



# NJEA TRANSFORM CONFERENCE SATURDAY, APRIL 22, 2023

Choose your own professional development adventure to transform your work in public schools.

At the NJEA Transform Conference you'll find programs designed for instructional practice, educational support professionals, special education, hope and healing, technology, and teacher leadership.

The adventure begins April 22 and continues this summer with the **NJEA Impact Conference**.



Keynote:

**Eliot Schrefer,**  
author

Photo: Matt Wilson

Eliot Schrefer is a *New York Times* bestselling author, has twice been a finalist for the National Book Award for Young People's Literature, received the Stonewall Honor for best LGBT teen book, and received the Printz Honor for best young adult book from the ALA. In naming him an Editor's Choice, the *New York Times* has called his work "dazzling... big-hearted." His science writing has appeared in *Discover*, *Sierra*, *USAToday*, *Nautilus*, and *The Washington Post Magazine*. He is in the process of receiving his M.A. in Animal Studies from NYU and is on the faculty of the Fairleigh Dickinson and Hamline MFAs for creative writing. He lives with his husband in New York City.

**DoubleTree Somerset Hotel & Conference Center,**  
200 Atrium Drive, Somerset, NJ 08873

7:30-9:00 a.m. .... Registration, hot breakfast, exhibits, wellness center activities

9:00-10:15 a.m. .... Welcoming remarks,  
Keynote – Eliot Schrefer, author

10:30-12:30 p.m. .... Breakout sessions (10)

12:30-1:30 p.m. .... Lunch, wellness center activities

1:30-3:30 p.m. .... Hosted conversation –  
all participants convene in the  
ballroom for guided conversations

3:30-4:30 p.m. .... Networking event, exhibits,  
wellness center activities

**Regular registration** (Deadline April 14, 2023)

**\$30** for NJEA members

**\$15** for NJEA Preservice members

Registration fee includes program, hot breakfast and lunch.

This conference provides up to five hours of professional development credit.

Preregistration required: Visit [njea.org/transform](https://njea.org/transform) to register.

Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Only registered participants may attend. No on site registration.

Refund deadline: April 15, 2023.

Purchase order registrations are not available online and must be placed with the conference registrar, Cindy Vannauker, at [cvannauker@njea.org](mailto:cvannauker@njea.org), or 609.310.4263.

Questions? Email [pdevents@njea.org](mailto:pdevents@njea.org).

If you have a special physical, communication, dietary, or other disability-related need which may require assistance or accommodations to permit or facilitate your attendance/participation in the conference please contact the conference registrar, Cindy Vannauker, [cvannauker@njea.org](mailto:cvannauker@njea.org) or 609-310-4263.

## Morning Breakout Sessions (choose one):

### **A Transformative Conversation with the Black and Dyslexic Podcast**

**Hosts:** LeDerick Horne, LeDerick Horne Speaks, LLC and Winifred A. Winston, Dyslexia Advocation Inc.

Join co-hosts Winifred Winston and LeDerick Horne for a live recording of the Black and Dyslexic Podcast. This session will feature a panel discussion consisting of young adults and professionals who will explore the intersectionality of being Black and Neurodivergent. The panel will share their stories and provide advice to educators from their own experiences. Educators will be provided with concrete tips and strategies on developing culturally competent and inclusive approaches to empowering diverse learners. This upbeat and interactive session will end with a live Q & A from the audience.

### **Find Your Calm Through Poetry**

**Presenter:** Erika Kelley, CEO & Principal Consultant, Sage Horizons, LLC

Trauma is an emotional response to a distressing event or situation that breaks a sense of security. Anyone can experience trauma due to an injury, a frightening situation or painful events from our past. We may experience trauma responses or triggers. This is normal and not a character flaw or a weakness. However, unprocessed trauma may impact our relationships, instruction and parenting to children, and care that we provide to families. During this workshop, we will explore research that demonstrates links between writing and emotional processing and learn how to mitigate trauma and increase our emotional resilience using poetry.

### **Interruption and Disruption: How Representative Curricula Fosters Better Student Outcomes**

**Presenters:** NJEA Consortium Design Team Ambassadors

This session will be led by the NJEA Consortium Design Team Ambassadors. We will focus on how incorporating inclusive pedagogy and practice allows teachers to disrupt the majority model and interrupt potential negative student outcomes often connected to systemic exclusion and/or marginalization in the classroom. The incorporation of inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies across content matter and grade level fosters better student outcomes, school and community belonging, and the creation of an affirming culture and climate.

### **New Jersey Statewide Student Support Services (NJ4S): A Statewide Response to the Youth Mental Health Crisis**

**Presenter:** Sanford Starr, New Jersey Department of Children and Families

In response to a national mental wellness crisis in youth and young adults, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families has proposed to launch a statewide, innovative hub-and-spoke model of services and resources intended to support youth mental wellness and promote prevention initiatives (prevention of bullying, prevention of teen suicide, prevention of substance use, etc.). Participants will learn about what the model looks like, have an opportunity for Q&A and space to imagine what this model could look like in their district.

### **Reaching Every Student: Adaptations, Accommodations, & Modifications**

**Presenter:** Susan Coll-Guedes, M.Ed., New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education

How can educators design instruction to meet the unique needs of students in the inclusive classroom? Learn strategies for creating supported, engaging and flexible learning environments to meet student needs through exploring adaptations, accommodations, and modifications.

### **Reflections: Curricula that Ensures Liberty and Justice for All New Jersey Students**

**Presenter:** NJEA Consortium Design Team Ambassadors

This session will be led by the NJEA Consortium Design Team Ambassadors. New Jersey is home to the densest population in the U.S. and ranked as one of the most diverse states in the country with nearly 45% of New Jersey's 8.9 million residents being people of color. New Jersey also proudly boasts the third-largest population of foreign-born residents in the nation. To reflect this diversity, the New Jersey Department of Education has passed various mandates to expand, reflect and build on the rich diversity of our great state. But how can we, as classroom teachers, address this diversity legally, pedagogically & literally in our K-12 classrooms?

### **Reigniting Joy: Leading, Learning and Living with Renewed Purpose and Passion**

**Presenter:** Charlene Gerbig, NJEA Teacher Leader Academy Graduate

In the post-pandemic current school climate, it can be difficult to find a way toward joyfulness in our work and lives. These times call for finding ways to transform ourselves and our schools through a rededication to our 'why'. Join us to examine our own 'educator bandwidths' to reset and reignite passion, purpose, and

energy for our profession and personal lives.

### **Teacher Leadership, the Seat NEEDED at the Table**

**Presenter:** Brittany Bloss, NJEA Teacher Leader Academy Graduate

Do you feel like things HAVE to change in public education, but don't know how to have that impact as a classroom teacher? Join us as we reflect on the themes that have emerged from the past three years and determine how we work together, as teacher leaders, to provide the change needed for the betterment of our students. We will discuss the power of the Teacher Leader Model Standards and their impact on the work that needs to be done in public education now. Becoming a teacher leader will arm you with the skills and qualities needed to sit at the table to transform public education in New Jersey.

### **Teaching Them to Fish: Facilitating Student Independence and Success**

**Presenter:** Sara Jutovich, M.A., New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education

Join Sara Jutovich, an Inclusion Facilitator with NJCIE, to learn how paraprofessionals can facilitate student independence and success. In this presentation, we will explore how to engage students with choice and how to foster active participation in the classroom. Together we will look at tips and tools for academic and behavior support. In our session, we will learn about the importance of relationship building, communication, and establishing expectations. Participants will engage in discussions, resource exploration, case studies, and will leave with new tips and strategies to help students succeed and thrive.

### **The Impact of Being a Teacher Leader as a Member of Color**

**Presenters:** Johanna Amaro, Ikechukwu Onyema, Estefania Rios Gomez, NJEA Teacher Leader Academy Consultants, and Tyeisha Jeffries, NJEA Teacher Leader Academy Candidate

This breakout session will hold space for members of color to discuss the unique impact of our presence as leaders in our various educational spaces. In addition, members of color will be introduced to the unique facets of NJEA's Teacher Leader Academy and deepen our understanding of how TLA can equip us to continue blossoming as more courageous and effective leaders. Finally, the presenters will share stories of our unique journeys as Teacher Leaders to illustrate the many ways that TLA can be a catalyst for growth and change.