelli

Atlantic: Trina Jenkins; Bergen: Rommy Buttafuoco; Burlington: Sandra Wilcox; Camden: Pamela Clark; Cape May: Kenneth Basset; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Essex: David Walker; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Hudson: Marquisha Reynolds; Hunterdon: Fiona Descala; Mercer: Antoinette Hopkins; Middlesex: Nancy Cogland; Monmouth: Regina Jagoo; Morris: Mark Eckert; NJREA: Barbara Newman; Ocean: Patti Watson; Passaic: Nikki Baker; Derrick Watson; Salem: Jennifer Jenkins; Somerset: Christopher James; Sussex: Kerri Burns; Gillian Raye; Union: Michael Boyd; Warren: Scott Elliott

## ELECTIONS

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

**Chair:** Eda Ferrante, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Mary Jane Hurley; Bergen: Thomas Schram; Burlington: Maria Rivera; Camden: Jonathan Maxson; Cape May: Tiffany Lively; Cumberland: Sophia Amaranto; Essex: Shirley Henry; Gloucester: Melba Moore-Suggs; Hudson: Diane Mackay; Hunterdon: Donna Pontoriero; Mercer: Patricia Jones; Middlesex: Leslie Anderson; Morris: Jon Coniglio; NJREA: Toni Guerra; Ocean: Jim Lubrani; Passaic: Rosalind Abreu; Salem: Amy Tighe; Michael Wichart; Somerset: Jennifer Tuller; Sussex: Theresa Snyder; Union: Gary Mazure

## EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

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

**Chair:** Sanderlin Tomeka, Atlantic

**Staff contact:** Camy Kobylinski

Atlantic: Lori Dean; Bergen: Rick Gladstone; Burlington: Marcia Stetler-Klock; Camden: Tyeisha Jefferies; Cape May: Tiffany Lively; Shawna Mulford; Essex: Megan Dellafave; Gloucester: Malika Moore; Mercer: Rhonda Williams; Middlesex: Francine

Wilden; Monmouth: Elizabeth Lieberman; Morris: Laurie Schorno; NJREA: Perry Stio; Ocean: Ronald Donnerstag; Passaic: Diane Cartaina; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Gayle Faulkner; Union: Kayla Khaled; Warren: Russa Nollstadt

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

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

**Chair:** Christina Dare, Gloucester

**Staff contact:** Marybeth Beichert

Atlantic: Anthony Angelozzi, Erica Walk Polito; Bergen: Julia Gutilla, Howard Lipoff; Burlington: Christine Hewitt, Steven Nahill; Camden: George Kemery, Dianna Morris; Cape May: Cynthia Rosenberg, Stacey Salerno; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati, Temika Langston-Myers; Essex: Christopher Cannella, Nickerson Paul, Jacqueline White; Gloucester: Brian D'Ottavio, Ryan Griffin, Stephen Whitehead; Higher Ed: Michael Frank, Lori Podstupka-King; Hudson: Rosanne Versaci, Gene Woods; Hunterdon: Marie Corfield; Mercer: Grace Rarich, Lisa Rizzello; Middlesex: Timothy Simonitis; Monmouth; James St. Anglo, Erin Wheeler; Morris: Brian Adams, Mark Eckert; Preservice: Nicholas D'Antuono; NJREA: Susan Maurer; Ocean: Susan Morgan, Richard Ryan; Passaic: Dennis Carroll, Todd Pipkin; Salem: Leslie Wright-Pinheiro; Somerset: Daniel Epstein, Henry Goodhue; Sussex: Angela Deluccia; Union: Joanne Barrett, Nancy Lucas-Miller, Jennifer Passuth; Warren: Erin Durkin

## HEALTH BENEFITS

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

meet members' needs; 6. proposes initiatives to ensure the maintenance of health benefits for retirees; 7. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Mary Ellen McLeod, Morris

**Staff contact:** Michael Salerno

Atlantic: Zacharia Johnson; Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Kristen Frey; Camden: Marisol Charernsook; Cape May: Catherine Krause; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Dawn Nichol-Manning; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto; Mercer: John Forte; Middlesex: Matthew Hrevnak; Monmouth: Tiffani Monroe; Morris: Maryellen McLeod; NJREA: Judith Ruff; Ocean: Jaclyn Finnigan; Passaic: William Krakower; Salem: John Romano; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Carrie Odgers Lax

## HEARING COMMITTEE ON CENSURE, SUSPENSION, AND EXPULSION

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

**Chair:** Lori Lalama, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Burlington: Tomika Lamb; Camden: Rosemarie Casey; Essex: Sharon Ortiz; Higher Ed: Mecheline Farhat; Hudson: Edwinta Rhue; Mercer: Twanda Taylor; Middlesex: Jarrett Lampkin; Salem: Kenneth Buck.

## HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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

**Chair:** Mecheline Farhat, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Marcia Kleinz

Atlantic: Cheryl Garwood, Michelle Perkins; Bergen: Toby DeMarco, Michael Echols, Alan Kaufman; Burlington: William Whitfield; Camden: Zaida Nogue; Cumberland: John Lore; Essex: Michael Frank, Ned Wilson; Executive Committee Higher Ed Rep: Peter Helff; Gloucester: Kimberly Henderson, Anna Roth; Hudson: Michael Ferlise; Mercer: Edward Carmien; Monmouth: Karyn Arnold, Brent Costleigh; Laura Kirkwood; Morris: Stephen Kaifa; NJEA Preservice: Brian Reilly; NJREA: Thomas Harrington; Ocean: Jayanti

Tamm; Passaic: Christopher Mueller; Union: Paul Belmonte; Warren: Kerry Frabizio

## HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS

The Human Rights Committee: 1. studies and recommends how members and their associations can contribute to equal opportunities and improved human relations; 2. develops and publicizes teaching strategies to promote diversity education for children and adults; 3. reviews timely issues such as diversity, ethnicity, human relations, and discrimination; 4. conducts the annual human rights conference and recommends Human Rights Award winners, if any; 5. develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

**Chair:** Fayette Weatherington, Essex

**Staff contact:** Gabe Tanglao

Atlantic: Amy Gold; Bergen: Yolanda Salazar; Burlington: April Newman; Camden: Brittany Lamb; Cape May: Walter Johnson; Cumberland: Tiffanie ThrBak; Essex: Gloucester: Monica Moore-Cook; Hudson: Mark Klein; Mercer: Paige Hinton-Mason; Monmouth: Bridget James; Morris: Nanette Fandino Diaz; NJEA Preservice: Bianca Nicolescu Jeannie Pincus; NJREA: Betty Meeks-Manning; Ocean: Dorothea Douglas; Passaic: Marco Martinez; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Fawnya Gibson; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall

## INSTRUCTION

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

**Chair:** Brenda Martin-Lee, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Christine Miles

Atlantic: Brenda Brathwaite; Tamar LaSure-Owens; Bergen: John Sassi; Burlington: Alamelu Sundaram-Walters; Camden: Gregory Louie; Cape May: June Camizzi; Cumberland: Sophia Amaranto; Essex: Jean Jackson; Gloucester: Cheryl Mervine; Hudson: Beth Tomlinson; Hunterdon: Kelly Hill; Mercer: Elizabeth Brasor; Monmouth: Lisa Marie Varley; Morris: Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Iris Tonti; Ocean: Veronica Kriegl; Passaic: Melanie Vasa; Somerset: Brittany Hamilton; Union: Vernon Spencer; Warren: Kristi Weber

## LEADERSHIP

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

**Chair:** Ann Kaspereen, Warren

**Staff contact:** Michael Saffran

Atlantic: Kevin Hackney; Bergen: Fanny Cruz-Betesh; Burlington: Melissa Foremny; Camden: Asia Brown; Cumberland: Nicole Carminati; Essex: Stephanie Ross; Gloucester: Susan Buriak; Hudson: Mark Klein; Mercer: Twanda Taylor; Middlesex: Daniel Fields; Monmouth: Cheryl Haynes; Morris: Angela Cordova; NJREA: Minnie Mozee; Ocean: Gina Pizzuto; Passaic: Marie Ross; Salem: Renee Jost; Somerset: Andrew Coslit; Sussex: Stacy Yanko; Union: Robert Mangel; Warren: Ann Kaspereen

## MEMBER BENEFITS

The Member Benefits Committee studies and makes recommendations on: 1. Insurance programs; 2. Education programs on financial products; 3. Car leasing or purchasing; 4. Consumer buying plans; 5. Travel programs; 6. Any other consumer service plans benefiting the membership; 7. Retailers who offer discounts to members; 8. Programs available to members provided by boards of education and local, county, state, or national associations.

**Chair:** Diane Vistein, Monmouth

**Staff contact:** Beth Schroeder-Buonsante

Atlantic: Marla Bennard; Bergen: Susan Avallone; Burlington: Kimberly Ballinger; Camden: Evangelina Davis; Cape May: Jennifer Loper; Cumberland: Eileen Roche; Essex: Donna Sabol; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity; Hudson: Jocelyn Martinez; Hunterdon: Carol Rocha; Mercer: Patricia Yapple; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; Morris: Samantha Selikoff; NJEA Preservice: Matthew Yuro; NJREA: Jeanne Kiefner; Ocean: Daniel Staples; Passaic: Christopher Awad; Somerset: Nancy Kordell; Sussex: Gillian Raye; Michelle Visco; Union: Tia Reid

## MEMBERSHIP

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

**Chair:** Anita Kober, Hudson

**Staff contact:** Jaime Valente

Atlantic: Jayne Carmen; Bergen: Jill Schwerd; Burlington: Anthony Rizzo; Camden: Joy Patterson; Cape May: Stephanie Greenberg; Cumberland: Mildred Johnson; Essex: Linda Kelly-Gamble; Hudson: Joseph Kelly; Hunterdon: Joann Gitto; Mercer: Karen Pouria; Middlesex: Kevin Bloom; Monmouth: Heidi Brache; Morris: Amal Hussein; NJREA: Frances Davis; Passaic: Karen Cawthern; NJEA Preservice: Matthew Yuro; Ocean: Nancy Jubert; Passaic: Karen Cawthern; Salem: Michael Wichart; Somerset: Laurel Suk; Sussex: Nancy Richeda; Union: Arthur Rodgers; Warren: Valerie Gary

## MINORITY LEADERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

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

**Chair:** Tiffanie ThrBak, Cumberland

**Staff contact:** Gabe Tanglao

Atlantic: Tomeka Sanderlin; Bergen: Michelle Hammond-Dudley; Burlington: Janet Adams; Camden: Crystal Love; Cape May: David Farrow; Cumberland: Nicole Kinsey; Essex: Evelyn Ayum; Gloucester: Chardae Ingram; Hudson: Katharine Chao; Mercer: Aaryenne White; Middlesex: Shan Byrd; Monmouth: Mary Scott; Morris: Vilmary Hernandez; NJEA Preservice: Bridget Gum, Bianca Nicolescu; Jeannie Pincus; NJREA: Vires Simmons; Ocean: Maria DeVenecia-McFarland; Somerset: Aida-Janet Wahba; Union: Michael Boyd

## NEA ACTIVITIES

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

**Chair:** Tamara Beatty, Burlington

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

Atlantic: Karol Ball; Bergen: Mariann Kronyak; Camden: Sharita Stinson; Cape May: Tammi Lee; Cumberland: Taja Board; Essex: Philip McCormick; Gloucester: Robert Scardino; Hudson: Andrew Bove; Mercer: Renee Szporm; Monmouth: Diane Vistein; Morris: Malani Leitzel; NJREA: John Zurka; Ocean: Gina Pizzuto; Passaic: Trent Johnson; Salem: Michael Wichart; Somerset: Marisol Espinoza; Union: Charisse Parker

## NEA ISSUES

The NEA Issues Committee: 1. advises the Association on issues relating to the NEA; 2. initiates the screening of candidates for NEA

positions; 3. provides information to the NJEA delegation regarding issues and programs being promoted by the NEA

**Staff contact:** Gary Melton

NEA Directors: Brenda Brathwaite, James Frazier, Laurie T. Gibson-Parker, Anita Kober, Robert La Morte, Tamika Langston-Myers, Susan McBride, Peter Moran, Ashanti Rankin, Barbara Rheault, Stacy Yanko; Resource person: Michael Wildermuth.

## NJEA PAC OPERATING

The NJEA PAC Operating Committee: 1. supports candidates for state and federal offices, on a nonpartisan basis, who are proven or potential friends of education; 2. takes a leadership role in NJEA/NEA PAC fundraising; 3. coordinates candidate screening, selection, campaign, and support efforts; 4. reviews PAC guidelines for appropriateness; 5. educates the membership about the need for political involvement and the rationale and process used for selecting endorsed candidates; 6. supports the general operations in statewide political action efforts and campaigns; Supports efforts by local and county associations completing endorsements for 7. candidates at the local and county level using the NJEA-PAC guidelines.

**Chair:** NJEA Vice President Steve Beatty

**Staff contact:** Al Beaver

The 125-member NJEA PAC Operating Committee consists of NJEA's officers; the NJEA Executive Committee; NJEA Government Relations and Congressional Contact committee, the county association presidents, the president of NJEA Personnel, three NJEA active support members, the NJREA legislative chairperson, vice chairperson, and three NJREA legislative regional coordinators, one representing northern New Jersey, one representing central New Jersey and one representing southern New Jersey.

## PAUL DIMITRIADIS RIGHTS FUND

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

**Chair:** Peter Moran, Hunterdon

**Staff contact:** Crystal Inman

Atlantic: Cassandra Montague; Burlington: Roxanne Jackson; Camden: Katrina Squire; Gloucester: Roberta Rissling; Hudson: Keith Olkewicz; NJREA: George Wood; Somerset: Patrick Frain; Union: Kelee Mitchell-Hall

## PENSION POLICY

The Pension Policy Committee: 1. studies and makes recommendations on problems and solutions relating to teacher retirement and other pension or benefit programs designed to help members and their dependents attain financial security upon retirement, disability, and/or death; 2.

reviews legislative proposals related to changes in the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund and Public Employees Retirement System pension systems; 3. reviews actions of the respective pension boards of trustees.

**Chair:** Howard Lipoff, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Sarah Favinger

Atlantic: Karol Ball; Camden: David Regn; Cumberland: Shinese Harvey; Essex: Lauren Greenfield; Gloucester: Michael Acchione; Hudson: Mark Azzarello; Hunterdon: Fiona Descala; Mercer: Daniel Siegel; Middlesex: Kenneth Veres; Monmouth: Casey Barilka; Morris: Kathleen Paterek; NJREA: Irene Savicky; Passaic: Pamela Fadden; Somerset: Theresa Fuller; Union: Linda Cortinas

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

**Chair:** Jennifer Clemen, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Dawn Howlen

Atlantic: Brenda Brathwaite; Bergen: Stacey Brown; Camden: Sharon Galt; Cape May: June Camizzi; Cumberland: Lawrence Hickman; Essex: Toi Hinton; Gloucester: Judith Ideo; Higher Ed: Bridget Turner; Hudson: Anita Kober; Hunterdon: Donna Pontoriero; Mercer: Kathryn Graf; Middlesex: Joseph Landolfi; Monmouth: Steven Koumoulis; Morris: Angela Cordova; NJEA Preservice: Wendy Diaz; Melissa McClymont; NJREA: Diane Stelacio; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Passaic: Shaye Brown-Crandol; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: Louis Guglielmo; Union: Tonya Scott-Cole; Warren: Laurie O'Brien

### PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Professional Rights & Responsibilities Committee: 1. promotes and protects the legal and professional rights of members; 2. investigates the legal status of members who are in contest regarding their rights and responsibility as school employees and as citizens; 3. reviews cases involving affirmative litigation in such areas as rights for non-tenured employees, academic

freedom, negotiations, and hardship cases resulting from member rights efforts; 4. supervises staff investigations and assistance for members and associations when warranted; 5. recommends appropriate action to the Executive Committee, including the granting of financial assistance.

**Chair:** Marguerite Cahill, Somerset

**Staff contact:** Aileen O'Driscoll

Bergen: Andrew Policastro; Camden: Larry Blake; Cape May: Kimberle Bruckno-Moore; Cumberland: Rachel Reinhart; Essex: Lois Infanger; Gloucester: Stephen Balaity; Hudson: Jose Garcia; Mercer: Michelle Marrazzo; Monmouth: James St. Angelo; Morris: Amal Hussein; NJREA: Arlene Volkin; Passaic: Lauren Chavis-Ferrer; Union: Brenda Pryor.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

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

**Chair:** Donna Reaver, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Meredith Barnes

Atlantic: Jayne Carmen; Bergen: Donna West; Burlington: Kimberly Niehaus; Camden: Felicia Cade-Turner; Cumberland: Stephen Garavento; Essex: Christal White; Hudson: Edwinta Rhue; Mercer: Debra Baer; Middlesex: Claudia Robinson Morris; Ann Marie Finnen; NJREA: Susan Vigilante; Passaic: Javier Fresse; Union: Annice Benamy; Warren: Sharon O'Meara

### SCHOOL FINANCE

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

**Chair:** Mariann Kronyak, Bergen

**Staff contact:** Dan Goldman

Atlantic: Sandra Peart; Camden: Noelle Boyer; Cumberland: April Stevenson-Kinder; Gloucester: Mary Kate Gereaghty; Mercer: Frank Gatto;

Middlesex: Tracey McGowan; Monmouth: Cheryl Haynes; NJREA: Michelle Fox; Passaic: Marc Foti; Salem: John Romano; Somerset: Jessica Crutchlow; Union: Vernon Spencer

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY

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

**Chair:** Christopher Cannella, Essex

**Staff contact:** Michael Rollins

Atlantic: Kevin Hackney; Bergen: Amy Moran; Burlington: Tiffany Harris-Greene; Camden: Sofi Capinha; Cape May: Kenneth Bassett; Cumberland: April Stevenson-Kinder; Essex: Micah Gary-Fryer; Gloucester: Adjua Lafleur; Hunterdon: Katherine Beggiano; Mercer: Joy Barnes-Johnson; Middlesex: Susan Waldron; Monmouth: Karina McIntyre; Morris: Meryl Ironson; NJREA: Karen Hughes; Ocean: Jennifer Ansbach; Passaic: Erin Kelly; Salem: Jennifer Lehr; Somerset: Marisol Espinoza; Union: Terron Singletary

### STAFF PENSION FUND TRUSTEE

**Chair:** NJEA President Sean M. Spiller

**Staff contact:** Kristen Sherman

The Board of Directors of the NJEA Employees Retirement System is responsible for administering and carrying out the provisions of the pension program for NJEA staff members.

### TECHNOLOGY

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

**Chair:** Sabina Ellis, Essex

**Staff contact:** Anna Muessig

Bergen: Michael Ryan; Burlington: Christopher Bowman; Camden: Dali Kilpatrick; Cape May: Julie Stratton; Cumberland: Debra Byrd; Gloucester: Stephen Whitehead; Hunterdon: Peter Moran; Mercer: Olive Giles; Middlesex: Pallavi Shetty; Monmouth: Laurie Floyd; Ann Moyle; Morris: Laurie Schorno; NJEA Preservice: Kayla Kanarkowski; NJREA: Virginia Hoden; Ocean: Melissa Krupp; Passaic: Lori Lalama; Salem: Bethany Hannah

### UNISERV

The UniServ Committee: 1. hears suggestions and

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

**Chair:** Ellen Ogintz, Mercer

**Staff contact:** Patrick Manahan

Atlantic: Georgia Charles; Bergen: Marie Papaleo; Burlington: Stacey Williams; Camden: Stephanie Rogers; Cape May: Patrick Holden; Cumberland: Deanna Nicosia-Jones; Essex: Michael Byock; Gloucester: Anthony Cappello; Hudson: John Marques; Hunterdon: Carol Rocha; Middlesex: Carolyn Muglia; Monmouth: Louis Castagno; Morris: Brian Adams; NJREA: Frank Harsanyi; Ocean: Jodi Dotts; Passaic: Francis Koterba; Salem: Carmen Porter; Somerset: Daniel Mayer; Union: Alissa Valiante

### URBAN EDUCATION

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

**Chair:** Todd Pipkin, Passaic

**Staff contact:** Amanda Adams

Atlantic: Lateefah Scott; Bergen: Alison Morgan-Black; Burlington: David Parker; Camden: Cynthia King; Cumberland: Sherman Denby; Essex: Marpessa Bell; Janet Mitchell; Gloucester: Melba Moore-Suggs; Hudson: Samantha Pelletreau; Mercer: Elizabeth McGlinchy; Middlesex: Paul Bryant; Monmouth: Felicia Hardman; Morris: Kevin Rooney; NJREA: Geraldine Lane; Passaic: Nicole Fuller; Somerset: Gayle Nelson; Union: Tanya Tenturier

### VOCATIONAL, CAREER, AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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

**Chair:** Erin Wheeler, Monmouth

**Staff contact:** Francine Pfeffer

Bergen: Kevin Rager; Burlington: Larry Tisdale; Bergen: Kevin Rager; Camden: Andrew McAlpin; Cape May: Michael Crane; Cumberland: Timothy Campbell; Essex: Joseph Dedalonis; Hudson: Robert Meyer; Mercer: Asra Mazhar-Uddin; Middlesex: Frank Paprota; Morris: Colleen Pascale; NJREA: Renee Mengistab; Somerset: Sheila Sullivan; Sussex: Deborah Wakefoos; Union: Julie Klikus

### WOMEN IN EDUCATION

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

**Chair:** Lisa Veit, Bergen County

**Staff contact:** Meredith Barnes

Atlantic: Sandra Peart; Bergen: Lauren Zuckere; Camden: Jacquelyn Mancinelli; Cape May: Kimberle Bruckno Moore; Cumberland: Claudia Angle; Damita White-Morris; Essex: Angel Boose; Gloucester: Joyce Farr; Hudson: Katharine Chao; Mercer: Dana Lakins; Monmouth: Sarah Reichenbecher; Morris: Michele Miller; NJREA: Joan Jensen; Ocean: Susan Morgan; Passaic: Kerriann Palmieri; Salem: Martha Arrizon; Somerset: Aida-Janet Wahba; Union: Lillian Alston

### WORKING CONDITIONS

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

**Chair:** Barbara Rheault, Atlantic

**Staff contact:** Jennifer Raïke

Bergen: Susan Dziob; Burlington: Grace McCloskey; Camden: Lisa Campisi; Cumberland: Claudia Angle; Essex: Evan McLaughlin; Mark Richards; Gloucester: Michael Acchione; Malika Moore; Hudson: Christopher Kuchar; Mercer: Kathryn Wolden; Monmouth: Susan Morin; NJREA: Frank Foulkes; Ocean: Brenda Douglas; Somerset: Cheryl Mitchell; Union: Katherine Lewis

### WORKSITE SAFETY AND HEALTH

The Worksite Safety and Health Committee: 1. serves as a watchdog on environmental issues; 2. monitors and recommends policy regarding environmental health issues in school facilities; 3. monitors curricular developments in New Jersey

and the nation; 4. recommends training programs and the dissemination of pertinent instructional information in the interest of all members.

**Chair:** Keith Hinton II, Essex

**Staff contact:** Michael Rollins

Bergen: Deborah Rick; Burlington: Tomika Lamb; Camden: Madeline Leach; Cumberland: Christopher Mohan; Gloucester: Robert Scardino; Hudson: Anna Picca; Middlesex: Mary Calbo-Gordon; Monmouth: Patricia Kelly; Morris: Eugene Behme; NJREA: Rhondaleigh Austin; Ocean: Brenda Douglas; Passaic: Robin Holcombe; Somerset: Rhonda Sherbin; Union: Matthew Beveridge

### YOUTH SERVICES

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

**Chair:** Cheryl Willis, Middlesex

**Staff contact:** Amanda Adams

Atlantic: Trina Jenkins; Bergen: Martha Martinez; Burlington: Saidah Hart; Camden: Veronica Bishop; Cape May: Tiffany Lively; Essex: Jennifer Larsen; Gloucester: Chardae Ingram; Hudson: Elsie Diaz; Mercer: Rhonda Williams; Middlesex: Noelle Ebler; Cheryl Willis; Monmouth: Mary Scott; Morris: Lee Bensinger; NJREA: Regina Andrews-Collette; Ocean: Cheryl Terranova; Somerset: Christa McLaughlin; Union: Kelly Katrus

**Every effort is made to produce an accurate organizational directory. If you wish to correct an error, email Liz Murphy at [lmurphy@njea.org](mailto:lmurphy@njea.org).**

# NJEA COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS AND PRESIDENTS

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

## ATLANTIC COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

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

## BERGEN COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

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

## BURLINGTON COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

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

## CAMDEN COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

**April N. Brown, President**  
700 Sheppard Rd., Sheppard Office Park,  
Voorhees, NJ 08043-4787, (856) 489-1267

## CAPE MAY COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Stacey Salerno, President**  
c/o Stacey Salerno, 502 S. Railroad Ave.,  
Rio Grande, NJ 08242, (609) 554-0100

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

**Nicole Carminati, President**  
Dandelion Plaza, 1672 N. Delsea Drive, Suite A-2,  
Vineland, NJ 08360, (856) 794-1221

## ESSEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Christine Candarella, President**  
886 Pompton Ave., Suite B-2, Cedar Grove, NJ  
07009-1257, (973) 736-5650

## GLOUCESTER COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Christine K. Kosar, President**  
190 North Evergreen Avenue, Suite 108,  
Woodbury, NJ 08096-1050, (856) 853-667

## HUDSON COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Andrea A. Pastore, President**  
1600 John F. Kennedy Blvd, Jersey City, NJ  
07305-1749, (201) 451-070

## HUNTERDON COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Susan R. Vala, President**  
13 Bloomfield Ave., Flemington, NJ 08822-1172,  
(908) 284-1640

## MERCER COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Grace E. Rarich, President**  
3131 Princeton Pike, Bldg. 2010 FC,  
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2201, (609) 882-9228

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Lois Yukna, President**  
622 Georges Road, Suites 301-302, North  
Brunswick, NJ 08902-5601, (732) 448-0004

## MONMOUTH COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Denise J. W. King, President**  
3301 State Rt. 66, Ste. 103,  
Neptune, NJ 07753-2758, (732) 455-5055

## MORRIS COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

**Laurie A. Schorno, President**  
Plaza 447 Suite 12, Route Ten East,  
Randolph, NJ 07869, (973) 366-0202

## OCEAN COUNTY COUNCIL OF EDUCATION ASSN.

**Susan R. Morgan, President**  
317 Brick Blvd., Ste. 230, Brick, NJ 08723-6031  
(848) 241-5653

## PASSAIC COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Susan S. Butterfield, President**  
401 Hamburg Turnpike, Ste. 209,  
Wayne, NJ 07470-2139, (973) 595-7232

## SALEM COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Carmen Porter, President**  
106 N. Broadway, Pennsville, NJ 08070-1617,  
(856) 678-4886

## SOMERSET COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Daniel R. Epstein, President**  
1140 Rt. 22 East, Ste. 100,  
Bridgewater, NJ 08807-1218, (908) 393-900

## SUSSEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Susan J. Sawey, President**  
Po Box 40, Newton, NJ 07860,  
(973) 534-9763

## UNION COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**James Frazier Jr., President**  
77 Central Ave., Suite 201, Clark, NJ 07066-1441,  
(732) 574-0033

## WARREN COUNTY EDUCATION ASSN.

**Erin Durkin, Presiden**  
716 Rt. 57, Stewartsville, NJ 08886-1535,  
(973) 222-0754

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## NJEA STAFF

### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

The Executive Office, the primary link between governance and staff, oversees implementation of policies adopted by the Delegate Assembly, and acts as a resource on all governance matters. Under the Executive Director's supervision, the Executive Office is responsible for overall staff direction and management. It supports the Delegate Assembly and the Executive Committee and maintains the official records of these two bodies. It conducts NJEA elections and county association elections where appropriate. It provides staff support on issues related to the NJEA Constitution and Bylaws, organizational structure, the conduct of meetings, and the NEA Convention and offers assistance and training to affiliates. It also maintains liaison with the National Education Association and Education International and works with the NEA directors.

In addition, it coordinates the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, the Bolivar L. Graham NJEA Intern Foundation, and the NJEA Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service to Education Award. NJEA Member Rights, which comes under the Executive Office, coordinates the NJEA Legal Services Program, directing and managing the NJEA Legal Services Network and the Attorney Referral Program.

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

Also under the Executive Director's supervision are business operations, which includes personnel, business management, information systems, and purchasing/production. These functions cover all aspects of the Association's fiscal, facilities, equipment/technology, membership records, and personnel needs. The Human Resources Office deals with personnel functions, including affirmative action and employee benefits.

**Executive Office:** Steve Swetsky, Executive Director (retires Feb. 28); Kevin Kelleher, Deputy Executive Director (becomes Executive Director March 1); Kathleen Mathews, Executive Assistant; Michael Ritzius, Associate Director; Carrie Herbert, Executive Assistant; Janet Bush, Program Assistant.

**Governance:** Sean M. Spiller, President; Steve Beatty, Vice President; Petal Robertson, Secretary-Treasurer; Nancy Bachrach, Tamika Elder, Shannon Pellegrino, Executive Assistants.

**Human and Civil Rights, Equity and Governance:** Gary Melton, Manager; Cindy Matute-Brown, Gabriel Tanglao, Associate Directors; Colleen Lopez, Carmen Torres-Izquierdo, Administrative Assistants.

**Human Resources:** Matthew DiRado, Manager; Annette Ilagan, Sr., Human Resource Specialist; Dawn Goatley, Employee Benefits Administrator.

**Legal Services/Member Rights:** Aileen O'Driscoll, Esq., Managing Attorney; Kaitlyn Dunphy, Esq., Associate Director; Dawn Pisauro, Program Assistant; Meghan Westbrook, Administrators Assistant.

**Organizational Development:** Alfred Beaver, Director of Organizational Development; Robert Antonelli, Eric Jones, Michael Rollins, Michael Saffran, John Staab, Field Reps; Antoinette Boyle, Chief, Administrative Assistant; Linda Calehuff, Jennifer Donaghue, Sabrina Moore, Carolyn Thompson, Davella Ward, Program Assistants; Christina Dare, Andrew Lewis, Charisse Parker, Kathleen Paterek, Hannah Pawlak, Consultants.

### BUSINESS

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

The business management function handled by the Accounting Office encompasses the organization's financial and bookkeeping, property, and membership records activities. The staff trains local affiliates on organizational management and supports affiliates on dealing with affiliation standards, agency fee, bonding, auditing, incorporation matters and filing of tax reports. Working with the Association's secretary-treasurer, the office handles NJEA's financial records, payroll, taxes, paying bills and auditing. Budgeting, investments, insurance, bonding, and inventory of assets also are coordinated. The NJEA Membership Processing unit maintains up-to-date membership records and dues accounting.

The Information Systems unit meets data processing needs and oversees the computer network used by staff throughout the state.

The purchasing/production function includes coordinating office supplies and equipment acquisition, duplicating and mailing (including shipping/receiving and storage of NJEA materials), and buildings and grounds operations and management (including parking, security, reception, telephone services, catering, maintenance, and custodial services).

**Accounting:** Karen Kryven, Comptroller; Kristen Sherman, Manager; Conswalo 'Sway' Gilbert, Administrative Assistant; José Cancio, Michael Caracci, Associate Directors; Brenda Pabon-Guadarrama, Bonnie Weiss, Chiefs – Business

Services; Deschela Davis, Shirley Jones, Monica Winch, Principal Clerks – Bookkeepers.

**Building and Grounds:** James Buckley, Chief, Buildings and Grounds; Artie Eischeid; Oscar Gee; Sandra Martin, Principal Facilities Assistants.

**Information Systems:** John Cottone, Manager; Anthony Leuzzi, Richard Nachbaur, Ryan Stouffer, Associate Directors – Software App Development; Donald Miller, Senior Network Architect; Richard Roche, Jorge Salgado, Associate Directors – Senior Systems Administrators; Rich Driscoll, Renee Mills, Computer Technicians.

**Mailroom/Printshop:** John Cottone, Manager; Eric O'Donnell, Chief – Duplicating and Mailing; Ryan Eischeid, Stephen Feuerstein, Principal Offset Operators; Gloria Lugo, Principal Receptionist; Andrew Mathis, Zann Williams, Principal Clerks.

**Membership:** Jaime Valente, Manager; Marguerite Schroeder, Field Rep; Murjani Howard, Chief Membership Specialist; Catherine Raffaele, Administrative Assistant; Tammi Antonelli, Charisse Huff, Karyn Snyder, vacancy, Principal Clerks-Bookkeepers.

**Purchasing/Production:** Kristin N. Sherman, Manager; Melody Washington, Andrea Meshofski, Chiefs – Business Services

### COMMUNICATIONS

NJEA's Communications Division is responsible for all aspects of the Association's communication efforts, both internal and external. The division uses all media and communications platforms to inform NJEA members, education policymakers, New Jersey residents and public opinion leaders about the Association's values and objectives, to highlight the successes of New Jersey's public schools and to promote the professional excellence of NJEA members. The division deals with news media outlets to accurately share and promote NJEA's positions and priorities. NJEA's monthly all-member magazine, the *Review*, is produced within the division. NJEA's primary public website, *njea.org*, and several other custom websites are created and maintained by the division, along with NJEA's official social media properties. All other print and audiovisual materials—including brochures, fliers, posters, videos and online content, among other things—are also produced by the division. NJEA Communications also provides communications strategy and support to local and county affiliates. It helps those affiliates create and utilize internal and external communications structures, develop public relations plans and media strategies, and carry out communications organizing activities. The division also:

- Sets and maintains brand standards for NJEA-produced materials.
- Produces targeted membership publications, including the NJREA Newsletter.
- Handles administration, fundraising and promotion of the Hipp Foundation.
- Manages NJEA's Pride in Public Education advertising campaigns as well as other Pride-related partnerships and projects.

**Communications:** Steven Baker, Director; Beth Georgette, Elizabeth DeBarr, Administrative Assistants.

**Graphic Design:** Jennifer Cohn Marsh, Associate Director; Gregg Poserina, Lead Design Assistant; Jennifer Larson, Technical Design Assistant; Nora J. Lenahan, Typesetter.

**NJEA Review:** Patrick Rumaker, Kathy Coulibaly, Associate Directors; Liz Murphy, Secretary.

**Public Relations:** Meredith Barnes, Christy Kanaby, Stephanie Natera, Matthew Stagliano, vacancy, Associate Directors; Lisa Logan-Leach, Secretary.

**Digital/Visual Communications:** Diane Barry, Associate Director.

**Video Production:** Nello Ciccone, Associate Director; Christopher Curto, Technical Video Assistant.

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

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

NJEA Government Relations coordinates NJEA's legislative activities and political campaigns and is responsible for the monitoring functions of government departments, bureaus and agencies except for the New Jersey Department of Education and State Board of Education, which are monitored by NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues. It also is responsible for working with Association committees that study educational legislation and regulations, and which recommend educational policy.

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

**Member and Political Organizing:** Al Beaver, Director; Marybeth Beichert, Eloy Delgado, Anna Hanzas, Adam Sheridan, Associate Directors; vacancy, Secretary; Christina Dare, James Frazier, Patricia Kebrdle, Erin Wheeler, Consultants

**Office of Politics and Policy:** Deborah Cornavaca, Director; Michael Flynn, Michael Giglio, Sean Hadley, Francine Pfeffer, Associate Directors; Mary Kemery, Administrative Assistant; Tamanyka Booker, Secretary

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL ISSUES

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

The division focuses on a wide range of professional development and continuing education issues. It has worked extensively with the N.J. Department of Education to promote a positive professional development focus. The division works with the teacher-led State Professional Teaching Standards Board, County Professional Development Boards, and local Professional Development Committees, which oversee continuing education in the state.

The division coordinates major statewide instructional issue conferences and scores of specialized meetings. It plans and administers the NJEA Convention—the Association's premier professional development event—developing and coordinating professional programs and activities, as well as overseeing facilities arrangements, logistical services, and exposition services.

It is responsible for the NJEA Professional Development Institute, which endorses and promotes high quality professional development programs.

In addition, the division acts as a resource on a wide variety of instructional subjects and professional issues, extending from such topics as reading to gender equity and youth services.

Division staff assists members and local and county affiliates in the field on these issues as needed through the NJEA-NEA UniServ network.

**Chrissi Miles, Ed.D.,** Director; Camy Kobylinski, Anna Muessig, Janet Royal, Elisabeth Yucis, Associate Directors; Felicia Davis, Cindy Vannauker, Administrative Assistants; Krista Orellana, vacancy, Secretary.

**PD Consultants:** Ridhima Bajaj, Eric Brenner, Katie Burke, Shan Byrd, Robin Cogan, Edward Dubroski, Greg Jablonski, Brian Janik, Joan Jensen, Pamela Koharchik, Danielle Kovach, Margaret Leventhal, Brenda Martin-Lee, Deanne Martini, Michael Mason, Jennifer Passuth, Jason Pukel, Mary Steinhauer, Tiffanie Thrbak.

**ACCESS:** Amanda Adams, Associate Director; Kimeisha Boyd, Secretary

**ACCESS Consultants:** Kathrine Clark, Angela Coxen, Carrie Ann Floyd, Brian McLaughlin, Carolyn Schultz, Diane Stelacio, Danele Still, Dorjima Tchourumoff, Linda Thomas, Maryann Woods-Murphy.

**NJEA Consortium:** Lizandaa Alburg, Associate

Director.

**Teacher Leader Academy:** Rich Wilson, Associate Director; Vicki Serreino, Administrative Assistant.

**TLA Consultants:** Johanna Amaro, Christine Candarella, Edward Dubroski, Michael Fletcher, Renda Martin-Lee, Deanne Martini, Ikechukwu Onyema, Jennifer Passuth, Estefania-Rios Gomez, Deidre Varga.

## RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC SERVICES

The NJEA Research and Economic Services Division gathers, organizes, and presents information to support state and local association programs and activities. The Division provides analytical and statistical information for other NJEA divisions including determination of fiscal impact of proposed legislation, evaluation of workshops and conferences, review of education research, guidance on issues of member benefits and retirement, and consultation on local fiscal operations impacting the bargaining process.

**Research and Economic Services:** Denise Graff Policastro, Director; Liz Rylak, Administrative Assistant.

**Education and Evaluation Research:** Lori Legette, Administrative Assistant.

**Library:** Martha O. DeBlieu, Associate Director; Lorraine Jones, Administrative Assistant.

**Member Benefits:** Beth Schroeder Buonsante, Associate Director; Lorraine Jones, Administrative Assistant.

**Negotiations Assistance:** Leigh Davidson, Michael Kaminski, Michael Salerno, Peter Vala, Gregory Yordy, Associate Directors; Jackie Candy, Michelle Randazzo, LaTonya Reid, Secretaries.

**Pension and Benefits:** Bob Bobik, Sarah Favinger, Thomas Predale, Michael Salerno, Associate Directors; Roxie Muhsig, Secretary; Felicia Tard, Principal Clerk.

**Statistics and School Funding:** Dan Goldman, Crystal Inman, Associate Directors.

**Pension Consultants:** Ryan Cohen, Barbara English, Ann Marie Finnen, Rocio Lopez, Dr. Erland Nordstrom, Kathleen Parker, Laura Rivera, Joanne Sanferraro, Gary Wikander, Kathleen Wollert.

# UNISERV REGIONAL OFFICES

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

Operating on a coordinated, statewide basis, the UniServ field representatives and Office Staff members work out of 16 regional offices to supply doorstep service to members.

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

The 63 professional and 36 associate UniServ staff members are assisted by 100 part-time UniServ consultants.

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

## FIELD ORGANIZING SPECIALISTS:

Central – William Junker; Northeast – Kimberly Scott Hayden; Northwest – Lakresha Harris-Hodge; South – Kathleen Quinn

## UNISERV SOUTH (REGIONS 1-3)

15000 Commerce Parkway, Ste. A,  
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-2212  
(856) 234-0522

Patrick Manahan, Regional Director  
Susan Schroeder, Administrative Assistant

## UNISERV CENTRAL

### (REGIONS 7-11 AND 29)

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

Jennifer Raike, Regional Director  
Diane Gourley, Administrative Assistant

## UNISERV NORTHEAST

### (REGIONS 15, 19 - 25)

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

Thomas Hardy, Regional Director  
Verlencia Waring, Administrative Assistant

## UNISERV NORTHWEST

### (REGIONS 13, 17, 27)

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

Mayrose Wegmann, Regional Director  
Brenda Champion, Administrative Assistant

## REGION 1

(Atlantic and Cape May Counties)

436 Chris Gaupp Drive, Ste.201,  
Galloway, NJ 08205-4464; (609) 652-9200

**UniServ reps:** Mario Montanero, Vincent Perna,  
Stephanie Tarr

**Office staff:** : Crysty Jenkins, Administrative  
Assistant; Nina Garrett, Secretary

**Consultants:** Anthony Angelozzi, Franklin  
Butterick, Brian Currie, Jean Hovey, Curt Nath,  
Stacey Salerno, Martha Septynski

## REGION 2

(Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem counties)

Tomlinson Prof. Bldg., 7 Myers Drive., Ste. F,  
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062; (856) 628-8650

**UniServ Reps:** Desirée Brennan, Fatima Hayes,  
Louis Randazzo, Anna Waltman

**Office Staff:** Donna Pacetta, Administrative  
Assistant; Elizabeth Parker, Secretary

**Consultants:** Sandra Beals, Alison Braun, Anthony  
Cappello, Diana Castiglione, Stephen Garavento,  
Mildred Johnson, Carmen Porter, Louis Russo,  
Stephanie Wheaton, Michael Wichart

## REGION 3

(Burlington and Camden counties) –

15000 Commerce Parkway, Ste. A.,  
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054; (856) 234-2485

**UniServ Reps:** Jim Boice, Jessica Cook, Jessica  
Vasquez-Denney, Ryan McCarty, Angela

McC Dermott, Caroline Tantum, Harry Zakarian

**Office Staff:** Kristin Hunt, Administrative Assistant;  
Linda Sacks, Administrative Assistant, Andrea  
Whilden, Secretary

**Consultants:** Mary Brennan-Farnen, Deborah  
Bruhn, Joseph Coleman, Marilese Fillbert,  
Catherine MacManiman, Judith Meyer, Janelle  
Mungro, Steve Redfeam, Ryan Strothers, Lisa  
Tripani, Stacey Williams

## REGION 7

(Ocean Co) – 1433 Hooper Avenue, Suite 225,

Toms River, NJ 08753-2200;  
(732) 349-0280

**UniServ Reps:** Mike Manion, Colleen Neil, Wendy  
Sistarenik

**Office Staff:** Lily Tremari, Administrative Assistant;  
Rebecca Novak, Secretary

**Consultants:** Michael Fletcher, James Huebner,  
Kimberlee Shaw, Daniel Staples, vacancy

## REGION 8

(Mercer Co) – 172 W. State St.,

Trenton, NJ 08608-1211; (609) 896-3422

**UniServ Reps:** Alexander DeVicaris, Jennifer  
Larsen, Susan Nardi

**Office Staff:** Gale Quinn, Administrative Assistant;  
Dawn Vitella, Secretary

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

## REGION 9

(Monmouth Co) – 1345 Campus Parkway, Ste. A-1,  
Wall Twp., NJ 07753-6828; (732) 403-8000

**UniServ Reps:** Christopher Johnson, Naomi  
Johnson-Lafleur, Lorraine Tesaro and Tracie  
Yostpille

**Office Staff:** vacancy, Administrative Assistant,  
Anne Elluzzi, Secretary

**Consultants:** Doug Dale, Denise King, Diane  
Vistein, Erin Wheeler, vacancy

## REGION 11

(Middlesex Co) – Raritan Plaza II, 91 Fieldcrest  
Ave., Ste. A3, Edison, NJ 08837-3627;

(732) 287-4700

**UniServ Reps:** Thomas Bohnyak, Brian Furry,  
Nancy Grbelja, Thomas Hayden

**Office Staff:** Margaret Fudacz, Administrative  
Assistant; Ileana Rivera, Secretary

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

## REGION 13

(Hunterdon, Somerset and Warren counties) –  
27 Minneakoning Road,

Flemington, NJ 08822-3605; (908) 782-2168

**UniServ Reps:** Ryan Edwish, Douglas Finkel, Brian  
Rock, John Ropars, Fred Skirbst

**Office Staff:** Lynne Nelson, Lori Garofano,  
Administrative Assistants

**Consultants:** LeShaun Arrington, Gregg Babbitt,  
Stephen Halldorson, Christopher James, Cheryl  
Mitchell, Charisse Parker, Anthony Rosamilia,  
Theresa Snyder

## REGION 15

(Union County) – 25 Commerce Drive Ste. 380,  
Cranford, NJ 07016-2464; (908) 709-9440

**UniServ Reps:** Dominick Giordano, Allyson  
Pontier, Maryanne Rodriguez, Ted Tympanik

**Office Staff:** Tabatha Walton, Administrative  
Assistant; Jeanette Rodriguez, Secretary

**Consultants:** Kevin Bloom, Eda Ferrante, Glen  
Robertson, Helyne Smith, Gene Woods

**REGION 17**

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

**UniServ Reps:** Hendrik John Klein, Vickie Walsh, John Williams, vacancy

**Office Staff:** Heather Marsh, Administrative Assistant; Chanae Phifer, Secretary

**Consultants:** Christopher Cannella, Nicole Denton, Richard Dispenziere, Deirdre Falk, Lyn Lowndes, Louis Migliacci Jr., Patricia Ressler, Nancy Richeda, Susan Sawey, vacancy

**REGION 19**

(Essex and Hudson counties) – 6600 Kennedy Blvd., East, Ste. 1L, West New York, NJ 07093-4217; (201) 861-1266

**UniServ Reps:** Tom DeSocio, Edward Stevens

**Office Staff:** Kristy Pessoa, Administrative Assistant; Bianca Rey, Secretary

**Consultants:** Emily Litman, Beverly Senior, Shareen Shibli

**REGION 20**

(Hudson County) – 1600 John Kennedy Blvd., Ste. B, Jersey City, NJ 07305-1749; (201) 653-6634

**UniServ Reps:** Kevin McHale, Daniel Suarez

**Office Staff:** Veronica Pereira, Administrative Assistant; Bianca Rey, Secretary

**Consultants:** Emily Litman, Beverly Senior, Beverley Shibli

**REGION 21**

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

**UniServ Reps:** Luis Delgado, James McGuire, Adrian Rodriguez

**Office Staff:** LaQuia Norment, Administrative Assistant; Shaunesa Walker, Secretary

**Consultants:** Antoinette Blaustein, Patricia Kebrdle, Jeremias Salinas, Christopher Tamburro

**REGION 25**

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

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

**Office Staff:** Dawn Valentine, Administrative Assistant; Laura Pometti, Secretary

**Consultants:** Michael DeOrio, Laura Grasso, Marianne Kronyak, Cynthia Lota, Margaret Novicki, Dayna Orlak, Christina Ventre, Michael Warren

**REGION 27**

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

**UniServ Reps:** Ron Bivona, Lori Cintron, Melanie Lemme, Sasha Wolf

**Office Staff:** Kathryn Maron, Administrative Assistant; Ann Chirico, Secretary

**Consultants:** Marc Foti, Sharon Milano, Kleo Papadatos, Donna Reaver, Brian Watson, Pamela Wilczynski

**REGION 29**

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

**UniServ Reps:** Marcia Kleinz, Maurice Koffman

**Office Staff:** Karen "Skip" Perry, Administrative Assistant; Jean DiQuinzio, office assistant

**Consultants:** Edward Carmien, Nicholas DiCicco, Mingyon McCall, Oron Nahom, vacancy

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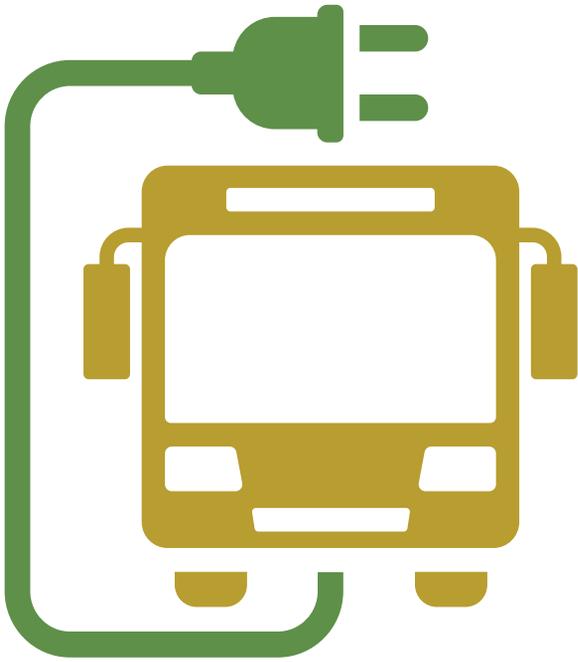
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# ELECTRIC BUS POSSIBILITIES CHARGING AHEAD

By Dorothy Wigmore

Plug and go! Electric buses are coming to New Jersey schools.

It's part of an international movement to take diesel vehicles off the road, following campaigns by organizations focused on the climate emergency, environmental justice and job-related hazards.

In New Jersey, it became the law in August.

S-1282 requires the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to establish the Electric School Bus Program by Feb. 4, 2023. The pilot will provide \$15 million a year for three years (subject to funding) to at least 18 districts. The money will help lease or buy electric buses and their charging stations. Other provisions include minimum bus range requirements, "telematics monitoring systems" on each bus, reporting processes and worker training.

In the competitive process, at least half the grants must go to school districts rather than private companies. Each year, at least half the school districts or contractors must be from, and half the funds must go to, low-income, urban, or environmental justice communities. Geographic equity is a related goal.

This program adds to the growing funding sources for electric school buses. For example, 2022 federal

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Clean School Bus Program rebates went to the Atlantic County Special Services School District (\$1,525,000) and the Bridgeton City School District (\$790,000). Another 47 school districts are on a waiting list, after requesting a total of \$61,410,000 for 14 propane and 216 electric buses.

There are 10,000 diesel powered school buses in the state. School districts need the financial aid to replace them. Electric buses are much more expensive now than diesel versions, although data shows long-term savings and greater benefits.

## Why go electric?

Studies show that children's health is affected by diesel exhaust from school buses. While still-developing bodies make them more vulnerable to harm from diesel exhaust, bus driver harm is often neglected.

Other investigations show that inhaling diesel exhaust's complex mixture of airborne particles (aerosols), gases and vapors can lead to short-term eye and respiratory irritation, asthma, and lung and bladder cancers.

It also is a major contributor to air pollution. Currently, that pollution is linked to increased rates of asthma, cancer, strokes, reproductive and heart problems, allergies and more. It also can make climate change worse. The transportation sector accounts for more than 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in New Jersey.

The state's three-minute idling law is not enough.

"Getting diesel buses off of the roads is good for the environment," says Drew Tompkins, director of Advocacy and Policy for New Jersey Work Environment Council

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*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.*

## “Electric buses require a just transition—making sure those affected by change aren’t left behind.

(NJWEC), one of 30-plus organizations that supported the bill.

“It’s good for public health—for the children riding buses, the drivers, and communities where the buses travel, especially really dense areas, many of them environmental justice hotspots—already burdened by air pollution,” he adds.

Electric buses also are quieter, with lower maintenance and operation costs, making up for up-front costs over time, and they produce fewer greenhouse gases. V2G ones can feed power back into the grid when they are not being used and electricity demand is high.

### What electric buses mean for members

Chrissy Kosar has questions about electric buses. President of the Gloucester County Education Association, she’s been a Washington Township bus driver for 17 years.

“We don’t have any information,” she says. “Members are asking questions like, ‘How far can you go on a field trip?’ ‘Where do we charge them?’ ‘What happens if you run out of electricity?’ Nobody’s particularly said, ‘I don’t think I could drive one.’”

Uncertainty like this adds to an already-stressful job. Drivers have increasing responsibilities while school districts set restrictions on working hours to limit benefits.

“You work from paycheck to paycheck. You worry that if your hours get cut, then you could lose this or that, or you could lose the house,” Kosar says.

Privatization is a constant threat, she adds. Members have concerns about this happening with electric buses.

Answers may take a while.

“While other states are investing in electric school buses, New Jersey took a three-year pilot approach to ensure the buses work well, can be used by everybody, and the cost—including maintenance—makes sense. While it’s a step in the right direction, we believe there’s enough data already and the state should be more aggressive in adopting these buses.”

Electric buses require a just transition—making sure those affected by change aren’t left behind. Groups fought for, and got, staff training and limits to funding private contractors.

Monitoring systems also are job stressors if employers use them to keep track of what bus drivers do and penalize them, rather than bus performance as intended. 🚗

## What can health and safety committees and locals do?

- Survey drivers and maintenance staff for their questions/concerns about electric buses, as well as current hazards.
- Use the results to push for changes to current and new buses and their maintenance.
- Find out the school district’s electric bus plans.
- Get involved early, pushing for a just transition and fewer hazards (e.g., do a hazard assessment of proposed purchase remembering the season makes a difference, e.g., removing roof snow).
- Do a hazard assessment of new buses and push for needed changes.
- Demand staff get effective training and relevant documents before new buses are used as the law requires.
- Negotiate monitoring system rules that assess buses, not people.
- Contribute to district’s required DEP electric bus reports.

## Resources

### Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

“Diesel exhaust”  
[bit.ly/3Wag8zu](https://bit.ly/3Wag8zu)

### Climate Justice Alliance

“Just Transition. A Framework for Change”  
[climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition](https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition)

### Environmental Protection Agency

“Awarded Clean School Bus Program Rebates” (and wait list)  
[bit.ly/3FMiKhI](https://bit.ly/3FMiKhI)

“What if electric school buses could be used to supply power when off duty?”  
[bit.ly/3hobr6s](https://bit.ly/3hobr6s)

### New Jersey

Text of A-1282  
[njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A1282](https://njleg.state.nj.us/bill-search/2022/A1282)

# Taking charge of your own PD

By Anna Muessig

Who in the world has the clearest understanding of what you need in order to grow as a professional? Who knows best what you are the most curious about and what you want to learn about at this very moment? Hint: it's probably not a central office administrator with whom you meet once a year for a maximum of 15 minutes.

Additionally, we continue to grow as lifelong learners when we remain curious and invest in ourselves on our own terms. These are two of many reasons why it's so important to take charge of your own professional development.

Here are three scenarios that might describe your current experience with PD and some ideas about how to take charge of your PD in each of them.

**Scenario 1:** You live in PD perfection. Your professional development provided by your district is always relevant and intentionally designed for professional adults. All professional development is well planned in terms of the time of the school year in which it is implemented, and each session has appropriate pacing including time for application and reflection. Additionally, all professional development has sustained follow-up and support.

**So now what?** How could you possibly need to take charge of your own PD when everything is working perfectly? If you are experiencing perfect PD, consider challenging yourself and considering ways to use your voice. PD may be perfect for you, but are your colleagues having the same experience? What about any colleagues whose PD needs aren't always considered, such as music, art, and health and physical education teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses, educational support professionals, and many other staff members? Consider looking beyond your own PD experiences to determine how you can develop your leadership and advocacy skills to support high quality PD for all.

**Scenario 2:** You can see that your district is trying to prioritize PD, and sometimes PD is useful, but coherence, coordination, timing, resources, or ongoing support are a challenge.

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*Anna Muessig is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She can be reached at [amuessig@njea.org](mailto:amuessig@njea.org).*

“ We continue to grow as lifelong learners when we remain curious and invest in ourselves on our own terms.

**Now what?** It may be tempting to sit back, cross your arms, and complain, but this situation may be a great opportunity to speak up, get involved, and to advocate for necessary follow-through and support. If there are official pathways to get involved—a leadership team in your district or building, openings on your school improvement panel (ScIP), association committees where you can get involved to advocate for your colleagues—consider investing in these opportunities to improve PD for yourself and your colleagues.

And if those formal pathways don't exist or aren't accessible to you, consider how you can connect with and share with your colleagues to support each other. Can you plan a weekly lunch and learn where you reflect on your instructional strategies together? Can you connect to an online community of educators? Can you explore PD offered by NJEA at conferences, regional workshops and county workshops?

**Scenario 3:** You can see that PD isn't a priority in your district for any number of reasons. Maybe PD is poorly timed, or staff are assigned to PD that isn't relevant to them, or support and follow-through are inconsistent or nonexistent.

**Now what?** Taking charge of your own PD may be the most important in this situation, because that may be your only authentic opportunity for growth. First, when you are required to participate in PD that isn't what you need, consider what you would want your students to do if they are experiencing a lesson that doesn't seem relevant to them. Sure, you can “check out” and grade papers, but if you stay engaged, there is likely something that you can learn from the experience, even if it isn't the intended objective of the session.

I can still remember the worst PD I'd ever experienced, even though it was nearly 20 years ago. While the content has faded from my memory, any time I have delivered PD since, I have not read from text filled slides for two hours while attendees sat on uncomfortable benches in a crowded cafeteria. I have always planned to make the environment as comfortable as possible, have sought to break the content into manageable chunks, and have looked to open space for attendees to actively engage with the content and each other rather than to passively receive information. I'm sure that wasn't the intended purpose of that long-ago PD session, but I was able to learn and subsequently apply that learning.

So if the PD your district provides does not meet your needs, consider what you can learn while you are in the moment, and then look for opportunities to continue to grow as an educational professional. 🏠



## WINTER VACATION GIVEAWAY

A+ Travel, an NJEA partner in our Member Discount Program, is running a promotion where they will reimburse one lucky member the cost of their travel booked through their service.

So in addition to discounted car rentals and hotel stays, someone is going to get a free trip! Book your travel by March 31, 2022, through the link below to be entered into this giveaway.

[travel.localhospitality.com/njea/travel-njea.html](https://travel.localhospitality.com/njea/travel-njea.html)

## Some ways take charge

Whatever your PD experience is, here are some ideas to help you take charge of your own PD:

- **Reflective journaling:** Whether a paper journal or a digital document, set aside five minutes a day (or even once a week) to regularly reflect on your instruction. Over time, go back and review your reflections to notice trends about what you may want to learn and ways you have grown.
- **Reading and researching:** Read educational research in books, articles, professional journals, or online through tools such as Google Scholar. One great, free resource for keeping current in educational research is What Works Clearinghouse, which you can find at [ies.ed.gov/ncee/WWC](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/WWC).
- **Regularly engage in professional conversations with colleagues.** This might look like a weekly lunch and learn, developing a professional learning community, online networking, or at EdCamps. (Upcoming EdCamps can be found at [digitalpromise.org/edcamp/attend](https://digitalpromise.org/edcamp/attend). Don't see an EdCamp near you? Gather some colleagues and consider organizing one!)
- **Consider ways to look beyond your own classroom.** Can you partner with a trusted colleague to watch each other teach, reflect together and learn together?
- **Ask for what you want—ask to go to a workshop, ask your local president to utilize NJEA resources.**
- **Take a graduate course.**
- **Tap into NJEA resources—the NJEA Convention, conferences, county and local workshops.**
- **Join professional organizations related to your content area.** Many such organizations maintain an affiliation with NJEA. Visit [njea.org/affiliated-groups](https://njea.org/affiliated-groups).
- **Apply to the NJEA Teacher Leader Academy.** This professional development and personal growth experience has been transformative for those who have completed it so far. For more information about this program, visit [njea.org/tla](https://njea.org/tla).

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# Preservice Previews increase membership

## NJEA Preservice drops dues to zero

BY MATTHEW YURO

As the Membership and Local Outreach Chair for NJEA Preservice, I've seen a significant loss in membership over the past few years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have seen our NJEA Preservice numbers drop across the many different college campuses and universities in New Jersey. This is hardly surprising as the one-on-one conversations we normally get to have on campus just couldn't happen.

Fortunately, we have a plan. With the implementation of a free dues pilot program, we have begun to see more future educators apply to be NJEA Preservice members. With so many benefits and perks, such as attending NJEA Convention and the Preservice Conference, it makes sense that so many future educators are once again joining! And now, the best part is that it's free!

### Preservice Previews

Preservice Previews are interactive presentations where members of the NJEA Preservice Full Leadership Team talk about everything NJEA Preservice has to offer. It allows for prospective members to join during the meeting and allows for a broader understanding of who we are and what we do as aspiring educators.

### Become a Preservice ambassador

NJEA Preservice is looking for ambassadors from colleges and universities across New Jersey to join our Full Leadership Team. Ambassadors act as a liaison between their institution and the NJEA Preservice state board. They update the Full Leadership Team on what their individual

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*Anna Muessig is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. She can be reached at [amuessig@njea.org](mailto:amuessig@njea.org).*



NJEA Preservice members made a strong showing at the NJEA Convention. From left: Maggie Machado, Morgan Michalko, Sophie Ward, James Pan, Francesca Vitulano, Chelsea Berwick, Elizabeth Gladstone, Sarah Adamo, Erin Ryan and Catherine Gonzalez.

chapters have accomplished throughout the service year.

For the spring 2023 semester, we plan to do even more outreach to even more colleges and universities by hosting more Preservice Preview events. Our membership goal for April 2023 is 850+ members. We are already halfway there, which is really exciting.

### Encourage future educators to join

If you are an NJEA member who works with a future educator, make sure they join NJEA Preservice today! If you are already an NJEA Preservice member, spread the word to your future educator friends that they need to join us too.

Visit [njea.org/preservice](http://njea.org/preservice) to learn more and about all of the benefits of becoming a Preservice member. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me at [myuro@njea.org](mailto:myuro@njea.org). I am super excited to continue pushing for membership and reaching our goals for the year.

We hope that you will continue to support NJEA Preservice and come to many of our spring events! 🎉

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# REFLECTIONS ON THE HOLOCAUST AND POVERTY

By Amy Moran, Ph.D. and Kate Okeson

## International Holocaust Remembrance Day

With International Holocaust Remembrance Day on Jan. 27, we have the sobering opportunity to reflect on political patterns of the past that yielded inhumane results for millions of ordinary folks. We can look at commonalities between hate speech of the past and that of the present and think critically about how seemingly benign inaction of individuals is, in hindsight, the start of untold widespread cruelty.

We know that in the Holocaust of World War II, people in Nazi Europe whose existences fell outside of Aryan or white supremacist norms were targeted for literal extinction. Six million Jews and at least five million Roma, political prisoners, disabled, and/or perceived to be homosexual, were murdered, with untold others tortured and fleeing as refugees.

We mourn the tragic losses and ongoing suffering of families whose destinies were forever changed by unthinkable cruelties carried out by a government that had the support of so many of its people. Certain contemporary rhetoric in our own country can be seen as similar to the hateful rhetoric of the past. That rhetoric must be interrupted. Critical reflection about the origins and outcomes of such messaging is needed.

We're also encouraged by the "reclaimant" process that certain symbols from that tragic time have undergone. With origins as badges of shame, the black triangle and the pink triangle were made to be worn by lesbians and gay men in the Nazi concentration camps. Once symbols of hate, they have given a new life as signs of LGBTQIA+ solidarity and, critically, as a symbol of HIV/AIDS action in the context of systemic oppression. Please continue further reading on this topic by following this month's QR code.

## Poverty Awareness Month

Of the many barriers to education that students can experience, few are so all-encompassing as poverty. Poverty is traditionally defined in absolute economic terms, but there are complicated social factors that can exacerbate all of the associated factors—and impacts—of poverty.

We raise this as January is Poverty Awareness Month, and we offer some data (and further reading in this month's QR code) to broaden our thinking on poverty and how

resource instability impacts some student populations in schools disproportionately. Expansive definitions of poverty include looking at access to food, access to health care, physical disability, access to social services, access to social capital and social exclusion.

Using those criteria to look at schools, we can see the potential for educational exclusion, and the risk factors for LGBTQIA+ students. Let's consider the following:

- 40% of 'runaway' and homeless youth are LGBTQIA+.
- 51% of LGBTQIA+ students consider dropping out of school due to hostile climates, including issues with harassment, unsupportive peers or educators, and gendered school policies/practices.
- 30% of high school dropouts are LGBTQIA+ according to American Psychological Association estimates.
- 32.2% of LGBTQIA+ students missed at least one entire day of school in the past month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 11.3% of LGBTQIA+ students missed four or more days in the past month for the same reasons.

Now let's consider those statistics with the following:

- 22% of LGBTQIA+ Americans live in poverty.
- 29% of transgender Americans live in poverty.
- 26% of LGBTQIA+ people in rural areas live in poverty.

For LGBTQIA+ people who did not grow up in poverty, anti-LGBTQIA+ bias and familial rejection, mental health issues and/or substance abuse issues were contributing factors in their adult poverty. As professional educators, we all understand the vital role education plays in human growth and outcomes; this is a call to center accepting and affirming educational practices to all of our young students as a means to stave off the risk factors of poverty.



Continue reading more about International Holocaust Remembrance Day and Poverty Awareness Month by following this month's QR code.

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# IF YOU MISSED THE CONVENTION, YOU MISSED OUT

BY HALLIE MEISTER



Members of the NJEA Early Career Network with NJEA staff members at the NJEA Convention. From left: Eric Gilliam, Brian Harkavy, Marcella Aquino-Bodden, Hallie Meister, John Staab (NJEA staff), Jordan Brennan, Eloy Delgado (NJEA staff), Kimberlee Doktor, Bennett Nagurka, Olivia Haas, and Davella Ward (NJEA staff).

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**Early Career  
Network**

If you were not at NJEA's 2022 Atlantic City Convention you missed out! The convention was back in full swing after COVID kept everyone home in 2020 and many home in 2021. It was wonderful to see so many people out and about after spending so much time at home. Both in-person and virtual experiences took place this year, so you could join colleagues in Atlantic City or from the comfort of your own home.

Hundreds of professional and career development workshops were held and Hall A featured phenomenal keynote speakers like LeVar Burton, Nyle DiMarco, David Hogg and Nikole Hannah-Jones. The convention also welcomed 2021's *Time* magazine Kid of the Year, 12-year-old Orion Jean (10 years old!) and The Gender Cool Project's Rebekah Bruesehoff, who is 14 years old.

Both Orion and Rebekah have authored their own books, which they signed at the convention. Orion's book, *A Kid's Book About Leadership*, focuses on leading with kindness and generosity. Rebekah's book, *A Kid's Book About Being Inclusive*, was co-written with Ashton Mota.

*Hallie Meister is a member of the East Brunswick Education Association and is a Team Central leader for the NJEA Early Career Network.*

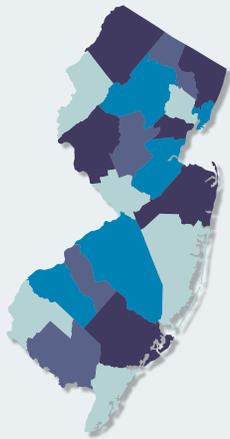
Both Rebekah and Orion were at the convention signing their books as well.

The convention floor was filled with booths and activities, including staff NJEA as well as many vendors and nonprofit organizations. Members found a wide range of opportunities, ranging from digital education resources to ax throwing and goat yoga.

There were lots of giveaways to be collected, including culturally diverse books from BookSmiles and dry-erase markers and erasers from the Early Career Network. BookSmiles is a nonprofit organization based in Pennsauken. Its goal is to encourage reading by helping children build their own libraries. BookSmiles and its founder, NJEA member and Lindenwold teacher Larry Abrams, accept donations of books that BookSmiles puts into the hands of children who need them. Learn more at [booksmiles.org](http://booksmiles.org).

Best of all, NJEA organized a "passport" activity that led to a ticket for a private event. The passport had to be filled out at multiple NJEA booths on the floor of the Exhibit Hall. Members who completed the passport received a ticket to the event at the Borgata Pool Club on Thursday evening. The event boasted a band made up of all teachers—and they were great!

If you haven't been to the convention yet or you haven't been in a while, don't miss it in 2023! Mark your calendars for Nov. 9-10, 2023. 🎉



# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY

Workshops and conferences

## highlights

Culturally responsive, gifted and bilingual education

## SHOWCASE

Showcase experiences have been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on [njea.org](http://njea.org). Those seeking endorsement of a professional development experience that they will provide should call NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.

## CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE ARTS EDUCATION WORKOUT

The Culturally Responsive Arts Education (CRAE) Workout is a free, eight-week curated asynchronous and synchronous experience that focuses on developing the capacity of educators and administrators to think about how culturally relevant and responsive approaches can shift curricula, instructional content and teaching practices to represent and validate all students' cultures and lived experiences more effectively.

- Registered participants will receive curated prompts over eight weeks that focus on individual, interpersonal and institutional aspects of CRAE. Prompts include articles, videos and reflection exercises that will help you learn about, reflect on and develop a CRAE practice and culturally responsive curriculum.
- Opportunities for journaling and artmaking to chronicle and deepen your learning.
- Opportunities to assess curricula through a culturally responsive lens with the CRAE Curriculum Scorecard adapted from New York University's Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools.
- Optional 90-minute guided conversation with other Workout participants on Mondays, 4-5:30 p.m., on weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8.
- Optional discussion in a Google Classroom will support inquiries and sharing of ideas between individuals as well as curriculum-writing teams.

**Location and date:** Virtual – Jan. 16-March 10

**Registration fee:** Free

**More information:** Email [CRAEWorkout@gmail.com](mailto:CRAEWorkout@gmail.com). Visit [artsednj.org/CRAEWorkout](http://artsednj.org/CRAEWorkout) to register.

## NJAGC CONFERENCE 2023

### The Dream Team: Families + Educators, Strengthening Gifted Education

Conference 2023 will focus on strengthening the relationship between the educators and caregivers of gifted students. The 2023 conference will be both in-person and available for digital replay. All in-person attendees will also receive access to the recorded presentations without an additional fee.

All areas of curricula will be included as well as assessment, identification, social and emotional issues, and the differentiation of curricula for this population of students. Speakers will also address successful strategies for including and retaining minority students in gifted programs, and the New Jersey law: the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act.

The courses will be facilitated by Dr. Rebecca McLelland-Crawley, a National Board-Certified Teacher who teaches at Community Middle School in Plainsboro. In her keynote, Dr. McLelland-Crawley will share ways we can work together to celebrate school systems, structures, and practices that support the diverse needs of gifted learners. In her breakout session, "Strengthening Gifted Education: The Student Perspective," she will discuss strategies for coaching colleagues, connecting with parents and building lasting community relationships.

Session topics will include:

- Giftedness: Characteristics and Needs
- District Responsibilities and Accountability
- Equity and Representation
- Instructional Strategies
- Parents/Caregivers: Supporting Your Gifted Child
- Program and Service Options

**Location:** Conference Center at Mercer County Community College

**Date:** March 17 – 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

### Registration fees:

- In-Person Registration + Membership: \$214
- In-Person Non-Member Registration: \$224
- Conference Recording Access + Membership: \$214
- Conference Recording Access for Non-Members: \$224

**More information:** Email [kellyr@njagc.org](mailto:kellyr@njagc.org). Visit [bit.ly/njagc-conf2023](http://bit.ly/njagc-conf2023) to register.

## 2023 NJTESOL/NJBE SPRING CONFERENCE

### Strengthening Collaboration

The 2023 conference of the New Jersey Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages/New Jersey Bilingual Educators will have two components: an in-person conference and a video library conference.

### In-person conference

The In-Person Conference will take place at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick on May 23, 24, and 25. You can register for one, two or all three days. The conference will feature three keynote speakers: Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld, Dr. Edward Fergus and Jacquelyn León.

In addition, you'll select from many presentations approved for the continuing education requirement, network with your colleagues, and obtain the latest information on state and national initiatives. You can also meet with representatives at the sponsors' and exhibitors' booths to find the latest and greatest teaching tools.

Presentation topics will include: General Interest, Content Area Instruction, Bilingual/ESL Pre-K through 12, Higher Ed, Teacher Ed, Adult Ed, and K-12 Administrators, and Dual Language/Biliteracy.

### Video library conference

The Video Library Conference is a select collection of library presentations you will have access to view starting on May 26 using the conference platform. There is no set schedule, and you will be able to view the workshops from May 26 to Sept. 1. By using your unique login, your hours will be tracked so that you can earn professional development hours through Sept. 1. Please note that the select collection of presentations will not include the keynotes or special invited guest speakers.

Register early for a discounted rate. Registration includes one free year of membership.

Visit [njtesol-njbe.org/spring-conference](https://njtesol-njbe.org/spring-conference) for more information and to register.

For other conference questions email Caia Schlessinger, conference coordinator, at [conference-coordinator@njtesol-njbe.org](mailto:conference-coordinator@njtesol-njbe.org).

## MORE TO LEARN

### SUMMER INSTITUTE AT COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

The 2023 Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute of Colonial Williamsburg offers a weeklong session and a three-day program of themed seminars. Taught on location in Williamsburg, Virginia, participants are immersed in an inclusive approach to teaching American history and civics. Come and collaborate with fellow teachers and Williamsburg staff and share instructional strategies and resources.

#### Weeklong Elementary Sessions

A Multifaceted American Heritage: Colonization, Conflict and Compromise (1607-178)

- June 11-17
- June 25-July 1
- July 9-15
- July 23-29
- July 30-Aug. 5

#### Weeklong Secondary Sessions

Evolving Perspectives on American Identity: Resistance, Revolution and Reform (1607-1870)

- June 11-17
- June 18-24
- June 25-July 1
- July 23-29
- July 30-Aug. 5

#### Three-day Themed Seminars

Agents of Change: Civic Engagement - Past and Present

- July 9-13
- July 30-Aug. 3

Resilience, Agency and Resistance: The African American Experience (1607-1781)

- June 25-29
- July 16-20

STEAM to the Past, Design for the Future

- June 18-22, 2023
- July 23-27, 2023

To ensure health and safety, the Teacher Institute will require all 2023 participants to be fully COVID-19 vaccinated before arriving onsite. During the program, participants and staff must also follow all Colonial Williamsburg requirements for COVID-19 based on CDC guidelines.

For more information about these and other programs, visit [colonialwilliamsburg.org/teach](https://colonialwilliamsburg.org/teach).

*(continued on next page)*

## MORE TO LEARN

(continued)

### Scholarships available for New Jersey educators

A generous New Jersey donor has funded at least 15 scholarships for New Jersey teachers to attend the 2023 Bob and Marion Wilson Teacher Institute of Colonial Williamsburg.

The cost of the weeklong program is \$2,400. The cost of the three-day seminar is \$1,500. In addition to tuition, accommodations, most meals, tickets and tours, and airfare/driving are paid for with the scholarship. There is also a \$100 gift card for educational materials that each participant receives.

To apply for a scholarship, visit [bit.ly/BMWTIScholarshipApplication](https://bit.ly/BMWTIScholarshipApplication). The deadline is Jan. 27.

Questions: Email [teacherdevelopment@cwf.org](mailto:teacherdevelopment@cwf.org).

### ONLINE MAPPING WEBINAR OFFERED TO TEACHERS

ESRI, the maker of online mapping software, sponsors a national mapping contest for high school and middle school students. New Jersey has participated in this contest for several years. Students make a Story Map about a New Jersey topic. Schools may receive a free organizational account at [bitlylinks.com/kihUwfY6U](https://bitlylinks.com/kihUwfY6U) to use ArcGIS Online. Top entries in the state may earn \$100 and possibly be entered in the national competition.

To assist teachers, a webinar will be offered on Feb. 7 from 4 to 5 p.m. Teachers who participate in the webinar and mentor students who enter the competition will be eligible for a stipend. For details and to register, visit the New Jersey contest website at [bitlylinks.com/9gauXp9ZO](https://bitlylinks.com/9gauXp9ZO).



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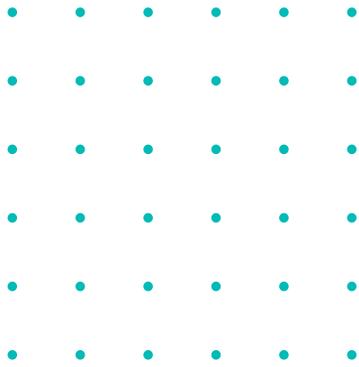
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## How to Keep Your New Year's Financial Resolutions



Did you set some financial goals this New Year's Day? Get expert advice on keeping the momentum going throughout the year. For more advice and services for smart—and stress-free—financial planning, check out [neamb.com](https://neamb.com).

Here are four classic financial New Year's resolutions, along with expert advice on how to successfully achieve them:



### PAY OFF DEBTS

This is a bold resolution because debt often emerges as the “elephant in the room” that no one wants to confront. It will never go away, however, until you tackle it head-on. The beginning of a new year is a perfect time to get started.



### STICK WITH A SET BUDGET

If you sat down and worked out a lean but reasonable budget before the new year, that's wonderful. But budgets are like diets—sometimes we can stick with them, and sometimes we can't. To ensure success, open up a second checking account without a debit card or checks attached to it so it can only be used for digital transfers, and arrange to have your paycheck directly deposited into it.



### BUILD AN EMERGENCY FUND

If you are following what the experts typically advise, you pledged in January to set aside no less than three months—and, if possible, six months—of living expenses in case of a job loss or other unexpected circumstances that would significantly impact your earnings and budget.



### FUND RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

Follow the “Save Before You See It” plan, meaning you arrange for automatic deductions from your paycheck—such as 1% of your income if you receive a 2% raise—before the raise kicks in.



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

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

For more advice about reducing debt, register for the NJEA Member Benefits webinar, “Dollars & Debt: Meeting Your Personal Finance Goals” on Jan. 25 at 4:30 p.m. Register at [njea.org/mbwebinars](https://njea.org/mbwebinars).



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



PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

## 2023 MEDICARE PART B PREMIUMS DECREASE

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the 2023 premiums for Medicare Part B in November.

For Medicare beneficiaries, premiums and deductibles will decrease. Premiums will be reduced to \$164.90 per month, a decrease of \$5.20, while Medicare Part B deductibles will decrease by \$7 to \$226. Retirees will also pay a different premium amount in 2023 if they fall into a different income-related category. This change happens once individual filers reach \$97,001, or a joint-filer reaches \$194,001, for income earned in 2023.

The Social Security Administration uses the income reported two years ago to determine a Part B beneficiary's premium. Thus, the income reported on a beneficiary's 2021 tax return is used to determine whether the beneficiary must pay a higher monthly Part B premium in 2023. If a beneficiary's income decreased significantly in the past two years, they may request that information from more recent years be used to calculate the premium.

For those members receiving post-retirement medical benefits paid for by the state of New Jersey, the standard Medicare Part B premium is reimbursed

in the member's pension check. Any income-related adjustment paid by enrollees or their spouse/partner is reimbursed at the end of the year in which the adjustment is paid, only after the proper paperwork is filed with the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits. Notice on how to file for any income-related adjustment reimbursement will be sent to retirees, as well as posted on the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits website, by early February.

Additional details can be found by visiting the NJREA webpage at [njea.org/njrea](http://njea.org/njrea).

If you have questions about your Medicare Part B premium, call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227.) Any questions regarding the reimbursement process should be directed to the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609- 292-7524. Members also can view updates via the division's "Letters to Retirees" at [state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pension-retirees.shtml](http://state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pension-retirees.shtml).

INCOME LEVELS FOR SINGLES	INCOME LEVELS FOR JOINT FILERS	2023 PREMIUMS
\$97,000 or below	\$194,000 or below	\$164.90
\$97,001 to \$123,000	\$194,001 to \$246,000	\$230.80
\$123,001 to \$153,000	\$246,001 to \$306,000	\$329.70
\$153,001 to \$183,000	\$306,001 to \$366,000	\$428.60
\$183,001 to \$499,999	\$366,001 to \$749,999	\$527.50
\$500,000 or above	\$750,000 or above	\$560.50

## 2023 MEDICARE PART D PREMIUMS

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

While there is no standard Medicare Part D cost associated with the program, enrollees whose incomes exceed the legislated threshold amounts—\$97,001 in 2021 for a beneficiary filing an individual income tax return or married and filing a separate return, and \$194,001 for a beneficiary filing a joint tax return—will pay a monthly, income-related payment. Please see the chart at right for specifics.

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

For those members receiving post-retirement medical benefits paid for by the state of New Jersey, the monthly, income-related payment for both them and their dependents is reimbursed at the end of the year in which the payment is paid, only after the proper paperwork

is filed with the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits. Notice on how to file for any income-related adjustment reimbursement is sent to retirees, as well as being posted on the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits website, by early February.

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

INCOME LEVELS FOR SINGLES	INCOME LEVELS FOR JOINT FILERS	2023 PREMIUMS
\$97,000 or below	\$194,000 or below	\$0.00
\$97,001 to \$123,000	\$194,001 to \$246,000	\$12.20
\$123,001 to \$153,000	\$246,001 to \$306,000	\$31.50
\$153,001 to \$183,000	\$306,001 to \$366,000	\$50.70
\$183,001 to \$499,999	\$366,001 to \$749,999	\$70.00
\$500,000 or above	\$750,000 or above	\$76.40

# 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.*

## ATLANTIC COUNTY REA

**Feb. 7:** Winter meeting/luncheon at Flander’s Hotel in Ocean City. Cost is \$TBD. To attend, contact Chic Brandt 609-774-3452 or [chic8852@aol.com](mailto:chic8852@aol.com).

## CAPE MAY COUNTY REA

**March 9:** Spring meeting/luncheon at Flanders Hotel in Ocean City. Cost is \$32. To attend, contact Chic Brandt at 609-774-3452 or [chic8852@aol.com](mailto:chic8852@aol.com).

## CUMBERLAND COUNTY REA

**March 1:** Winter luncheon/meeting at New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville (GPS: 8000 Dividing Creek Rd.). Topic: Pension update by Sarah Favinger, NJEA. Cost is \$30. To attend, call Irene Savicky at 856-863-8424 by Feb. 10.

## GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA

**March 28:** Laura Maltman Health & Wellness workshop on “Scams & Frauds on Seniors” held at GCREA Office Suite 108 Lakeside Professional Plaza 190 N. Evergreen Ave. Woodbury, NJ. Light refreshments. No cost to attend. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 570-710-5514.

## MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA

**March 9:** Spring meeting/luncheon at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. Cost is \$43. Topic will be a Member Benefits Fair. To attend, contact Susan Jaysnovitch at [teachtheinternet@aol.com](mailto:teachtheinternet@aol.com) or 732-925-1606 by Mar. 2.

## MORRIS COUNTY REA

**March 8:** Spring luncheon/meeting at Birchwood Manor in Whippany. Cost is \$35 for members, \$53 guest. Topic: Aetna Awards & Member Benefits Fair. To attend, call John Beekman at 973-514-1080 by March 1.

## OCEAN COUNTY REA

**March 16:** March meeting/luncheon at the Clarion Hotel in Toms River. Cost is \$28. To attend, call Barbara DiCicco at 732-773-4917 by March 2.

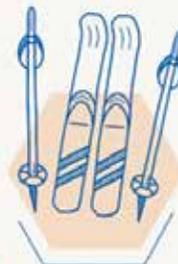
## PASSAIC COUNTY REA

**March 29:** Spring luncheon/meeting at The Brownstone in Paterson. Cost is \$35. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at 201-410-1325.

## UNION COUNTY REA

**Feb. 28:** Winter luncheon/meeting held at Gran Centurions in Clark, NJ. Cost is \$30. To attend, call Pat Alt at 732-382-6261 by Feb. 21.

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# JANUARY & beyond

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

<p>JAN <b>06</b></p>	<p><b>FRIDAY</b> Executive Committee meeting</p>	<p>JAN <b>14</b></p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b> Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Celebration</p>	<p>FEB <b>18</b></p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b> NJEA FAST Showcase</p>
<p>JAN <b>07</b></p>	<p><b>SATURDAY</b> Delegate Assembly meeting</p>	<p>JAN <b>27-28</b></p>	<p><b>FRI &amp; SAT</b> Winter Leadership Conference – South</p>	<p>FEB <b>24-25</b></p>	<p><b>FRI &amp; SAT</b> Winter Leadership Conference – North</p>
<p>JAN <b>13-14</b></p>	<p><b>FRI &amp; SAT</b> NJEA HCR Summit and Equity Alliance Conference</p>	<p>FEB <b>01</b></p>	<p><b>WEDNESDAY</b> Executive Committee meeting</p>	<p>MAR <b>03</b></p>	<p><b>FRIDAY</b> Executive Committee meeting</p>

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

## deadlines

- 1/13** Winter Leadership Conference-North  
Event date: Feb. 24-25  
Go to [njea.org/WLC](https://njea.org/WLC).
- 2/10** Winter Leadership Conference-Central  
Event date: March 31-April 1  
Go to [njea.org/WLC](https://njea.org/WLC).
- 2/10** NJEA FAST Showcase  
Event date: Feb. 18  
Go to [njea.org/FASTshowcase](https://njea.org/FASTshowcase)

**Save the date: May 12-13**  
LGBTQIA+ Conference  
Somerset Doubletree



### Employment Opportunities at NJEA

Questions? Call the NJEA Human Resources office at 609-599-4561.

NJEA is an equal opportunity employer. Visit [njea.org/jobs](https://njea.org/jobs).

# A life of advocacy and service

## Trenton names school after educational support professional

There are schools named after presidents, governors and other historic figures. There are even schools named after teachers and administrators. But this year, Trenton named one of its schools after a woman who served the district as a paraprofessional and parent liaison.

This makes Darlene C. McKnight Elementary School at least the second school in state to be named after an educational support professional (ESP). The other is Lawton C. Johnson Middle School in Summit, which was renamed in 2004 after the school's secretary/office manager.

According to the long list of distinguished guests invited to speak at a dedication ceremony held at the school on Oct. 19, there was no one better to name a school after than McKnight.

McKnight was well-known within the schools and far beyond them. She did extensive work with churches, community-based organizations, shelters, soup kitchens, and Trenton Paraprofessionals Association (TPA) initiatives such as NJEA FAST.

"When her daughter, Shelly, entered kindergarten, McKnight became a school volunteer and a parent organizer," retired Trenton teacher Jacqueline Tolbert-Beverly read from McKnight's biography. "By the time her son, Louis, entered kindergarten, she was well established as an advocate."

McKnight also worked to stem violence by bringing together, at every opportunity, groups of activists engaged in the work to create peaceful communities. Trenton City Council President and Mothers Against Violence founder Kathy McBride recalled that their friendship began when McKnight introduced her to Princeton's Coalition for Peace Action, soon after learning of McBride's organization.

McKnight also served on the TPA negotiations team and as secretary for several contracts.

"Not only was she an advocate for the children and families of Trenton, she was an advocate for her union family," said NJEA UniServ Field Rep Jenn Larsen.

"It's often said that we have to provide service to humankind for the space that we occupy on this earth," said Sen. Shirley Turner. "Darlene was someone who paid



The Trenton Paraprofessionals Association organized the dedication event, which drew a state senator, the mayor, city councilmembers, district administration, school board members, local and state association leaders and staff, current and former staff and students, community organizers, and many family members and friends.

her rent in full for the space—a space that she didn't just occupy, she committed her life to it."

Children pay much less attention to job titles and academic degrees. Instead, they remember those who make them feel important, valued and loved.

"She left you with a word, a gesture—something to let you know she loved you," said Darren Green, a Trenton community advocate. "You move differently when you feel loved."

"She may not have had 'doctor' in front of her name, but she was a doctor to us," concluded TPA President Betty Glenn.

McKnight loved Trenton, and Trenton loved her back. But she is not alone.

All across New Jersey and the nation, there are bus drivers, secretaries, custodians, paraprofessionals, aides, food service staff, maintenance workers, security staff and others who are making positive and permanent differences in the lives of the students and communities they serve. While not every ESP will have a school named after them, their names are in the hearts of students and families for years, even decades, after they leave school. 🇺🇸

Are there other schools in the state named after educational support professionals? Let the *Review* editor know about them at [NJEAREview@njea.org](mailto:NJEAREview@njea.org).



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