

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW

April 2017
NJEA.ORG



an education and advocacy resource

Supporting American Muslim students

Historical research beyond
students' smartphones

School security and
strong schools

Trenton EA discusses
institutional racism

Meet your NJEA
officer candidates



ABOVE LEFT: Education Association of Passaic member Manuel Gonzalez, a paraprofessional at School #5, discusses stress and time management issues. Read more on Page 18.



ABOVE RIGHT: At the NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference, Freehold Borough EA President Heidi Brache asks legislators a question during a session about privatization and urban education. Read more on Page 16.

BELOW: Mendham Borough EA member Marisa Weissman Cohen, learns how to extend MBEA influence through social media at Winter Leadership North in Parsippany.



RIGHT: During the NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference, Geoff Gollihur, the Hammonton Education Association Legislative Action Team chair, explains how he successfully brought PAC contribution levels to 95 percent in his local. Read more on Page 16.



While members receive more than nine hours of advocacy training at the Summer Leadership Conference, there's also time for some fun as these attendees at the last year's Summer Leadership can attest. Learn about this year's Summer Leadership Conference starting on Page 36.

Brunswick Room



FEATURES



20 SUPPORTING MUSLIM STUDENTS

Schools and those who work in them want to make schools safe for all students. Learn more about helping Muslim students feel safe in your school.

BY FARHANA SHAH



25 RESEARCH BEYOND SMARTPHONES

With information coming from every angle, students depend on teachers to guide them to the most reliable resources. Read how the New Jersey Student Learning Standards can help.

BY HANK BITTEN



28 INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Through a series of intense conversations with students and the community, the Trenton Education Association is creating a sustained dialog about the roots of institutional racism and how to help students and staff work through it.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



34 SCHOOL SECURITY GUARDS

The school security staff at Burnet Middle School in Union Township is committed to creating a safe environment where all students can succeed. They become important in the lives of the students they see every day.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

COLUMNS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 7 *Navigating extraordinary times*

THE ADVOCATE 8 *Know. Lead. Act.*

THE BULLETIN BOARD 9 *Cool stuff to check out*

THE NJEA REPORT 12 *Education in the news*

HEALTH AND SAFETY 56 *Identify floors containing mercury*

THE TOOLBOX 60 *Apps from STEM to STEAM*

CLASSROOM CLOSE-UP NJ 63 *Highlights of NJEA's Emmy award winning show*

SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY 64 *Workshops, field trips, grants, and more*

PRESERVICE MEMBERS 66 *Leadership matters*

RETIRED MEMBERS 68 *News and events*

MEMBER BENEFITS 71 *Get your money's worth*

STAFF NEWS 72 *Hires and promotions*

COMING UP 73 *What's next at NJEA*

FINAL EXAM 74 *Voucher threat looms large*

NJEA REPORT OF AUDIT 46 *Sept. 1, 2015-Aug. 31, 2016*



36 2016 JACK BERTOLINO SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



42 READ ACROSS AMERICA *Top pics from last month's celebration*



ON THE COVER:
All students deserve a safe and welcoming environment in which to learn.

PHOTO BY
GETTY IMAGES

VOLUME 90 NUMBER 9

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NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW



NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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Annual membership dues are: Active professional: \$866 (full time); \$433 (part time) \$433 (on leave). Active supportive \$424 (full time) \$212 (part time) \$212 (on leave). Retired: \$79; \$985 (retired life). Retired ESP: \$54; \$610 (retired ESP life); Student \$19. 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*.



Navigating extraordinary times



NJEA President Wendell Steinbauer spoke at the NJEA Educational Support Professionals conference on Feb. 3 about the importance of electing a governor in 2017 who protects the careers and job security of all members, including school support staff. For the Democratic gubernatorial primary in June, NJEA has endorsed Ambassador Phil Murphy who visited the conference that evening.

No doubt everyone believes that the times they live in are extraordinary, but one of the benefits of the times we live in is the vast information at our fingertips, and in our faces, every day. In this issue, we provide even more information, as well as context, to help us better understand—and even thrive—in the times in which we live.

In “American Muslim students need understanding and support,” on Page 20, we look at the special circumstances facing Islamic students and learn ways to better assist them face challenges while we help non-Muslim students and staff understand the rich cultural and religious traditions connected with the faith.

In “When your smartphone has the wrong answer, see your teacher,” we take a close look at New Jersey’s Student Learning Standards for Social Studies. The story, which begins on Page 25, explores how the standards can assist students sift through the vast amounts of information, and misinformation, that is available to them.

The Trenton Education Association (TEA) continued its yearlong, intensive look at combatting institutional racism with a community forum featuring educators, activists, researchers, students, and citizens. Read about TEA’s solutions in “Trenton EA talks institutional racism solutions with community, national partners” on Page 28.

Our school security guards play a vital role in keeping our students and staff safe and ensuring our schools are secure places in which to learn and work. We talk to the school security staff at Burnet Middle School in Union Township to take a closer look at the work they do and the impact they have in “Union Township school security guards: Building strong schools one child at a time” on Page 34.

As always, NJEA members are working together to ensure that our students have what they need to succeed in school and in life. We are proud of our great public schools, and we are committed to maintaining and improving them. We know that our future depends upon them.

Thank you for all that you do to make our public schools great and to help our students succeed.

Sincerely,

Wendell F. Steinbauer

Wendell's Picks

Twitter

@agrieco024: My class had so much fun celebrating #DrSeuss for #readacrossAmerica week. Thanks for the supplies and enthusiasm @Teachwithbiffle @NJEA

Ann Marie Grieco, a third-grade teacher at Eleanor Van Gelder School in Edgewater Park, tweeted about a great day celebrating Read Across America. See Page 42 and njea.org for photos from events around the state.

Website

njea.org

NJEA is proud to introduce the new njea.org, which was launched in early March. It looks great and works well on your smartphone, your tablet or your laptop. You can read about it on Page 12, but better yet, check it out on your favorite electronic device.

Advocacy training

2017 Summer Leadership Conference

It’s hard to believe it in April, but now is the time to decide what workshop you’ll want to take at the 2017 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference. See Pages 36 to 41 to select your workshop, and see your local president for a registration brochure.

Making schools safe

Union Township security guards

School security staff members are among the unsung heroes of our public schools. The build positive relationships with students and often serve as their mentors. Read about James Frazier and his colleagues at Burnet Middle School in Union Township.

Know. Lead. Act.

Art of Hosting techniques used at Manchester Township EA

By Dan Staples, president, Manchester Township Education Association

Around today's NJEA, there is no shortage of meetings being held by members and NJEA staff who are using Art of Hosting techniques. I first experienced the Art of Hosting at 2016's PRIDE in Public Education Conference and have since been involved in numerous county and statewide meetings where it has been used. It was also nice to hear one of my fellow presidents, Carolyn Schultz of the Pennsauken Education Association, talk about her experiences using the Art of Hosting on a recent episode of the Jersey Educator podcast.

Based upon these experiences, I decided to try facilitating meetings in my local association using Art of Hosting techniques. I planned a World Café for my Rep Council's August organizing meeting. I crafted questions for my members that guided discussion that would focus on our association goals for the year. This allowed all of our association representatives to share what was important to them, and we built upon these discussions to determine our association's priorities for the year.

We are now planning to use Art of Hosting as we prepare for bargaining. We want to give members the opportunity to share what their needs are and use the results, or harvests, from this to drive our negotiations survey.

I find Art of Hosting to be a more forward thinking model that offers greater participation to members. Since that initial meeting I believe that we have fostered a more constructive ongoing dialogue, which better serves our members and enhances our ability to effectively target their needs. Our members feel valued, too, as Art of Hosting gives them the opportunity to participate instead of just sitting and listening.

Because of Art of Hosting, more of my members' voices are being heard throughout our local association. For example, our high school transitioned to block scheduling this year, and we opened the year at the school with a World Café to identify potential challenges and opportunities.

Dan Staples is president of the Manchester Township Education Association of Ocean County. Feel free to reach out to him at staples5811@gmail.com. If you are interested in bringing Art of Hosting techniques to your local association, contact your NJEA UniServ field representative. You can learn more about Art of Hosting at artofhosting.org.



Your turn | readers respond

The article by Philip Avila in the February 2017 *NJEA Review*, "Creating Community Through Art" was an inspiring example of bringing the community and art together. As an art educator myself I run an after-school club and one of our goals for this year is to beautify our outdoor courtyard space. This article gave me the encouragement I needed to make things happen for my students.

Martha Garcia, *Jersey City Education Association*

The *NJEA Review* welcomes brief letters from members regarding content that has appeared in the magazine. Letters may be emailed to njeareview@njea.org.

April school budget elections in 14 districts

Over the last few years, school districts have steadily opted to move their school board elections from April to November. According to the N.J. Department of Education (NJDOE), 520 Type II school districts—about 97 percent—now have their elections in November. Those districts that opt to keep their elections in April must continue to place the district budget on the ballot.

There are still a handful of districts throughout the state that hold school elections in April. Many are suffering from the inability to maintain solid budgets as a result of Gov. Chris Christie's underfunding of the school funding formula coupled with the struggle to raise significant resources locally. As a result, schools have larger class sizes, and programs and staff have been cut.

NJEA and NJREA members in these communities will be working to get out the vote and advocate for public education. As of press time, the following 14 school districts still have April board elections and budget votes:

- Bergen County – Cliffside Park, Fairview, Garfield, Hackensack, Oakland
- Essex County – Irvington
- Hudson County – North Bergen, Weehawken
- Middlesex County – New Brunswick
- Monmouth County – Asbury Park, Neptune Township
- Passaic County – Passaic City, Totowa
- Union County – Plainfield

If you live in one of these communities, plan to go to the polls or apply to vote by mail at njelections.org.

SELFIE OF THE MONTH

The Essex County Association of School Librarians (ECASL) at their Feb. 16 tech sharing meeting held at the Essex County Vocational High School, North 13 Street Campus. From Left back row: Jameelah Johnson, Rosemary Vetrano, Tabitha Rice. Front row: Kelley Krick, Nancy Meglio, Carol Nawrocki and Mary Stratton.

Attending a local, county or state training or meeting? Working a PRIDE event? Send your selfies to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to identify where the picture was taken and the members who appear in the photo. 📸

COOL STUFF

Stuttering Awareness Week is May 8-14

Stuttering is a communication disorder in which the flow of speech is broken by repetitions (li-li-like this), prolongations (lllllike this), or abnormal stoppages (no sound) of sounds and syllables. There may also be unusual facial and body movements associated with the effort to speak. Stuttering is also referred to as stammering.

More than 70 million people worldwide stutter. In the U.S., that's over 3 million people who stutter. Approximately 5 percent of all children go through a period of stuttering that lasts six months or more. Three-quarters of those will recover by late childhood, leaving about 1 percent with a long-term problem. The best prevention tool is early intervention.

Stuttering affects four times as many males as females.

The Stuttering Foundation provides free online resources, services and support to those who stutter and their families, as well as support for research into the causes of stuttering. Visit www.stutteringhelp.org for more, including these eight tips for school employees:

1. Don't tell the student "slow down" or "just relax."
2. Don't complete words for the student or talk for him or her.
3. Help all members of the class learn to take turns talking and listening. All students—and especially those who stutter—find it much easier to talk when there are few interruptions and they have the listener's attention.
4. Expect the same quality and quantity of work from the student who stutters as the one who doesn't.
5. Speak with the student in an unhurried way, pausing frequently.
6. Convey that you are listening to the content of the message, not how it is said.
7. Have a one-on-one conversation with the student who stutters about needed accommodations in the classroom. Respect the student's needs, but do not be enabling.
8. Don't make stuttering something to be ashamed of. Talk about stuttering just like any other matter.

Compiled by Lisa Scott, Ph.D., The Florida State University

Students can honor school heroes

The Trenton Thunder baseball team and the NJEA are once again sponsoring a student essay contest open to all New Jersey public school students.

The topic of the contest is "My hero works at school." Students are encouraged to write a short, thoughtful essay about a school employee who has had a positive impact on them. Essays should be no more than 250 words.

Three winners will be selected. Each winning student, the school employee he or she writes about, and a total of eight family members and friends will be guests of NJEA and the Trenton Thunder at the Thursday, Aug. 17, 2017, Thunder home game (NJEA Back-to-School game).

Each winning student, and the school employee he or she writes about, will participate in pregame ceremonies and receive commemorative certificates. Participants should be available to attend the game—no substitute dates are available.

Entries must include the student's name, home address, parent/guardian's name and phone number, school name and address, teacher's name, and grade level.

Send entries to:

NJEA-Thunder Essay Contest

Attention: Dawn Hiltner

PO Box 1211

Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Submissions must be received by May 26, 2017.

Score discount tickets to Philadelphia Soul games

The 2016 Arena Bowl Champion Philadelphia Soul football team is offering NJEA members and their families specially priced tickets and a chance to receive pregame field passes when the Soul takes on the Baltimore Brigade on Saturday, May 13 at the Wells Fargo Center. Kickoff is slated for 7 p.m., doors open at 6 p.m.

A portion from each ticket sold will be donated to the NJEA Hipp Foundation, which provides \$100,000 a year in grants to help New Jersey educators bring their innovative ideas to life.

Soul Blue Seats (Center 6 Sections) are just \$30 per ticket with \$10 donated back to the Hipp Foundation. Pink Seats (End Zone) are just \$20 per ticket with \$5 donated back to the Hipp Foundation. The first 150 sold will receive pregame field passes, which will allow them to be on the field during the pregame show and player introductions. To purchase tickets, visit www.philadelphiasoul.com/njea.

NJEA seeks distinguished service award nominations

Do you know an individual or group that has made a significant contribution to public education in New Jersey?

Nominations are now being sought for the 2017 NJEA Ruthann Sheer Award for Distinguished Service to Education. The award is named in memory of an educator from Hackensack who was its 1994 recipient. The award was first presented in 1934.

The award is designed to call public attention to those who greatly serve New Jersey public schools and children. Any New Jersey resident or organization, including educators, may be

nominated. Excluded are NJEA officers during their terms in office.

Past award recipients have included state and federal lawmakers, reporters and editors, newspapers, the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers, PTA leaders, former NJEA presidents and staff, State Board of Education members, trustees of the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, school board members, and others who have promoted public school employee rights and public schools.

Nominations must be sent in writing with reasons for the recommendation.

Send nominations to:

NJEA

Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service Award

PO Box 1211

Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Nominations must be received no later than June 15, 2017.

The NJEA Executive Committee selects award recipients based on recommendations by the Distinguished Service Award Committee. 



A celebration of technology and learning in the classroom.

Wednesday, July 19

Stockton University • Galloway, NJ

Continental breakfast & registration 8:15-9:15 Day ends at 3:00 pm

Co-sponsored with Stockton University and the Southern Regional Institute and Educational Technology Training Center (SRI&ETTC), and Stockton University Master of Arts in Instructional Technology Program.

Tailor your learning to your needs!

CHOOSE ONE IN-DEPTH FULL-DAY SESSION:

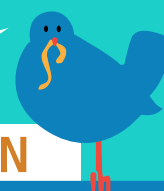
- SMARTBoards (Advanced)

OR

SPLIT YOUR DAY WITH TWO 2-HOUR SESSIONS:

- Google Classroom
- Chromebook/Chromebook Apps
- Create Online Assessments using Google
- Makerspace
- Integrating STEAM Across the Curriculum
- Using Edmodo in the Classroom
- Virtual Reality

**PLEASE BRING
YOUR OWN DEVICE!
NJEa WILL NOT PROVIDE
ANY ELECTRONIC
DEVICES.**



REGISTRATION

Early bird: \$25

(Early bird registration ends on May 25).

After May 25: \$35

NJSEA members: \$25

Registration ends on June 16.

ONLINE REGISTRATION ONLY

njea.org/techstock

If your school district is a member of the SRI&ETTC Consortium, and would like to pay by using ETTC hours, register online at www.etc.net/calendar KEYWORD: "techstock" Your account will be debited 2 ETTC hours. If you require assistance, contact the SRI&ETTC at 609-626-3850.



njea

**STOCKTON
UNIVERSITY**

SRI&ETTC
AT STOCKTON UNIVERSITY

NJEA REPORT



Welcome, member

Sign Out

Membership

Issues

Events

Community

Learning

Grants

About

My NJEA

Introducing the new NJEA.org

NJEA criticizes rampant charter expansion

2 weeks ago • 204

Tell the NJDOE to scale back testing, make your voice heard!

3 weeks ago • 178

NJEA statement on school funding inequities

1 week ago • 213

Although *njea.org* changes daily, its overall look hasn't changed significantly since 2011. So a year ago, NJEA Communications and NJEA Information Systems staff began the long process of developing a new website. After countless hours of work, the new *njea.org* maintains all of the things members love most about the website, from Member Benefits discounts and deals to professional development resources and up-to-the-minute education news, while providing improved functionality. Here's what you can expect from the new *njea.org*:

Improved access on mobile devices

As the use of mobile devices has skyrocketed, it was NJEA's priority to make the website mobile-first in this redesign, so this entire site is accessible on your phone, tablet, or other device.

Easier sign-in

Forgot your password? No problem! With the new "Lost Password" link on the sign-in page, you can enter your PIN or the email address on file with NJEA and a link will be sent so you can reset your password.

When signing in, if you check the box that reads "Your device? Stay signed in," you will stay signed in when you close the browser and open it again for a new session. If you do

not check the box, you will not stay signed in and you will need to enter your user name and password when you open a new browser session.

Amazing photos from Classroom Close-up NJ's digital library

With more than 20 years of photos from classrooms across the state, photos from "Classroom Close-up NJ" are an invaluable resource to showcase the work our members do every day.

Increased video resources

Video has become one of the primary means of communications. NJEA has significant video resources, and thanks to the redesign, members will be able to enjoy them.

Bolder, more visual elements

The new *njea.org* combines a greater emphasis on photos and graphic elements with clear, concise language to ensure that the website is informative as well as user-friendly.

Greater personalization

Sign in to unlock your My NJEA dashboard, which includes your benefits of membership, your documents and downloads, and personalized information for your career.

Your membership card is available right on the profile page so you can use your phone

to access your membership card – especially useful when you're using it to access your member benefits discounts.

On the My Associations page, you'll have access to contact information for all of your local, county, state and national associations as well as your Delegate Assembly representatives.

If you're a local leader, you'll have access to the Local Leader tab with documents and resources to help you with your local association work.

Easier navigation

With so much information, members sometimes found it difficult to find what they were looking for on the old website. The new website refines content to ensure an easier user experience.

New look, new logo

Along with the redesign of *njea.org*, you'll notice a refresh of NJEA's logo. Although it has changed over the years, the latest update reflects a modern style more suited for our digital age.

NJEA.org will continue to change to best meet members' interests and needs. Keep checking back to stay updated on the resources, discounts, and issues that matter to you.

What members want the next governor to know

After the two terms of Gov. Chris Christie, the 2017 gubernatorial election represents a vital opportunity for New Jersey to reinvest in public education, public workers and underfunded schools. NJEA members have finally started contemplating what public education in New Jersey could be, and how a governor rightly proud of our public education system could lead. Having already taken the unprecedented step of endorsing Ambassador Phil Murphy in the Democratic Primary, NJEA set about learning from its members how they imagined their professional futures and their future governor.

Just as a NJEA conducted conversations around the Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA in 2016, NJEA held two sessions in February 2017 (a third was cancelled due to inclement weather). At these sessions, members asked each other a series of questions, such as “What has been your experience as an educator under Gov. Christie?” and “What would a government supportive of education look like?”

While the interviews did contain scripted questions, the interviewers and interviewees were strongly encouraged to have a conversation rather than a strict interview.

NJEA staffers next sifted through the transcripts, looking for key phrases and themes. After a thorough reading and analysis, NJEA found from members:

A noble profession undermined

Constant negative attacks coupled with destructive legislation by Gov. Christie have demeaned our profession. Legislation has negatively affected public school employees and the students of New Jersey. To NJEA members, the next governor will need to work with the Senate and Assembly to improve the state of education: legislatively addressing Chapter 78, reforming property taxes and the 2 percent cap, reinstating COLA payments and fully funding pensions.

There is no standard child; they all have unique needs

Members want to reduce the amount of standardized testing that takes away from valuable instructional time and negatively impacts students.

Let educators take charge of the profession!

Members want a governor who is accessible and willing to have an open dialogue with stakeholders to address issues and collaborate on solutions, including the shaping of educational policies. NJEA members would also like to see a moratorium on charter-school expansion, more community input on charters, and equitable accountability for charter schools as compared to traditional public schools.

Our new governor should be genuinely concerned about New Jersey’s children and know that we feel the same way.

Educators are embedded in their communities and want a governor who is just as invested. Students and parents face a variety of issues across the state, ranging from poverty to lack of cultural awareness. The next governor should not only be aware of these issues, but also willing to work with educators and community members to better the quality of life for all New Jersey residents.

We are people—when you outsource jobs, you hurt real people

Teachers and, especially, ESPs are stressed by the looming threat of privatization. ESPs feel undervalued, that their work has been reduced to number in a budget.

Laying the groundwork for the next generation

NJEA members view electing New Jersey’s next governor as an explicit association responsibility. This should be done, first, by organizing members beyond active members to engage retirees as well as younger members. The activities should include sharing members’ concerns, get-out-the-vote drives; and rallies and phone banks.

Moving forward

Taken together, the interviews provided a comprehensive, nuanced story of our profession over the past eight years, where we want to go, and who we want as governor to go with us. Public education, public employees, students, and parents have suffered a great deal over the past eight years, but it is now possible to imagine something better. How much better is up to us.



NJEA staff and consultants review the transcripts of conversations with members about the current governor and the next one.



From the transcripts, staff posted their notes to determine common themes and values.

Governor again shortchanges schools in budget plan

In his final budget address on Feb. 28, 2017, Gov. Christie outlined his latest school funding scheme. New Jersey public schools are essentially flat funded once again, except for charter schools. The governor's budget contains special additional money to ensure that charter schools with rising enrollment will have their per-pupil funding protected. Traditional public schools with rising enrollments will not get any additional funding.

Gov. Christie's divisive tactic pits charter schools against traditional schools as they struggle to deal with years of underfunding.

State repeatedly fails to fund SFRA

In 2008, Republicans and Democrats came together to pass the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA). That funding formula had bipartisan support, and was the product of informed input from education stakeholder groups and upheld by the New Jersey Supreme Court.

After its initial implementation in 2009, Christie and the Legislature have underfunded SFRA by approximately \$1 billion each year. This refusal to appropriately fund the formula has led to gross inequities in school aid.

In the event of a budget shortfall, SFRA has mechanisms in the formula for equitable allocation of state aid in accord with the formula funds, but the governor ignored that. Instead of following the law, he has shortchanged public education and is calling for a re-examination of every aspect of the SFRA.

Governor and Sweeney offer lackluster alternatives

In the fall, the governor was promoting his so-called "Fairness Formula" which would further reduce aid to about 414,000

schoolchildren by over \$3 billion. That's an average of over \$7,000 per pupil for one out of every three New Jersey public school students.

Senate President Steve Sweeney is also calling for changes to SFRA, which would reduce aid to about 715,000 students by almost \$685 million, or around \$960 per pupil on average.

NJEA has consistently supported the current school funding formula, and believes that considering New Jersey's history with school funding, a formula that was agreed to by both houses of the Legislature and signed into law after extensive discussions with, and input from, education experts and stakeholders and upheld as constitutional by the New Jersey Supreme Court, should be followed each year.

NJEA supports full funding of SFRA

NJEA supports the proposal by Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto to gather the appropriate stakeholders to develop a plan to transition back to the current funding formula. In addition, NJEA has called for that group to study the funding mechanism for charter schools, as the current mechanism is causing drastic program cuts in the districts from which charters draw their students.

A report from September 2016 by the State Auditor concluded that if the funding formula was used to allocate school aid in FY 2016 without adding even \$1 dollar to the direct aid appropriation, 365 school districts would've received more school aid than they did under the Fiscal Year 2016 Budget. NJEA believes that the governor is shortchanging our students and that it's time to make all students a priority, wherever they live and whatever their needs and circumstances.

The governor is shortchanging our students.

It's time to

make all

students

a priority,

wherever

they live and

whatever their

needs and

circumstances.

Classroom Close-up NJ garners more Emmy nominations

"Classroom Close-up NJ" was nominated for two New York Emmy awards. The 60th Annual New York Emmy Awards Gala will be held on May 6.

In the Education Category, the show was nominated for a feature at Mary S. Shoemaker Elementary School in Woodstown-Pilesgrove. Teacher Laurie Miles has been running a crime scene investigation (CSI) program designed to develop critical thinking skills for children in the school's gifted and talented program. The entire student body was tasked with the job of discovering who stole a New York Yankees poster.

In the Magazine Program category, "Classroom Close-up NJ" was nominated for a full show that included four stories. Trenton's Washington Elementary School explores the Kids-bridge Tolerance Center. Teaneck Community Charter School runs a family program that combines music and art. Apshawa Elementary teacher Jaclyn Becker uses jellybeans to teach tax fairness. And at Bradley Elementary School in Asbury Park, occupational therapist Zahava Friedman and speech therapist Maureen Casey started a Friends Club to enhance social skills.



Students from Shoemaker Elementary School in Woodstown-Pilesgrove have been participating in a critical thinking skills program that was featured on Classroom Close-up NJ. The segment was nominated for an Emmy award.

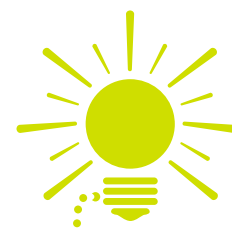


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*Presenters: Rich Wilson and Amanda Adams,
NJEA Staff*

Design Thinking in Education

Design Thinking allows educators to approach any challenge in a way that truly unpacks the problem and brings about creative solutions. Join us as we not only explore the 5 phases of the design thinking process, but dive into an authentic and approachable design challenge.

*Presenters: Chrissi Miles, Mike Ritzius, NJEA
Staff*

Understanding by Design

Backward planning provides a structure for establishing high-level goals and ensuring alignment in assessment and instructional planning. This session provides a comprehensive overview of the three stages of backward design and prepares participants for developing curriculum in the Understanding by Design framework.

*Presenters: Jen Dubroski, Andrea Scaturo,
NJEA Consultants*

Designing Space for Inquiry

The basic human need to create, to invent, to build with our own hands, is met as a maker. We are all born to make. Schools and classrooms have embraced the maker movement for years under a variety of programs such as industrial arts, STEM, STEAM, life skills, culinary and fine arts. These programs allow students to explore and create. The maker movement exemplifies persistence, resiliency, growth mindset, and learning from failure. Come learn, play, tinker, and explore ways you can infuse a maker mindset in your classroom to support all creative makers.

*Presenter: Dr. Rebecca McLelland-Crawley,
NBCT*

Register at njea.org

LATs, PAC fundraising excellence honored at NJEA Legislative Conference

Four county associations were recognized for exemplary Legislative Action Teams (LATs) and one local association LAT chair was honored for excellence in political action committee (PAC) fundraising at the NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference on Feb. 18. NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan noted that the ability to elect those who support public education to office is only one part of process.

"It does no good to elect the right people if you aren't willing to lobby them once they are in office, but if you don't elect the right people, you can lobby day and night and still not get the results you need," Blistan said. "Those two sides of political action go hand-in-hand, and today we are going to recognize some of our members who do them really well."

NJEA has a network of LATs at the county and local levels. LATs communicate legislative and political information to elected officials and to other NJEA members. LAT members organize, communicate, and advocate around promoting policies that advance the profession, protect NJEA members, and support New Jersey's public schools and the students who attend them.

LATs take action on issues that affect teachers, educational support professionals, higher education faculty and staff, preservice members, and retirees. The members of LATs come from each of those member constituencies.

LAT members also have the advantage of being among the first to learn about the politics and players that affect New Jersey residents and school employees every day.

Blistan called forward the four county associations that were recognized for their achievements this year, which are based upon membership size.

- The **Union County Education Association** was recognized as the Most Improved Legislative Action Team in a county with more than 9,000 members.
- The **Hunterdon County Education Association** was recognized as the Most Improved Legislative Action Team in a county with fewer than 9,000 members.
- The **Burlington County Education Association** was recognized for the Highest Level of Engagement in a county with more than 9,000 members.
- The **Atlantic County Council of Education Associations** was recognized for the Highest Level of Engagement in a county with fewer than 9,000 members.

Hammonton EA members double their PAC contributions

Geoff Gollihur, the Legislative Action Team Chair of the Hammonton Education Association (HEA), was in charge of the local's Political Action Campaign fund drive. HEA's PAC participation among members was typical of member participation throughout the state.

Through Gollihur's efforts, HEA member participation rose to 95 percent—more than doubling the PAC contributions from HEA members.

"Geoff's work helps ensure that we all have the resources we need to support the people running for office who share our values and replace the people who don't," Blistan said as she brought Gollihur to the podium.

Gollihur described his approach to PAC fundraising.

"The key for me was informing members of the merits of NJEA PAC, how it does the job members usually want to avoid, and how a relatively small donation can grow into a sizable sum," Gollihur said.

Gollihur said that he spoke bluntly with members about the impact of Chapter 78, the pension and benefit law in 2011 that increased school and public employees' pension contributions and health benefits contributions—the "negative net" that left members with less take home pay every year, even if they received a raise in salary.

Displaying a poster of a Camaro, Gollihur said that his increased pension and benefit contributions since the enactment of Chapter 78 could have paid for a new Camaro. Gollihur reminds his members that the vote on Chapter 78 was a close one.

"What if we had a few more pro-education legislators in the Statehouse that day?" he asks.

"Of course I wouldn't have bought a Camaro," Gollihur said he tells his members, "but maybe I could

have taken my kids to Orlando or my daughter could have taken both dancing lessons and gymnastics instead of having to choose one and not the other."

Through daily conversations with members about the difference PAC can make—such as denying Gov. Christie coattails in his reelection in 2013—Gollihur helped HEA raise its collective monthly contribution to PAC from \$160 to \$325.

"My conversation begins with the cost of new Camaro. What can you talk about to motivate your members to contribute to PAC?" Gollihur asked. (Gollihur is pictured on Page 3.)

BELOW: Union County Education Association – From left: NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan, NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer, Union County EA President Lisa Palin, LAT Hunterdon Nancy Lucas-Miller, Union County EA Vice President James Frazier and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller.

TOP RIGHT: Hunterdon County Education Association – From left: NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan, NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer, LAT Hunterdon Jack Kimple and Lynn Szczek, Hunterdon County EA President Susan Vala, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller.

CENTER RIGHT: Burlington County Education Association – From left: NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan, NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer, Burlington County EA President Mary Steinhauer, LAT Burlington Patricia Bland, BCEA 1st Vice President Anthony Rizzo, LAT Burlington Tamara Gross, BCEA Treasurer Andrew Jacobs, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Atlantic County Education Association – From left: NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan, NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer, Atlantic County Council of EAs Gary Melton Sr. and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller.





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NJEA honors ESP of the Year and Career Achievement at ESP Conference

Middlesex County Education Association President Lois Yukna was formally recognized as the 2017 NJEA Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the Year at the ESP Conference on Feb. 4. Longtime public education advocate and school secretary Donna O'Malley received the 2017 NJEA Career Achievement Award.

The story that traces Yukna's path to 2017 ESP of the Year was featured in the February NJEA Review. With a career spanning over 25 years, she has worked in both the transportation and attendance departments in her district. Sacrificing countless hours to improve the lives of others, she has proven to be a leader for her local, county, state and national union.

"Lois represents the best in all of us," said NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer. "She represents the unseen heroes of our schools. The folks who make our schools work, but don't even like to talk about their true value."

Steinhauer described the breadth of Yukna's service to association work, from committee work and officer positions at the local level, to her service as NEA Director ESP At Large on the national level.

"Think beyond the numbers and the titles," Steinhauer said. "Think about the sacrifice, the hours of unpaid work; the hours away from her family. Her life's work serves as just one example of fierce advocacy and an unwavering union power."

Yukna thanked her colleagues in Woodbridge, Middlesex County, NJEA and NEA for their support throughout her career as a school bus driver, an attendance officer and as an advocate for public education. She quickly focused on the importance of school support staff in the lives of students.

"My greatest honor is to be able to help our students understand the importance of education, give them the love and compassion they may not receive at home, and help them understand their importance in

society," Yukna said. "ESPs are essential to the educational health of our school systems. It is through my work with students that I realized how important our presence in the school building really is."

Yukna also noted the challenges and rewards of advocating for public school employees.

"Advocating is not about doing what's comfortable, it's doing what's right," Yukna said. "I used to think that everything was black and white. I've come to understand that seeing through the grey foggy area is how you get to the sunshine of advocacy. For me, there is no greater reward than helping a member."

O'Malley receives Career Achievement Award

Donna O'Malley has a long record of service to the students and staff of Tabernacle Township Schools in Burlington County. She is the administrative assistant to the principal of Tabernacle Elementary School and a former president of the all-inclusive Tabernacle Education Association (TEA).

In addition her nine years as president, O'Malley has served various leadership positions for well over 23 years. Resolving issues with a calm and professional manner is the hallmark of her leadership.

"Donna has been described as the 'glue' of the Tabernacle School District as she always has a willingness to help others, as well as her genuine care for the students," NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller said as he conferred upon her the 2017 NJEA Career Achievement Award. "Donna recognized very early on that to affect change, she must be the change."

Representing educational support professionals and teachers, O'Malley has chaired TEA's negotiations team through five contracts. Beyond Tabernacle, she has served the Burlington County Education Association (BCCEA) in various capacities, including as

1st and 2nd vice president. O'Malley currently represents the county on the NJEA Delegate Assembly. She has been a delegate to the National Education Association Representative Assembly more than 10 times.

O'Malley recalled that it was her late husband who had suggested 29 years ago that she should apply for a job at the school. She did, first as an assistant on the playground, in the cafeteria, and for a kindergarten class. Later she was hired as a 10-month secretary to the principal. The salary in that secretarial position was \$8,000.

"That salary was the catalyst for my becoming involved in association work," O'Malley quipped.

O'Malley described her work with students, staff, parents and administrators in the school as deeply rewarding. She also noted that living and working in Tabernacle has positioned her well to be a cheerleader for the district and for her association.

"I have found living in the same community where I work valuable because I can carry the good news about our schools and public education to my neighbors and to my friends at church and the clubs to which I belong," O'Malley said. "I believe that is our responsibility as school employees—as educators—to make sure our family, friends, neighbors and community view education employees as a resource if they have questions or concerns. I believe public education is a birthright and one that each of us must preserve and protect. We can do that through our personal connections."

As an educational support professional, O'Malley understands that everyone in the school—no matter his or her title—can make a difference.

"Each one of us serves an important role in education no matter our career path because it truly 'takes a village,' and in the words of Dr. Seuss, 'To the world you may be one person; but to one person you may be the world.'"



Murphy visits ESP and Legislative conferences

Ambassador Phil Murphy, NJEA's endorsed gubernatorial candidate in the June 6 primary, has been making the rounds of Association events to meet members. Recently, he attended the NJEA Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Conference on Feb. 3 and the NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference on Feb. 18.

"My door will always be open to you and there will always be a seat at the table, Murphy said. "I will not make decisions that impact education in a bubble. I will always seek your advice and your ideas."

School funding and educational support professionals

Murphy committed to fully funding the state's school funding formula, known as the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) by such strategies and raising the millionaire's tax and closing the tax loopholes that unduly benefit large corporations and millionaires. Under Christie, he said, SFRA has been underfunded by \$8 billion.

"Fully funding the formula will relieve the pressure that has been placed on schools to cut costs by cutting corners," Murphy said. "Hopefully it will end the practice of undertaking risky and questionable steps like privatizing the jobs of educational support professionals."

Continuing to address ESP members, Murphy added, "These

are professionals who should be part of the collective bargaining process. This is something I hold as a sacred trust between employers and employees. As governor, I will extend due-process rights to all ESPs."


Chapter 78 and pension funding

Murphy made sure that members knew he was well aware that since the passage of Chapter 78, the pension and benefits reform law that was signed by Christie in 2011, public school employees are taking smaller paychecks home every year. He said that he would not have signed Chapter 78.

"I believe in the collective bargaining process, and there are lines you do not cross," Murphy said. "Health benefits should be collectively bargained."

Murphy committed to putting the state on a path to fully funding the pension systems and said that he supports a constitutional amendment requiring the state to make quarterly payments into the system.

Standardized testing

Murphy reiterated his opposition to the overuse of standardized tests as a measure student progress, the factoring of standardized test scores in teacher evaluations, and a passing score as a hurdle for high school graduation. 



ABOVE TOP: NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller honors Tabernacle EA member and past president Donna O'Malley with the 2017 NJEA Career Achievement Award.



ABOVE: Middlesex County President Lois Yukna receives the 2017 NJEA ESP of the Year Award. From left: NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller, NJEA Vice President, Marie Blistan, Yukna, and NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer.

PREVIOUS PAGE: The 2017 County Educational Support professionals of the Year were honored at the NJEA ESP Conference on Feb. Front row from left: Linda Garoian (Somerset), Gloria Stewart (Essex), Susan Hickman (Cumberland), Linda Garoian (Somerset), Lois Yukna (Middlesex), Shirley Hicks (Mercer), Jane Heinz (Sussex), Angela Lawler (Union) and Grace Snyder (Hunterdon). Back row: Steve Aitchinson (Morris), Antonio Perez (Hudson), Paul Reagle (Camden), Regina Jagoo (Monmouth), NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller, NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan, NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer, Linda Lombardo (Ocean), Brianne Hartmann (Passaic) and David Gallagher (Salem).

RIGHT: Ambassador Phil Murphy addresses members at the NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference on Feb. 18.





American Muslim students need understanding and support

by Farhana N. Shah

Imagine if you were a Muslim student in your school. What would it be like for you in this time of Islamophobia? As an educator, ask yourself what you know about the Muslim students in your school and district, and what you can do to alleviate the situation to make all students comfortable and ready to learn.

It is incumbent upon us to create socially and emotionally safe environments for all of our students. It is essential, now more than ever, to provide a safe haven for our Muslim students across the nation.

Muslim students are subject to negative perceptions nationwide. The rise in bullying and threats on the lives of Muslim students is a reflection of the increasing Islamophobia in the United States since 9/11. Reports of discrimination against U.S. Muslims are on the rise by a rate of 76 percent.

For example, both Pew Research Center data and Southern Poverty Law Center revealed that between Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016, the day after the presidential election, and the morning of Monday, Nov. 14, there were 437 reports of hateful intimidation and harassment against Muslims.

It is incumbent upon us to create socially and emotionally safe environments for all of our students. It is essential, now more than ever, to provide a safe haven for our Muslim students across the nation.

In addition, because it is not always apparent who is Muslim and who is not, the post-election backlash is falling on many groups. Immigrants and people of color are all experiencing heightened discrimination and intimidation. We need to conduct internal assessments to make sure all our students, including Muslims, are OK in our school systems by asking the following questions:

- Are our students experiencing backlash or bullying?
- What are we doing as a school system to support our Muslim students and others?

- What do the teachers and staff know about Muslim students?
- Where can Muslim students go for a safe place to speak?

Ours is a diverse nation. We can learn much from each other. Only 52 percent of Americans say they personally know someone who is Muslim. Polls also show very high levels of self-professed ignorance about Islam, and negative perceptions at a similar scale. To create a supportive environment, school staff and the community need to commit to learning to understand the Muslim families and their beliefs and practices.

What Muslims believe

Where did Islam come from? Who is Muhammad and why is he revered by Muslims?

Textbooks indicate that Islam began in 610 A.D. with Muhammad. However, following the Quran (Muslims' holy book), Muslims believe that Islam originated with the creation of the first human beings—Adam and Eve. The Quran states that God chose more than 124,000 prophets and messengers to remind people of the worship of one God, named Allah in Arabic language. A few of those mentioned by name in the Quran are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Lot, Jonah, Joseph, David, Moses, Aaron, Jesus, and Muhammad, whom God sent as the last prophet for all people.

According to Islamic teachings, Muhammad received the first revelation from God through the Angel Gabriel in the year 610 A.D. He was 40 years old. Muslims believe that the revelation took place in a small cave known as Hira in the city of Mecca, where Muhammad would go to meditate about his society, especially the injustices toward the poor and oppressed, and to seek God in prayer.

A brief timeline of the history of Islam:

- 570: Muhammad is born into a noble family in a city called Mecca. He becomes known for his impeccable character and is called "The Trustworthy."
- 610-622: Muhammad receives his first revelation at the age of 40 in the cave known as Hira. The main message is to inform people to worship One God, and not idols. A few years later, he first made the message public.
The people of Muhammad's town re-

act violently upon hearing his message. Arab pagans begin persecuting newly converted Muslims—some of whom were poor or enslaved—and place sanctions on those who practice Islam.

- 622-630: To escape persecution, Muhammad and his followers leave Mecca and migrate to a small, nearby town called Medina. This marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar and is known as the 'Hijra' or migration. The people of Medina are welcoming and offer neighborly support. Muhammad establishes a community of Meccan and Medinan followers. Together with other resident groups, they engage in a pact of cooperation. Despite attacks from the Meccans and their allies, Muhammad and his followers begin inviting people from across lands to understand the message of Islam and to worship only one God.

After enduring many adversities and challenges, Muhammad and his followers return to Mecca peacefully. The Meccans accept Islam and give up their idols. Since then the Kabah, a cubic, stone building, has been used for the sole worship of God.

- 633: Muhammad dies and a successor is named, based on Muhammad's advice. Islam spreads into the Mediterranean region and beyond, and becomes a world religion.

How are Jesus and the Virgin Mary viewed by the Muslims?

Muslims believe Jesus came before Muhammad, born to the Virgin Mary by the decree of God. There is a chapter in the Quran titled "Mariam" that gives details of the birth of Jesus and his life that differ to some extent from Biblical accounts. In the Quran, God saves Jesus from crucifixion and takes him up to himself. The Quran predicts that Jesus will return to Earth as the Messiah. Both Jesus and his mother Mary are highly respected in Islam and by Muslims. Not only is his birth considered a miracle by Muslims, but they also believe that God gave Jesus the ability to perform many miracles so people would worship only one God.

What are the basic beliefs and tenets of Islam?

There are five basic acts of worship in Islam that encapsulate what Muslims practice.

- Shahadah is the testimony in one God, Allah and belief in Muhammad

Muslim students are subject to negative perceptions nationwide. The rise in bullying and threats on the lives of Muslim students is a reflection of the increasing Islamophobia in the United States since 9/11.

as the last messenger.

- Salat are the five daily prayers performed at various intervals of the day. The purpose is to turn toward the highest being, and ask for his guidance and protection and to eradicate heedlessness. Similarly, other religions use meditation and prayer to find inner balance and peace.
- Zakat is compulsory charity, which is mandated once a year of every Muslim.
- Saum, or fasting, is practiced during the ninth month of the lunar year known as Ramadan. During this time, Muslims fast for about 29 to 30 days and refrain from food, drink, and any type of marital contact during daylight hours. Fasting is something that has been prescribed in most religions, and in Islam, it is considered one commandment very dear to God.
- Hajj (pilgrimage) is the fifth pillar in Islam and based on the story or tradition of Abraham and his son Ismael.

How can teachers support Muslim students?

Educators play a vital role and have a huge responsibility in making sure they protect Muslim students from bullying, harassment, and racism due to the spread of Islamophobia by media and politicians, who have little or no understanding of what Muslims believe or practice.


More importantly, it is urgent that teachers across the nation gain knowledge about the basics of Islam to build positive relationships with their Muslim students. They should also bear in mind that not everything Muslims do is based on Islamic beliefs and practices. Muslim individuals and families vary widely in the degree to which Islam is realized in their lives, and Muslims are among the most culturally, linguistically and ethnically diverse groups in the U.S. and the world.

- Lessons should include common vocabulary words and Muslim names in math problems.
- Teachers should be careful to avoid textbooks and lesson materials that contain bias against Muslim students. Make sure when topics such as 9/11, terrorism, and others arise that Muslim students are not singled out. There have been many instances in which teachers have directly asked Muslim students questions pertaining to these topics as if the children are experts on those matters.
- School leaders need to make sure to include assemblies that address anti-

bullying and racism occurring in their schools. Lessons on stereotypes, bias and discrimination should be taught directly and as a proactive measure.

Classroom ideas and resources for educators and schools to be inclusive:

- For English literature and language arts, include stories and novels with Muslim characters and anecdotes.
- In



When your smartphone has the wrong answer, see your teacher

By Hank Bitten, Executive Director, New
Jersey Council for the Social Studies

Fake news and alternative “facts” are not new in American history. The explosion of the USS Maine in Havana harbor in 1898 was used as the justification for a U.S. declaration of war against Spain. However, questions concerning what actually caused the explosion continue to be hotly debated. The U.S. officially blamed the explosion on a Spanish mine. Other evidence strongly suggested that the explosion resulted from an internal coal fire that ignited ammunition. Newspaper tycoons William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer ignored the conflicting reports and fanned the flames of war with sensational pictures and exaggerated stories.

The students in your class will likely see the 22nd century as they will be between 85 and 95 years old in 2101. The changes in communication, technology, transportation and the home during the 20th century were significant. Amazon and Google were created in the 1990s and Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat did not exist at the beginning of this century.

Revolutionary changes in society, culture and history have been part of the first two decades of every century since 1500, and the 21st century is already experiencing dramatic changes with information, shopping patterns, health care and artificial intelligence.

- 1517 – Reformation and Protestant churches
- 1620 – Pilgrims and settlement of America
- 1720 – Agrarian and Industrial Revolutions
- 1815 – End of Napoleonic era
- 1917 – Russian Revolution and World War I

Factual evidence is critical for decision-making in a democratic republic. Alexis de Tocqueville wrote about liberty and the press in *Democracy in America* (1831), stating, “What [citizens] seek in a newspaper is a knowledge of facts and it is only by altering or distorting those facts that a journalist can contribute to the support of his own views.”

Although propaganda, bias, alternative “facts” and “fake news” have influenced our factual evidence since the first century, it is the speed of social media and the ability to share information within minutes that requires educators to teach students how to differentiate sources, discriminate between different perspectives and determine the validity of the information.

Effective teachers guide students in searching for accurate information

Many teachers use examples from contemporary news reports of the Spanish-American War, the burning of the Reichstag in Berlin on the eve of the 1932 German federal election, and the radio broadcast of War of the Worlds to teach the impact of the media on the people.

According to the Pew Research Center in 2016, 73 percent of all 12-17 year olds in the United States use Facebook daily to get or share information. On a global scale there are almost 2 billion Facebook logins every month. (See bit.ly/fbstatsyouth.)

Thirty years ago there were about 50 independent news sources and today they have consolidated to six. (See bit.ly/newsconsolidation.) Internet search engines and mobile apps provide access to information through allegedly independent news sources, but those sources often have a hidden bias. The widely circulated report

by Rolling Stone in November 2014 about a sexual assault on the campus of the University of Virginia was eventually retracted. The jury also said that the author committed actual malice for reporting something that was false or recklessly disregarding whether the evidence was accurate. Unfortunately, the inaccurate report continues on internet searches.

Students must learn how to search for the truth

All teachers and media specialists have a responsibility for teaching students how to research, investigate, analyze and determine the credibility of information in their disciplines. In addition, discernment about how the information is presented is an important skill for analyzing content presented in images, textbooks, lab reports, editorials, headlines, PowerPoint presentations, television media, videos, websites, text boxes, sound bites, graphs, news headlines, Twitter and internet search engines.

“Students, for example, had a hard time distinguishing advertisements from news articles or identifying where information came from,” said Stanford Professor Sam Wineberg, who is the lead author of the November 2016 report by the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) on how students make decisions about information.

Although the core content standards in social studies and English directly relate to sources of information, the scope of the problem needs to be addressed by every teacher.

“As societies become more complex in structure and resources, the need of formal or intentional teaching and learning increases,” John Dewey wrote at the beginning of the 20th century. “As formal teaching and training grow in extent, there is the danger of creating an undesirable split between the experience gained in more direct associations and what is acquired in school.” This danger was never greater than at the present time, on account of the rapid growth in the last few centuries of knowledge and technical modes of skill. (See *Democracy in Education*, bit.ly/deweydemed.)

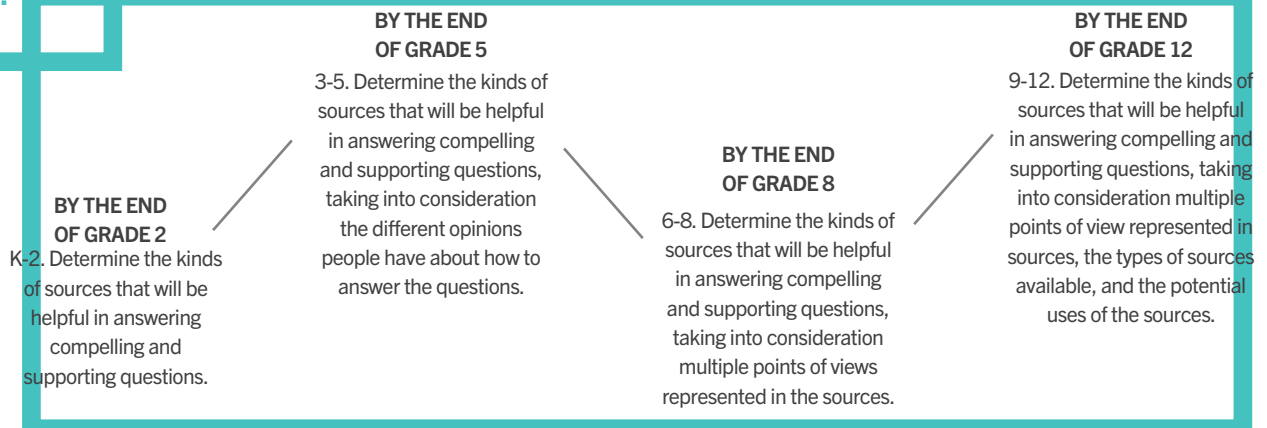
Democracy depends on communicating and sharing information because it contributes to a consensus of the diverse people living in a society. This is why Dewey understood the importance of the informal education that takes place in a school in addition to the teaching of disciplines and skills.

Is our democracy at risk?

The first alarm was raised 125 years ago when the National Education Association appointed the Committee on History, Civil Government, and Political Economy chaired by Charles Kendall

Individually and with others,

Students ...



Adams, President of the University of Wisconsin. This committee recommended that every high school student take four years of history “to exercise a salutary influence upon the affairs of their country.”

The second alarm was raised 25 years ago in when the National Council for History Education reported that 15 percent of students did not take any American history courses in high school and that 50 percent did not study world history. (See www.nche.net/bradleyreport.)

The third alarm was sounded through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), nicknamed the Nation’s Report Card. Test results revealed that in 2014, only 18 percent of American eighth-graders performed at or above the proficient level in U.S. history, only 27 percent performed at or above the proficient level in geography, and only 23 percent performed at or above the proficient level in civics. These results were significantly the same in 2010. Such scores that can only be raised with a commitment to teaching to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies, professional development for social studies teachers, and effective strategies for engaging students in discussion and debate.

The fourth alarm was raised this past November by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, which found that only 23 out of 76 of the “best” colleges, according to the Wall Street Journal, required history majors to take at least one U.S. history course. (Melissa Korn, “America Drops Off History Curriculum.”)

The crisis extends beyond U.S. history and world history to basic literacy in civics, economics and geography.

According to Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, “One of the subjects that those surveyed really struggled with was economics and trade. Asked to name the United States’ largest trading partner, most got it wrong, saying it was China. Only 10 percent correctly answered Canada.

Most respondents also overestimated the extent of Mexican immigration to the U.S.—another key issue in this election cycle. Two-thirds did not know that the number of Mexicans exiting the U.S. actually exceeds the number that enter.” (See bit.ly/natgeoamericans.)

New Jersey students deserve to learn the facts to discuss global and domestic affairs.

Are the New Jersey standards and assessments part of the solution?

Before a fifth alarm sounds, the time to rigorously implement and assess the current standards is now if New Jersey will have educated citizens who are prepared for college, careers and civic engagement.

It is critical for educators, parents and the public to support the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and skills for social studies. We must implement them through interdisciplinary and project-based learning, engaging students in problem-solving and decision-making. Students need strategies for analyzing data from primary and secondary sources, and educators need quality assessments that enable them to evaluate what students know and act on their findings. The timetable for action should not be delayed by criticisms that the state standards require too much history, because democratic institutions deserve educated and informed students. 📚

Hank Bitten is the executive director of the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies and an independent curriculum consultant. He taught history in the Ridgewood Public Schools and was a supervisor in the Ramapo Indian Hills High School District. Bitten can be reached at hank.bitten@rutgers.edu.

The C3 framework also emphasizes the need for this level of literacy

Social Studies Skills Table

Essential question: What are effective strategies for accessing various sources of information and historical evidence, determining their validity, and using them to solve a problem or find a solution to a public policy question?

	K-4	5-8	9-12
Social Studies skill	Distinguish fact from fiction.	Compare and contrast differing interpretations of current and historical events.	Distinguish valid arguments from false arguments when interpreting current and historical events.
	Identify and interpret a variety of primary and secondary sources for reconstructing the past (i.e. documents, letters, diaries, maps, photos, etc.)	Assess the credibility of sources by identifying bias and prejudice in documents, media, and computer-generated information.	Evaluate sources for validity and credibility and to detect propaganda, censorship, and bias.
Critical thinking		Analyze primary and secondary sources for reconstructing the past and understanding historical perspectives i.e. documents, letters, diaries, maps, images, etc.)	Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views (including historians and experts) while using the date, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

Source: New Jersey Department of Education, www.state.nj.us/education/cccs/2014/ss.

Civic engagement benefits democracy in local communities

Students and citizens who use and value local news are engaged as voters, volunteers, and community leaders. (See bit.ly/civicnewshabits and bit.ly/journalismmedia.)

Project-based learning engages students in reality education

Children can learn to become responsible and active citizens who make right decisions. They are more likely to become independent learners and thinkers by actively participating in real-world projects. They develop their own world by improving knowledge, skills and have a sense of society nationally and globally. The use of a project approach in teaching of social studies can help developing research and hands-on skills such as collecting, organizing and interpreting data, managing time, solving problems and manipulating materials. (See bit.ly/socialstudiespblearning.)

Social studies is a social science and with project-based learning it becomes a lab science. The diversity of perspectives in a classroom, the availability of documents on historical events, collaboration with professionals through partnerships and field trip experiences, participation in student government and competitions such as Model UN, National History Day, Euro Challenge, Fed Challenge, and debate provide real-world opportunities for research, debating perspectives, and presentation of solutions. The experience of teachers using strategies to guide inquiry and research are important in a society that values democracy and representative government.



Naomi Johnson-Lafleur



Mark "Jersey Jazzman" Weber



Ana Lozada



Janice Williams

Trenton EA talks institutional racism solutions with community, national partners

By Kathryn Coulibaly

For the past seven months, the Trenton Education Association, under the leadership of President Naomi Johnson-Lafleur, has been holding events with students and community members to create a dialogue around institutional racism.

Johnson-Lafleur initiated the program as a result of her position as the Eastern Region director with NEA's National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA). The NCUEA has been focused on institutional racism for some time, but the members felt it was time to take the conversation out of the realm of policy and move it into practice. With that in mind, NCUEA leaders encouraged local associations across the country to hold listening tours. TEA was one of 10 that accepted the challenge.

The association launched the conversation with an event in October that focused primarily on issues facing the African-American community in Trenton. In November, the conversation focused on Latino issues and was held in Spanish.

Conversations with students and community

The listening tours began with students who identified several areas that signaled institutional racism to them. Among those issues were outdated textbooks and materials, poor facilities, transportation challenges, and, in their schools, a lack of educators who look like them.

Jerrell Blakeley, a former TEA member who is now a campaign organizer with Healthy Schools Now, addressed the students' concerns about school facilities.

"When we look at the manifestation of institutional racism, it's not big and nebulous," Blakeley said. "Our students see it every day in their school facilities. They are told that education is their passport to a better future, but their schools don't reflect that."

Students also pointed out that the demographic breakdown of Trenton's public schools is approximately 48 percent African-American, 48 percent Latino, and four percent "other," but 64 percent of the teachers in the district are white.

"There is a nationwide attack on teachers of color through the evaluation process," Johnson-Lafleur said.

Janice Williams, TEA's grievance chair, cites the explosion of charter schools as another sign of institutional racism because they strip funding away from traditional public schools while cherry-picking easier-to-educate students. Utah-based International Charter Academy just opened in the former Trenton Times building as a kindergarten through fifth-grade school, but it plans to add a class each year. For Williams, the solution is to transform Trenton's traditional public schools into community schools, which are open to the community for extended hours and provide students and the community with invaluable services and resources through the school.

TEA member Ana Lozada, a bilingual teacher who is the chair of the TEA's Pride and FAST programs, sees the impact of marketing by charter school owners as having a negative impact on the perception of the city's traditional public schools.

"Our parents are receiving information about charters that makes them seem like a better option, with social cachet, but we need to open parents' eyes to the fact that charters do not outperform traditional public schools," Lozada said.

Division among communities fed by institutional racism

Lozada sees the divisions among the Latino community as another consequence of institutional racism.

"It's important for community groups to understand there is no Latino 'community,'" Lozada said. "There are significant divisions between people based on the region of the country they immigrated from, let alone the country they immigrated from. This is due to institutional racism. They created these divisions to weaken us. And then they divided the Latino and African-Americans. Our mission is to open people's eyes to the fact that we are all in this together."

As Williams said, "Trenton is focused on these issues, because this district is primarily composed of people of color, but these same issues are affecting other districts. We have an obligation to help our counterparts address these issues in places like Hopewell and Hamilton."

Williams also highlighted Trenton Central High School electing a transgender

student as homecoming queen as evidence that addressing issues that affect minority communities can help translate into a more inclusive environment for everyone.

Trenton Board of Education President Gene Bouie attended the event and is supportive of TEA's efforts to initiate the conversation around institutional racism.

"I believe that our teachers are more than qualified," Bouie said. "They impart a knowledge of self that builds our students' self-esteem."

City Councilman Alex Bethea, a retired Trenton Public Schools educator, raised his nine children in Trenton, and each attended the district's public schools. He pointed to the city's unique position as the home of state government. Land in Trenton held by the state government is not subject to local property taxes. Bethea said that the impact of that loss of an adequate tax base is a major part of the problem, not only financially, but also in giving residents the power to change the system.

"We are at the will of those in power," Bethea said.

February forum deepens discussion

On Feb. 21, TEA held a community forum featuring presentations by educator Mark Weber, who writes a blog as "Jersey Jazzman"; community leader and former Trenton mayoral candidate Paul Perez; and Jitu Brown, executive director of Journey for Justice. The forum was moderated by Kathleen Smallwood-Johnson, a retired Trenton Board attorney.

Smallwood-Johnson, who raised her two daughters in Trenton, explained her continued involvement in Trenton's public schools.

"My daughters received world-class exposure at Trenton Central High School through the teachers they had," Smallwood-Johnson said. "For me, it's not enough that my daughters got a first-class education; I need to pay it forward. There are enough resources on the Route 1 corridor to turn around the schools as far as resources go."

Weber's presentation focused on data, but he made a powerful point about language.

"People say spending money in urban districts is 'throwing money down a rat hole.' Is that really how we talk about children?" Weber asked. He compared the data among area districts to show that Princeton spends more per pupil than Trenton, and that Trenton's per-pupil spending is on par with Hopewell. He also pointed to the fact that Trenton's crumbling infrastructure was also to blame for misperceptions about education spending.

"Old facilities eat money," Weber explained.

Perez spoke about the potential of Trenton's students, and the fact that many are still succeeding despite overwhelming odds against them.

"The state monitor fired 92 paraprofessionals for special education students at the beginning of the school year," Perez recalled. "Now we have Source 4 Teachers employees in those positions, but they aren't coming to work. We need to build up our children and give them the support they deserve. Skill is what's getting us through this terrible time—the skill of our teachers—but we can't rely solely on that anymore."

Brown made it clear that he sees the problem not in terms of political parties, but a desire to avoid confronting the history of this country. Brown, a Chicago native, leveled criticism at Rahm Emanuel, the mayor of Chicago, and Arne Duncan, who was chief executive officer of Chicago's public schools prior to his nearly seven years as U.S. Secretary of Education. Emanuel also held a position in the Obama administration. Brown and dozens of others went on a 34-day hunger strike to prevent Emanuel from closing their neighborhood school.

"I am not going to accept that just because my son is black he's not going to get a good education," Brown said. "We need to disrupt normal operations to the point where they can't function. We have to go beyond our traditional playbook of testifying and attending board meetings. People will fight back anywhere if we create the culture to fight back."

Helping students dream big

Following presentations by the panel, the meeting opened up to solutions proposed by the community. Among them were to push for an elected, as opposed to a mayor-appointed, board of education in Trenton; increased bonding to provide funds for schools; protecting immigrants; ending the overreliance on high-stakes testing; and providing special education students with the services they need.

The TEA plans to continue to work with their community partners, NJEA, Healthy Schools Now and Journey for Justice to move toward enacting the solutions the group identified.

"I believe Trenton's students are gifted and talented, and that they can become what they dream," Smallwood-Johnson said. "We just need to help them dream big." 🏡

Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to njea.org. She can be reached at kcoulibaly@njea.org.



Alex Bethea



Jitu Brown



Kathleen Smallwood-Johnson



Jerrell Blakeley



"Under current leadership, thousands have been taken from our paychecks to cover the cost of mandated health insurance contributions. An ever increasing workload is stripping our students of valuable instruction time and the new evaluation model tied teacher efficacy to student performance on PARCC. The NJEA has endorsed a charter school model that eliminated hundreds of jobs in urban

districts and efforts to outsource our educational support professionals are sweeping across the state. The teacher's pension fund will be bankrupt in 12 years! We cannot afford to continue down this current path of inaction. Let's take back the NJEA!" – *Michael Grossman*

"I have known Michael Grossman for 10 years. In that time I have seen him work for this union. He is our local president, our negotiations chair, and advocate in many ways. I know him personally and know he does what is right for his members. I have seen him react each time our profession has been attacked. He is the right man for this job."

– *Tina Attanasio, Co-President of the Hampton Education Association*

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of President

Michael Grossman

Education: M.A. Educational Leadership, Centenary College; B.A. Elementary Education and Psychology, Kean University

Community of Employment: Hampton, N.J.

Community of Residence: Alpha, N.J.

Local – Hampton: President; Negotiation Committee lead

State: NJEA member

National: NEA member

Other relevant experience: Parents were both NJEA members and teachers; father of four



"Because of our members' work every day, our schools are tops in the country. We must focus on recruiting and electing candidates into public office who value and respect our public schools and members who protect, nurture, and educate our most precious resource. My priorities are repealing devastating legislation, such as Chapter 78 and an unfair evaluation system; securing members' pensions and health benefits in retirement; full

funding of public schools from urban to suburban and preschool to community colleges; protecting collective bargaining and stopping privatization; advocating for social justice; and elevating our members as the leaders in our profession." – *Marie Blistan*

"When you are looking for a voice in support of all members, and more specifically, for urban education, then you are looking for a leader like Marie Blistan." – *Naomi Johnson-Lafleur, President, Trenton Education Association*

"Marie's zeal, her eagerness to serve, and her ability to relate to all members has propelled me to say she will be a great asset to NJEA as its next leader." – *Dr. Stephen Kaifa, President, Faculty Association Community College of Morris*

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of President

Marie Blistan

Education: MA/BA Rowan: reading/special education; AA: Camden County

Local – Washington Township, Gloucester County: Vice President, Committee Chair/Co-Chair: Grievance; Negotiations; Action; Health and Safety; Public Relations; Membership; Special Education

Local – Somerdale, Camden County: President; County Teacher of the Year

County – Gloucester: President; Chair: Gloucester County Education Commission

State: NJEA Vice President; NJEA Secretary-Treasurer; Chair: Special Education Task Force; Host: Classroom Close-up; NJEA Apprentice Program Committee

National: State Officers Association; Healthy Schools Now, Presenter; Labor Management Affiliated Groups, presenter

Other relevant experience: Co-chair – N.J. Council State Teachers of the Year; Board: N.J. Hall of Fame; Brain Injury Alliance; Emerge New Jersey; Vice President (two years) Work Environment Council; spearheaded Member Relief Fund; founding member, Healthy Schools Now Coalition; led fight blocking county consolidation; spearheaded Union-Management Collaborative Project; Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund; "Where Angels Play" initiative; Constitutional amendment to raise minimum wage; Initiated Teacher Leader legislation; Delta Kappa Gamma member; NAACP, life member

Sean M. Spiller



"I appreciate and am humbled by the confidence shown in me when you first elected me as NJEA secretary-treasurer four years ago. This September, I will be honored to serve as your vice president as we stand arm-in-arm to face our current challenges. I know that we will steadfastly fight for our members' well-being, that we will remain a leader in advocating for our profession, and that we will

always demand the conditions needed for student success. I commit that, together, we will be successful on the issues and will never give up on the cause. Thank you for your support." – Sean M. Spiller

Education: M.S. Ramapo College; B.A. Rutgers College/Rutgers University

Community of Employment: Wayne Township, N.J.

Community of Residence: Montclair, N.J.

Local – Wayne: President; Vice President; Grievance Committee; Government Relations Member; Public Relations Member; Safety and Security Committee; Strike Avoidance and Negotiation Committee

State: NJEA Secretary-Treasurer; Chair: NJEA Budget Committee; Ex-officio to all NJEA Committees; NJREA Officer Liaison

National: State Officers Association; NEA Charter School Taskforce Member

Other relevant experience: Chair: Sustainable Jersey for Schools Health and Wellness Task Force; Vice President: Work Environment Council (WEC); Board Member: Project Re-Direct Youth and Family Services; Member: NJTV Community Advisory Board; NAACP Life Member; Spearheaded Runaway Income Inequality Partnership—designed to close the gap; Township Councilman

NJEA Elections begin on April 1

Members may vote by postal mail or electronic ballot. Those who have pre-registered to vote online will simply need to go to njea.org, sign-in and follow the link to the electronic ballot.

All mail-in ballots must be received no later than noon on Friday, April 14, 2017.

A new feature this year will be the ability to view state officer candidate photos, bios and campaign statements.

Those who have not yet registered to vote electronically may do so, by going to njea.org and following the link to register and vote electronically. All ballots have a unique member-only code to ensure that only one ballot will be counted for each member.

The strength of the NJEA is our members. Make sure your voice is heard.

A screenshot of the NJEA Member Login page. The page has a blue header with the 'njea' logo. Below the header, the text 'Member Login' is displayed. A message says 'Sign into your account to unlock your njea member features'. There are two input fields: one for email/PIN and one for password. Below these fields is a blue 'Log In' button. At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled 'Your device? Stay signed in' and a link 'Lost your password?'. The background of the page shows a crowd of people at an outdoor event.

Not sure how to connect?

Here are the instructions to sign in to the NJEA website.

1. Go to njea.org.
2. Click at the Sign in found in the upper right hand corner. Fill in your email or PIN and password. Use the email address you have on file with NJEA, or the PIN found on your membership card (it is 2 letters, 2 numbers, 2 letters such as AB12CD).
 - If you've never changed it, your password is the last four digits of your Social Security number.
 - If you forgot your password, click "Lost Your Password" at the bottom right of screen and follow instructions. A new one will be emailed to you.
3. Once you are signed in, go to the "My NJEA" Tab and click on "Profile."
4. Once you are logged in, follow the link to register and vote.



"There were three court oral arguments about Chapter 78 (obviously the most important subject for NJEA members) in the past three years; two at the Superior Court and one at the New Jersey Supreme Court. Incredibly, no NJEA officer or candidate for Secretary-Treasurer was present at any of these important hearings on our pensions. I was in the front row of the two superior court oral arguments and literally

forced my way into the last seat at the New Jersey Supreme Court. I have the backbone and the reputation as a fighter, and I will not let you down!" – *Andy Policastro*

"Since I first met my son Andy 51 years ago, I have found him to be uncompromisingly honest and relentlessly truthful. Andy is so without artifice he can seem humorless; but he's not. Andy's truthful, honest, intelligent and a champion of members' rights; qualities to value in the NJEA Secretary-Treasurer (who serves as chairman of the important Budget committee) he is a natural. Vote for Andy!" *Rosanne Policastro, NJREA, Retired School Psychologist, Newark Public Schools*

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of Secretary-Treasurer

Andrew Policastro

Local – Tenafly: Tenafly Education Association Officer; Negotiations Team; Executive Committee; Chair: Action Team; Chair: Legislative Action Team; Grievance Representative; Building Representative

County – Bergen: Bergen County Education Association First Vice President; Bergen County Education Association Second Vice President; Executive Committee; BCEA Council; Budget Committee; Chair: Human Relations-Minority Involvement Committee; Chair: Instructional and Professional Development Committee; Chair: Government Relations Committee; Chair: Constitutional Review Committee; Editor: County Newsletter

State: NJEA Executive Committee (six years); NJEA Delegate Assembly; Budget Committee (ten years); Congressional Contact Committee; Editorial Committee; Hearing-Censure; Suspension and Expulsion Committee; Membership Committee; NEA Issues Committee; PAC Operating Committee; Professional Development Committee

National: NEA Board of Directors (six years); NEA Member Benefits Corporation: Board Member (four years); NEA Congressional Lobbyist; NEA Delegate: Representative Assembly (12 years); NEA Delegate: Education International; NEA Human and Civil Rights Award Committee; NEA Local President Release Time Committee



"This month, the members of NJEA will vote on the next slate of officers to lead the organization. The decision is whether members want a democratic form of government, or an oligarchy. Yes, an oligarchy, an organization run by a few. Decisions have been taken away by our running officers. Their ticket indicates they

will work with only one individual, not who is elected. No democratic choice? Why vote? This seems to indicate a disengagement from NJEA and a misunderstanding about exactly what members are voting for. Please vote who you want, not who you're being told to."

– *Michael Kruczek*

"Members and leaders across the state agree: Mike advocates for each member, ensuring NJEA's ability to lead them in to the future."

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of Secretary-Treasurer

Michael J. Kruczek

Education: M.Ed. Mathematics, DeSales University; B.A. Math Education, Bloomsburg University; B.S. Mathematics, Bloomsburg University

Community of Employment: Phillipsburg, N.J.

Community of Residence: Easton, Pa.

Local – Phillipsburg: Vice President; Chair: Site Based Management Team; Chair: Grievance; Negotiations Committee; association representative; County Representative Council member

County – Warren: President; Vice President; Treasurer; State Assembly/Senate Screening Committee; County Executive Committee

State: Chair: NJEA-NEA Issues Committee; Chair: NJEA Urban Education Committee; NJEA Executive Committee; NJEA Delegate Assembly; Congressional Contact Committee; Government Relations Committee; Budget Committee; Membership Committee; Pension and Benefits Task Force; PAC Operating Committee; County Presidents' Council; Urban Education Committee

National: Delegate: NEA Representative Assembly, Congressional Lobbyist for NEA; NEA Board, Senior Director for N.J.; Northeast Regional Leadership Conference Planning Committee; Unified Legal Services Program Committee; NEA Board Steering Committee; NEA Board Discussion Group Facilitator; State Contact Committee; NCUEA member and conference attendee

Other relevant experience: N.J. Department of Education: State Board of Examiners



"We need action, not promises. It's time to re-evaluate the practices that aren't moving the NJEA forward. Teachers and ESPs are still struggling financially under the burden of Chapter 78. We're paying more and making less. Our security in retirement is still at risk. Saddled with an ever increasing workload and an unfair evaluation model, our school employees provide our students the best education in the country. Members' interests must drive the agenda. As NJEA Secretary-Treasurer, I will be a steadfast advocate for your interests, ensuring that our

dues are spent effectively to move our profession forward." – Denise King

"She is a true leader who cares about the teaching profession."

– Maureen Casey, APEA officer

"Denise is always available to guide everyone in a positive direction."

– John Graham, HTEA vice president

"Denise is very knowledgeable when it comes to difficult situations."

– Tracie Yostpille, FTEA president

"Denise realizes that the key to any real change is to get our membership mobilized and working together, to develop leadership within, and to unify our cause."

– Emily Gibbons David, teacher

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of Secretary-Treasurer

Denise King

Education: M.A. Art, William Patterson University; B.A. Art and Elementary Education, Goucher College

Community of employment: Holmdel, N.J.

Community of residence: Howell, N.J.

Local – Holmdel Township: President; Vice President; Chair: Grievance Committee; Chair: LAT; association representative; Negotiations Committee; Evaluation Committee/DEAC; Budget Committee; PRIDE; Health Benefits Liaison

County – Monmouth: President

State: NJEA UniServ Consultant; NJEA Delegate Assembly; PAC Operating Committee; Congressional Contact Committee

National: NEA Delegate: Representative Assembly

Other relevant experience: Evaluation Committee; Communications Network; Art Educators of New Jersey; Yearbook Advisor; Received LAT Award for Most Improved; Increased local and county membership participation by 50%



"We have the top schools in the nation because of the dedication and work of our members, but respect for our profession must be restored. Electing members and pro-public education candidates to public offices must be a priority. This will allow us to win the battles over social justice issues such as privatization and full funding for all schools no matter their ZIP code. We will address the needs of all members, preservice to retired,

and work to expand collective bargaining rights, end Chapter 78, restore a fair evaluation system and insure full funding of our earned pensions."

– Steve Beatty

"Steve has worked beside me advocating for members, fighting to secure our pensions, and disseminating information through one-on-one conversations. Steve is invested in NJEA; he will work hard to ensure that every member is protected and has a seat at the table."

– Heather Sorge, Paraprofessional, Holland Township

"I have known Steve for many years...and I can say he is an upstanding guy who truly cares about the Union." – Ron Greco, President, Jersey City EA

NJEA State Officer Candidate | Position of Secretary-Treasurer

Steve Beatty

Education: M.A. Art of Teaching, Marygrove College; B.A. History, Rutgers University

Community of Employment: Bridgewater-Raritan

Community of Residence: Basking Ridge, N.J.

Local – Bridgewater-Raritan: President; 2nd Vice President; Chair: Grievance; Negotiations Team; chief association representative; social studies teacher

County – Somerset: President; 2nd Vice President; Government Relations Committee; Legislative Action Team Chairperson; association representative

State: Chair: Government Relations Committee; Secretary-Treasurer, County Presidents Council; Gubernatorial Screening Committee; NJEA Delegate Assembly; Pension Fellow, NJEA Union School

National: Delegate: NEA Representative Assembly; N.J. Chair for PAC Fundraising

Other relevant experience: Rutgers Labor Relations School – Public Sector Labor Relations Certificate; Cornell Industrial and Labor Relations School – Labor Relations Collective Bargaining Certificate; two-time Jim George Collective Bargaining Recognition Certificate; Fulbright Recipient; Education Foundation of Bridgewater-Raritan, trustee; PTO: Bridgewater-Raritan and Bernards Township; Star-Ledger Boys Swim Coach of the Year

Union Township school security guards



Union Twp. security guards Kim Meisch, James Frazier, and substitute security guard Steven Stochlinski in the halls of Burnet Middle School.

By Kathryn Coulibaly

Building strong schools one child at a time

Morning and afternoon, the school security personnel at Burnet Middle School in Union Township take up their posts around the buildings and grounds as students stream past them. Even with 1,000 students in the district, the security guards know every student by face, and almost every student by name.

Perhaps that is because the role of a school security guard is not just to prevent unauthorized people from accessing the building—although that is an important part of their job—but it is also to know and connect with students, parents and staff so they can help prevent issues from spiraling out of control, or going unnoticed and unaddressed.

James Frazier has been a security guard in Union for 20 years. His is one of the first faces students see each day. For Frazier, and the majority of the school security team, working at Burnet Middle School is a homecoming. As a child growing up in Union, he attended the public schools, played sports, and participated in community civic groups. Fellow security guards Kim Meisch and Cliff Detjen, as well as substitute security guard Steven Stochlinski, all live or lived in Union, raising children and even grandchildren in the district.

School support staff are leaders in their communities

“Union Township is a culturally diverse community,” Frazier says. “My experiences growing up in Union truly prepared me for the realities of dealing with everyone from all walks of life. Many of my classmates became more like family than friends, and I want to preserve that atmosphere.”

Frazier and his wife, Patricia, a Spanish teacher at Burnet, are raising their children in the township and continue to play an active role in community and athletic organizations in Union.

“My work in the community is an extension of how I deal with school-day interactions,” Frazier says. “I believe in the school community concept: I live and work here. I am a neighbor to many of my students, as well as a coach. Many people see me as a leader as a result of my involvement with civic and community associations. Educational support professionals (ESP) like me are an essential part of our communities because many of our members live in the towns in which they work. They are a vital link between the schools and the community.”

That link—and a commitment to ensuring every child has what he or she needs to succeed—has yielded vast rewards for the community. When Frazier and Detjen, the two most veteran staff members, first began working together, each was assigned to mentor a student with behavior issues. They did double-duty as school security guards and one-on-one behavior aides, walking their mentees



"Educational support professionals like me are an essential part of our communities because many of our members live in the towns in which they work."

- James Frazier



Frazier knows how important it is for the security guards' students to see them as adults they can trust with everything including issues at home or with other students, or to help them out if they need lunch money.



to classes and helping to guide them on the right path. Both students are now doing well and they maintain contact with Frazier and Detjen who have served as job references for them, and even helped them find employment with friends and family members.

Addressing student needs

While mentoring is no longer a formal part of their official job description, it is still a big part of the security guards' day. Each of them can point to a recent occasion where he or she stepped in to help address an issue with a student before the situation could escalate, but they are zealous in protecting their students' privacy and do not divulge details.

Frazier knows how important it is for the security guards' students to see them as adults they can trust with everything including issues at home or with other students, or to help them out if they need lunch money.

“In dealing with behavior issues, my philosophy is to first address and understand the root cause of the issue,” Frazier says. “Many of our students come from homes and backgrounds that are not ideal. Many may not have eaten a meal in the morning, or went to bed the night before without a hot meal. Many come from homes where there is no love from the parent. I know many of us may be burdened by our own circumstances, but we need to recognize that not all the students in our classroom are as fortunate as we are. I believe once we recognize the causes of the underlying issue, and work to address them, you will generally see improved behavior.”

Frazier, who also serves as the vice president for the Union County Education Association and as an NEA ESP At Large Director, believes that school employees have to be advocates for their students and themselves.

“The different roles I have taken on allow me to be part of the policymaking decisions and educational advancements in the school community,” Frazier says. “I am able to have valuable input in all aspects of our community.”

At the end of the day, Frazier and his colleagues see their role as school security guards as integral to preserving a sense of community that has nurtured them and their families, friends, and students for decades.

“We grew up in an environment that we didn't want to lose,” Frazier says. “We take it from the heart.” 🏠

Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to njea.org. She can be reached at kcoulibaly@njea.org.

TOP: Veteran security guard Cliff Detjen greets students, parents and visitors at the front desk.

CENTER: Frazier shakes hands with Gifted and Talented teacher Larry Petras.

BOTTOM: Frazier and Meisch pose outside the security office.



Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference

The 2017 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference will offer a broad menu of workshops that equip members to become stronger association advocates. Most workshops offer nine hours of training in a three-day period spread over six parts. A longer workshop providing 18 hours of training over four days is available for newer presidents.

There are three sets of three-day programs:

- Workshop I – Aug. 5-7 (Sat., Sun., Mon.)
- Workshop II – Aug. 7-9 (Mon., Tues., Wed.)
- Workshop III – Aug. 9-11 (Wed., Thurs., Fri.)

Not all of the 37 workshops are offered in every workshop period. The workshop descriptions provided on the following pages indicate when any given program is scheduled. To accommodate educational support professional members (ESP) who may wish to limit use of vacation or personal time, Workshop Number 21 runs from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon.

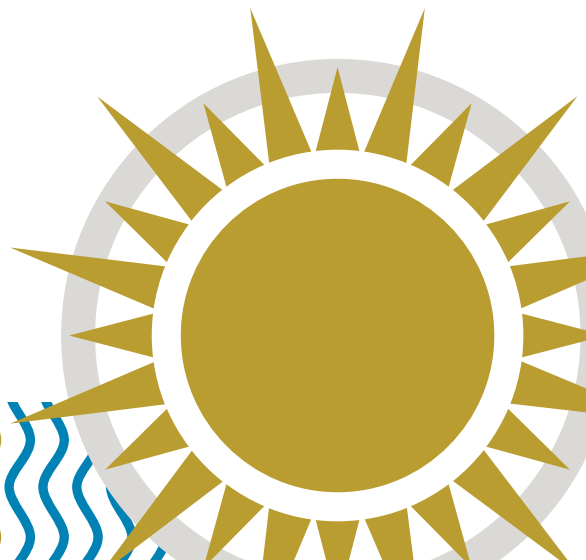
For most workshops, registration begins on Day One at 1 p.m., and the opening general session starts at 3 p.m. Day Three ends with a brunch, which is served at 10 a.m. following the sixth workshop session.

This year's summer leadership conference will take place at the Hilton East Brunswick. The conference is dedicated to developing association advocate representatives. Accordingly, no professional development credit is given for attendance in any seminar.

How do I register?

The purpose of this article is to alert members to this training opportunity and describe the 37 workshop programs available this year, but to register you need to talk to your local and/or county association president.

Local and county association presidents will receive registration brochures with detailed information on the 2017 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference. You must contact your local president and consult that brochure to learn more about lodging, daily schedules, accommodations for members with special needs, and registration.





Workshops

1. Now That I'm President, What Do I Do?

PART 1 – 8/5-7 – 2-½ Day Workshop
PART 2 – 9/15-16 – 1-½ Day Workshop

For: New Presidents

The job of an effective local president is the most challenging you'll ever face in your association. This workshop is designed to help you identify those challenges, develop strategies to deal with them, and build a strong, effective association. Advocacy topics will be thoroughly discussed to empower you with all the information you need to lead your association.

This training begins prior to the start of the conference at 1:15 on August 5. Participants should plan to arrive by 12:45 p.m.

Resident: \$458*
Commuter: \$371

**If a single room is requested for Workshop 1 the cost is \$626 since an additional overnight occurs in September.*

2. Now That I'm President, What Do I Do? (offered 8/7-10)

Four-day workshop

For: New Presidents

The job of an effective local president is the most challenging you'll ever face in your association. This workshop is designed to help you identify those challenges, develop strategies to deal with them, and build a strong, effective association. Advocacy topics will be thoroughly discussed to empower you with all the information you need to lead your association.

This four-day training has additional sessions scheduled throughout the week in addition to the conference schedule. This workshop

will conclude with dinner on August 10.

Resident: \$458*
Commuter: \$371

**If a single room is requested for Workshop 2 the cost is \$626 since the training occurs during Sessions II & III.*

3. Vital Skills for Experienced Presidents (offered 8/9-11)

For: Experienced Presidents

Prerequisite: Now That I'm President, What Do I Do? or at least three years' experience

So you survived your first term or two as president and you didn't quit in spite of organizational issues, pressures, paperwork and power plays? Good for you! Come learn how to create trust, inspire enthusiasm, and win over skeptics so someone else will want to step up to serve the membership when you decide to step down.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

4. Basic Treasurer's Training (offered 8/5-7 and 8/7-9)

For: Local Treasurers

Learn the ABCs of being a local treasurer. Understand the fiduciary responsibilities of this important association role. Learn about building a budget and fiscal issues, understanding agency fee, implementing time management tools, taking the fear out of treasury audits and payroll, and laying the foundation for a computerized treasury. Lastly, understand the benefits of the Local Association Financial Assistance Program (LAFAP) form and learn how to complete a LAFAP through our online system.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

5. Advanced Treasurer's Training (offered 8/9-11)

Prerequisite: Treasurers who have completed Basic Treasurer's Training

This course is designed for the experienced treasurer interested in using Quicken® to maintain the association's books and conform to Local Association Financial Assistance Program (LAFAP) reporting requirements. It also includes further training on budgets, PAC/Philanthropic funds, LAFAP, and check reconciliation.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397
Commuter: \$357

6. Basic Grievance Processing (offered all sessions)

For: Any member who is new to grievance processing as either an association representative (AR) or as a grievance committee representative

This workshop will provide an introduction to the basic vocabulary, essential tools, complete process, and changing laws of grievance work from the local association level through court appeals. Problem-solving options will be made available to local grievance representatives. These will be reviewed through case studies illustrating specific solutions to real problems.

Participants need to bring a copy of their collective bargaining agreement.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

7. Advanced Grievance Processing (offered all sessions)

Prerequisite: Basic Grievance Processing or experience in processing grievances

Learn the skills needed and why it is necessary for the local association to present grievances effectively at the board of education level. Case studies and role playing will be utilized in group activities in order for participants to present a grievance to a board of education. Participants will be instructed in the following concepts prior to preparing their cases: past practice, clear vs. ambiguous contract language, just cause standards, management rights, maintenance of benefits, and duty of fair representation.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

8. Legal Issues Affecting School Employees (offered 8/5-7 and 8/7-9)

For: All members

This workshop is an in-depth review of pertinent provisions of school and labor laws, and administrative and legal decisions affecting members. We will examine the impact of school and labor laws on employment, analyze techniques for proper forum selection for dealing with disputes (i.e. role of PERC, the commissioner of education, courts and agencies), review decisional law and legislative enactments, recognize statute applications/interpretations through case-by-case determination, and examine, analyze and review association roles.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

9. Advanced Legal Issues (offered 8/9-11)

For: Experienced local leaders and grievance chairs or members who have completed Legal Issues Affecting School Employees

Advanced Legal Issues will provide a more in-depth exploration of subjects covered in the Legal Issues Affecting School Employees workshop. Topics will include arbitration, ULP, and tenure charge processes; in-depth case analysis; teacher seniority; crisis resolution; and past practice, just cause, and scope issues.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

10. PERC Law (offered 8/5-7 and 8/7-9)

For: Negotiators, grievance committee representatives, and other association leaders

To assist in negotiations and representation, this workshop will focus on unfair labor practices and court cases outlining negotiability/arbitrability disputes including: discipline, transfers, extracurricular assignments, and duty of fair representation. What constitutes past practice, just cause, and relief from unilateral changes in working conditions will be explored in depth.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

11. AR - Key to a Strong Organization (offered all sessions)

For: Association representatives; open to all members

Learn the fundamentals and develop skills to become an association advocate. This

program concentrates on contract enforcement, basic school law, member benefits, membership promotion, emerging instructional issues, legislative action, and your state and national association. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

12. Basic Collective Bargaining (offered all sessions)

For: New and inexperienced negotiators

Master the essential phases of bargaining with particular emphasis on the role of laws in the negotiations process; organization of and preparation for negotiations; negotiations tactics and techniques; the use of mathematics in negotiations; the 2010 bargaining law; impasse resolution including mediation, fact-finding, and superconciliation; job actions and communication; and ratification.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

13. Advanced Collective Bargaining (offered 8/5-7 and 8/7-9)

For: Experienced negotiators who have completed Basic Collective Bargaining or members who have actively participated in the bargaining process as a member of a team

Advanced Collective Bargaining workshop topics include hot topics at the table, getting to where we want to go and how to get there, salary guides (alternative methods of distribution), what do we do when the going gets tough, legislation affecting bargaining, and bargaining health benefits.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

14. Basic Salary Guides (offered 8/5-7)

For: New local negotiators preparing for successful salary negotiations

Methods of costing, analyzing, and understanding salary guides will be presented. Successful salary negotiations techniques such as developing comparisons, member input, district's ability to pay, planning salary guide workshops, and planning a successful ratification will be emphasized. Challenges facing ESP and inclusive local association will be stressed. Current issues of importance will be discussed and successful strategies in these areas will be presented.

Participants must bring their current scattergram and collective bargaining agreement, including all salary guides.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

15. Advanced Salary Guides (offered 8/7-9)

Prerequisite: Basic Salary Guides

The workshop will give participants an understanding of how salary guides are constructed and calculated. Participants will construct a base-year cost-out and salary guides for three additional years on an Excel spreadsheet. Knowledge of how a spreadsheet functions is essential. This training will expand on issues raised in Basic Salary Guides, as well as explore additional concerns and techniques.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided. Resident: \$397
Commuter: \$357

16. Using Excel in Bargaining (offered 8/9-11)

For: All members

This workshop is designed to help local negotiation team members effectively use Microsoft Excel to organize information, calculate impact of association and board proposals, and make presentations needed to advance the negotiations process. Enrollees must understand basic Excel concepts including, cell formatting, page layout, use of basic formulas and worksheet organizing.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397
Commuter: \$357

17. Bargaining Health Benefits (offered 8/7-9)

For: Negotiators and leaders with interest in benefits

Learn how to deal with board demands on health insurance issues at the bargaining table. This training will provide participants with a thorough understanding of the role of insurance benefits in achieving economic security. There will be extensive instruction on medical, dental, prescription, and optical plans.

This workshop will enable participants to review the legal framework, prepare for negotiations, and analyze board proposals.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

18. Minority Leadership Training for Emerging & Experienced Leaders (offered 8/5-7)

For: All members

Recognizing that NJEA's influence on public education is in direct proportion to an



Workshops

2017

engaged membership, the Minority Leadership Training (MLT) Program prepares ethnic-minority members to be strong leaders, advocates, and full participants in their association. Participants will be introduced to the skills necessary to become an effective leader in their school, community and association. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

19. Jumpstart Member Involvement (offered 8/7-9)

For: All members

Learn why membership matters and discover ways to support members while building their commitment and involvement. This is a great program for membership chairs, ARs, and those who would like to get other members involved in their local associations but don't know where to begin. Learn about how to use NJEA resources to help your membership succeed, as well as attract and retain your volunteer corps. This workshop was previously titled "Engaging Your Members." Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

20. Managing Conflict Effectively (offered 8/7-9 and 8/9-11)

For: All members

This workshop is designed to increase personal and association effectiveness in dealing with conflict in a positive fashion. Participants will learn a variety of techniques that enhance this process by developing new strategies in identifying and handling conflict. Discussion will focus on what causes conflict and how better communication can help prevent or resolve

conflict. This workshop is hands-on and interactive. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

21. Educational Support Professionals (ESP): You Are Essential, You Matter! (offered 8/4-6)

For: ESP members

Join fellow ESP members and experts on ESP issues in this lively workshop where you'll gain the tools necessary to build your career and safeguard your interests. Just as you play an essential role in your school, your contribution to this workshop will ensure its success. Don't miss out!

This workshop has a special schedule. Registration is at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, August 4. It concludes with lunch on Sunday, August 6. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

22. Effective Political Advocacy Through Your Legislative Action Team (offered 8/5-7)

For: All members

If you are a member of your local or county Legislative Action Team (LAT), then this workshop is for you! Learn how to build a robust LAT by recruiting volunteers, communicating effectively, organizing for action, and building and maintaining relationships with elected public officials. This training will give you the skills to make your voice heard. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

23. Advanced Political Advocacy Training for Legislative Action Teams (offered 8/7-9)

For: Members who have completed Effective Political Advocacy Through Your

Legislative Action Team

Take political action in your local to the next level by learning best practices for developing relationships with policymakers and influencing their decisions. Hone your organizing skills for use in issue campaigns and in the 2017 election.

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

24. Policy Wonks (offered 8/9-11)

For: Members who have completed Effective Political Advocacy Through Your Legislative Action Team

Dive deeper into the weeds of education policy issues and learn the backstory and impetus on pending legislation. Listen to and challenge policymakers, legislative staff, and issue experts. Go back to your local "in the know" and be ready to advocate!

Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

25. Social Media for Activists (offered 8/5-7)

For: All Members

Learn how to harness powerful social media tools to make an impact online. Explore the full functionality of the popular social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This workshop was previously titled "Social Media for Organizing."

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided. Resident: \$397
Commuter: \$357

26. Social Media for Local Associations (offered 8/9-11)

For: Local association social media editors

Learn how to successfully manage your local's social me-

dia platforms to activate your membership, engage your community, and maximize your organizing efforts. This workshop is for advanced social media users.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided. Resident: \$397
Commuter: \$357

27. Using Evaluations as an Organizing Tool (offered 8/9-11)

For: All Members

Empower your members and organize them around evaluations. Take your local down a path to success by learning about important regulatory changes, the right to rebut and the power of creating a database. Energize your members to use various avenues to meet with key stakeholders including parents, community members and administrators. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257

28. Evaluation and the Association: Ensuring Advocacy for Professional Growth (offered 8/7-9)

For: All Members

Identify opportunities for association action that supports members and empowers them to focus the results of the evaluation process on effective professional learning systems. The role of the association as the voice of professional advocacy on behalf of educators is more important than ever with the AchieveNJ Educator Evaluation system. Resident: \$297
Commuter: \$257





29. Organizing for Participatory Leadership (offered 8/5-7)

For: All Members

Looking for ways to increase participation in your association? Interested in finding ways to build consensus and allow new leadership to emerge? Trying to find ways to include all the voices in the room when you run a meeting? Using practices from the Art of Hosting Meaningful Conversations, develop new skills to work collectively to harness the shared knowledge and wisdom of your membership, creating a stronger union that can move forward towards wise action.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

30. Principles of Leadership Development for Association Leaders (offered 8/7-9)

For: All Members

In this workshop we will explore principles of effective leadership and team building, effective communication and listening skills, principles of time and stress management, facilitation skills for leaders, importance of change management, and leadership scenarios for association leaders.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

31. Organizing Around Special Education Issues (offered 8/9-11)

For: All members

This workshop will review the hot topics in special education including, but not limited to, regulatory changes, legislation, least restrictive environment, dyslexia and standardized testing. Participants will explore strategies to involve members in as-

sociation work around special education issues. Approaches to community organizing will also be covered.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

32. ESSA, PARCC, NJSLs, and Evaluations: How These Affect You and Your Career (offered 8/5-7)

For: All members

New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs), the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC), assessments and evaluation—these are today's educational jargon. Explore the connections between them and the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Participants will explore strategies to advocate for your professional involvement in each.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

33. Websites for Local and County Associations (offered 8/7-9)

For: Recommended for association editors and webmasters

Have you been thinking about starting a website for your local or county, but you don't know where to begin? NJEA has the solution. Designed for local association editors and webmasters, this workshop will provide the nuts and bolts of website design, hosting, and management through NJEA's affiliate website service, NJEASites. Attendees will use a web-based content management system to design, build, and launch a local/county association website by the end of the workshop.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397

Commuter: \$357

34. How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker (offered 8/5-7)

For: All members

Learn how to look and sound your best when presenting to a group. Participants review techniques for preparing and delivering a speech. Each speaker will be videotaped for a self and group critique.

Enrollment limited to 15 participants (one per local).

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

35. Membership Chair Training (offered 8/5-7 and 8/7-9)

For: New, current, or up-and-coming membership chairs

This course is designed for both new and "seasoned" membership chairs. Learn what your responsibilities are and how to manage them using the various membership resources. You will be presented with an overview of all membership forms as well as the calendar of events and member engagement organizing tools. Participants will receive an in-depth understanding of the reports and information available to them while using MARS on the Web.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local). Computers will be provided.

Resident: \$397

Commuter: \$357

36. Health Benefits and Pensions for Your Local (offered 8/7-9)

For: All members

Become your local's go-to person for all of its health benefits and pension questions. Learn the ins and outs of what you need to know when assisting your members in understanding health plan options, minimizing out-of-pocket health care costs, premium sharing contributions, preparing for retirement, understanding their pensions and more.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257

37. Money Matters: Now and Later (offered 8/7-9)

For: All members

This workshop is intended for local leaders who wish to become more proactive in strengthening their members' knowledge of financial matters and in providing adequate solutions for supplemental pension plans. Topics will also include life insurance, income protection, estate planning, and retirement income.

Resident: \$297

Commuter: \$257



Leadership training opportunities

What workshop should I choose?

NJEA offers many advocacy conferences with a large array of workshops throughout the year. Selecting which workshop to take can be a daunting task. To guide you, positions within the association are listed on the charts below along with workshops that would be beneficial to you. They are not listed in any particular order and are not mandatory to serve in any position.

Workshops marked with an asterisk are not offered at the summer leadership conference, but may be offered at other conferences during the year. Note as well, that not all 37 of the workshops offered at the summer leadership conference are listed on the chart below. Make sure to review all of the offerings before making your selection.

PRESIDENT

Now That I'm President, What Do I Do?	1, 2
Vital Skills for Experienced Presidents	3
Basic Collective Bargaining.....	12
Advanced Collective Bargaining	13
Basic Salary Guides	14
Advanced Salary Guides	15
Bargaining Health Benefits	17
Legal Issues Affecting School Employees.....	8
Advanced Legal Issues	9
PERC Law	10
Basic Grievance Processing.....	6
Advanced Grievance Processing.....	7
Using the PRIDE Program to Build Community Support	*
Principles of Leadership Development.....	30
How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker	34
How to Be an Organizer	*
Using Evaluations as an Organizing Tool	27

VICE PRESIDENT

Basic Collective Bargaining.....	12
Basic Grievance Processing.....	6
Legal Issues Affecting School Employees	8
PERC Law	10
Managing Conflict Effectively.....	20
Principles of Leadership Development.....	30
Using Evaluations as an Organizing Tool	27
How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker	34
How to Be an Organizer	*
Purposeful Networking.....	*

TREASURER

Basic Treasurer's Training	4
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Advanced Treasurer's Training	5
Membership Chair Training	35

ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE (AR)

AR - Key to a Strong Organization	11
Managing Conflict Effectively.....	20
Basic Grievance Processing.....	6
Legal Issues Affecting School Employees	8
Basic Collective Bargaining.....	12
Advocacy Boot Camp	*
Using Evaluations as an Organizing Tool	27
How to Be an Organizer	*
Principles of Leadership Development.....	30
Purposeful Networking.....	*

NEGOTIATIONS TEAM

Basic Collective Bargaining.....	12
Basic Salary Guides.....	14
Using Excel in Bargaining	16
Bargaining Health Benefits	17
Advanced Collective Bargaining.....	13
Advanced Salary Guides.....	15
Your Job, Your Benefits, Your Future.....	*

GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

Basic Grievance Processing.....	6
Legal Issues Affecting School Employees	8
PERC Law	10
Advanced Legal Issues.....	9
Advanced Grievance Processing.....	7
Managing Conflict Effectively.....	20

ESP

AR - Key to a Strong Organization	11
Combatting Privatization – You Could Be Fired!.....	*
Basic Collective Bargaining.....	12
Basic Grievance Processing.....	6

Purposeful Networking.....	*
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ESP Survivor...How NOT to Get Voted Off the Island!	*
ESP: You Are Essential, You Matter!	21
Principles of Leadership Development.....	30
ESP: Who We Are!	*
Legal Issues Affecting School Employees	8
Advocacy Boot Camp	*
Preparing for Your Evaluation	*

EXPLORING LEADERSHIP

Managing Conflict Effectively.....	20
How to Be an Organizer	*
Minority Leadership Training for Emerging and Experienced Leaders	18
Jumpstart Member Involvement	19
Purposeful Networking.....	*
Principles of Leadership Development.....	30
How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker	34
Advocacy Boot Camp	*
Social Media for Activists.....	25

EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Using Evaluations as an Organizing Tool	27
Evaluation and the Association: Ensuring Advocacy for Professional Growth	28
ESSA, PARCC, NJSLS, and Evaluations: How These Affect You and Your Career	32

LEGISLATIVE ACTION TEAM (LAT)

Effective Political Advocacy Through Your LAT	22
Advanced Political Advocacy Training for LATs.....	23
Policy Wonks.....	24

**Workshops not offered at 2017 SLC; please check future NJEA conferences.*



NJEA Vice President Marie Blistan celebrated Read Across America with her granddaughter, Julieanna, at Holly Glen Elementary School in Williamstown, Gloucester County.



1



2



NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean M. Spiller read to students in Montclair, Essex County.

1. Elms Elementary School, Jackson
 2. Woodfern Elementary School, Hillsborough
 3. Clara B. Worth School in Bayville
 4. Warren County Technical School in Washington
 5. Burlington County Special Services District in Westampton
 6. Tuscan Elementary School in Maplewood
 7. Clayton Middle School in Clayton
 8. Bay Head Elementary School in Bay Head
- Find more photos at njea.org.



3



NJEA President Wendell Steinhauer read to students at Eastampton Community School in Eastampton, Burlington County.

READ ACROSS



SS AMERICA

**To the Executive Committee and Members of
the New Jersey Education Association**

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA), which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of Aug. 31, 2016 and 2015, and the related consolidated statements of activities and of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to NJEA's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of NJEA's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion.

An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the New Jersey Education Association as of August 31, 2016 and 2015, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Novak Francella, LLC

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania

December 13, 2016

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	2016	2015
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 13,939,084	\$ 15,455,836
RECEIVABLES:		
Membership dues	365,897	587,108
Due from National Education Association	946,325	-
Contributions receivable	7,000	7,000
Advances to employees	57,916	56,700
Accrued investment income	46,825	49,236
Total receivables	<u>1,423,963</u>	<u>700,044</u>
Investments - at fair value	<u>119,529,004</u>	<u>112,867,493</u>
Prepaid expenses and other assets	<u>2,334,527</u>	<u>2,664,353</u>
FIXED ASSETS - AT COST:		
Land and buildings	21,835,690	21,353,597
Computer equipment	6,961,559	6,442,756
Furniture, equipment and vehicles	<u>4,326,957</u>	<u>4,137,204</u>
	33,124,206	31,933,557
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(19,101,447)</u>	<u>(17,052,723)</u>
Net fixed assets	<u>14,022,759</u>	<u>14,880,834</u>
Total assets	<u>\$151,249,337</u>	<u>\$146,568,560</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable	\$ 4,587,894	\$ 4,706,882
Unremitted National Education Association dues	425,064	1,864,960
Due to National Education Association	-	180,843
Due to VEBA	1,024	-
Accrued expenses	429,456	458,833
Other current liabilities	-	200,691
Deferred revenue	883,962	894,568
Current maturity of capital lease obligations	206,585	190,958
Current portion of long-term debt	447,924	430,439
Long-term debt	115,191	562,905
Long-term liabilities	1,011,143	1,207,291
Accrued vacation	6,075,451	5,861,561
Accrued postretirement benefit cost—other	151,419,317	105,316,743
Accrued pension cost	<u>65,288,478</u>	<u>47,911,777</u>
Total liabilities	<u>230,891,489</u>	<u>169,788,451</u>
NET ASSETS:		
Unrestricted - operating	(82,391,087)	(25,754,070)
Temporarily restricted	25,000	20,569
Permanently restricted	<u>2,723,935</u>	<u>2,513,610</u>
Total net assets	<u>(79,642,152)</u>	<u>(23,219,891)</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 151,249,337</u>	<u>\$ 146,568,560</u>

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

	2016	2015
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received from		
Members' dues and representation fee payers	\$ 110,460,256	\$ 107,756,409
Members' Pride dues	11,000,039	10,730,675
National Education Association	5,204,106	6,200,204
Conventions, conferences and other sources	2,024,870	1,887,690
Investment income	4,264,604	5,485,563
Cash paid for personnel costs	(62,394,275)	(60,834,898)
Cash paid to suppliers, vendors and service providers	(65,788,783)	(63,893,525)
Interest paid	(125,077)	(59,155)
Grants paid	<u>(97,914)</u>	<u>(97,053)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>4,547,826</u>	<u>7,175,910</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Payments for the purchase of fixed assets	(1,191,498)	(1,426,611)
Payments for the purchase of investments	(19,333,583)	(36,631,965)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	-	125,210
Proceeds from the sale of investments	<u>15,061,777</u>	<u>34,110,822</u>
Net cash used for investing activities	<u>(5,463,304)</u>	<u>(3,822,544)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Principal payments on capital leases	(190,957)	(20,834)
Principal payments on long-term debt	(430,228)	(413,097)
Permanently restricted investment income	19,911	19,592
Net cash used for financing activities	<u>(601,274)</u>	<u>(414,339)</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(1,516,752)	2,939,027
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Beginning of year	<u>15,455,836</u>	<u>12,516,809</u>
End of year	<u>\$13,939,084</u>	<u>\$15,455,836</u>
SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE OF NON-CASH FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Capital expenditures funded by capital lease borrowings	\$ -	\$1,145,228
RECONCILIATION OF INCREASE IN NET ASSETS TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Increase in net assets	\$ 5,355,029	\$ 2,865,674
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	2,049,573	1,818,369
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	-	(91,311)
Net realized and unrealized (gains) losses on investments	(2,379,270)	7,766,985
Temporarily restricted investment income	(19,911)	(19,592)
FASB ASC 715 adjustment	(61,777,290)	(11,356,182)
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase) decrease in receivables	(723,919)	482,940
(Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses and other assets	329,826	(405,266)
Increase in accounts payable and accrued expenses	63,164,290	6,063,101
Increase (decrease) in unremitted dues and deferred revenue	<u>(1,450,502)</u>	<u>51,192</u>
Total adjustments	<u>(807,203)</u>	<u>4,310,236</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>\$4,547,826</u>	<u>\$7,175,910</u>

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE FOLLOWING SIX PAGES.

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	2016				2015			
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
REVENUE								
Membership dues	\$109,255,219	\$ -	\$ -	\$109,255,219	\$106,589,649	\$ -	\$ -	\$106,589,649
Pride dues	11,000,039	-	-	11,000,039	10,730,675	-	-	10,730,675
National Education Assn. grants and reimbursements	7,771,170	-	-	7,771,170	5,948,527	-	-	5,948,527
Conferences	850,731	-	-	850,731	831,067	-	-	831,067
Convention	611,533	-	-	611,533	640,644	-	-	640,644
Investment income	6,634,530	-	20,128	6,654,658	(2,046,963)	-	(232,700)	(2,279,663)
Representation fees	994,432	-	-	994,432	721,708	-	-	721,708
Member benefits income	88,810	-	-	88,810	100,229	-	-	100,229
Publication income	313,493	-	-	313,493	339,192	-	-	339,192
Contributions	-	117,036	-	117,036	-	21,160	-	21,160
Disaster Relief Fund	4,000	1,000	-	5,000	6,000	1,000	-	7,000
Other income	38,459	-	-	38,459	32,066	-	-	32,066
Net assets transferred to other funds (released from restrictions)	(76,592)	(113,605)	190,197	-	(171,322)	78,583	92,739	-
Total revenue	<u>137,485,824</u>	<u>4,431</u>	<u>210,325</u>	<u>137,700,580</u>	<u>123,721,472</u>	<u>100,743</u>	<u>(139,961)</u>	<u>123,682,254</u>
EXPENSES								
PROGRAM SERVICES:								
Governance	6,449,655	-	-	6,449,655	5,798,332	-	-	5,798,332
Executive organizational development	7,997,838	-	-	7,997,838	8,263,608	-	-	8,263,608
Uniserv								
Regional offices	20,777,073	-	-	20,777,073	19,212,494	-	-	19,212,494
Field office	6,490,911	-	-	6,490,911	6,346,081	-	-	6,346,081
Legal services	12,490,203	-	-	12,490,203	11,501,317	-	-	11,501,317
Communications	5,757,462	-	-	5,757,462	5,391,912	-	-	5,391,912
Professional development	4,549,349	-	-	4,549,349	4,103,011	-	-	4,103,011
Research and economics	5,157,654	-	-	5,157,654	4,928,024	-	-	4,928,024
Government relations	3,910,140	-	-	3,910,140	3,500,048	-	-	3,500,048
Conventions	2,745,215	-	-	2,745,215	3,016,316	-	-	3,016,316
Organizational services	6,916,262	-	-	6,916,262	6,398,492	-	-	6,398,492
Campaign								
Garden State Forward	3,728,320	-	-	3,728,320	329,157	-	-	329,157
Pride	11,440,508	-	-	11,440,508	12,335,155	-	-	12,335,155
Frederick L. Hipp Foundation	106,034	-	-	106,034	105,301	-	-	105,301
NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group	211,509	-	-	211,509	108,130	-	-	108,130
Disaster Relief	19,390	-	-	19,390	14,756	-	-	14,756
Total program services	<u>98,747,523</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98,747,523</u>	<u>91,352,134</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>91,352,134</u>
ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL:								
Executive office	4,682,274	-	-	4,682,274	4,382,240	-	-	4,382,240
Business division	12,018,679	-	-	12,018,679	11,764,188	-	-	11,764,188
Total administrative and general	<u>16,700,953</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,700,953</u>	<u>16,146,428</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>16,146,428</u>
Expenses before depreciation, postretirement benefit cost, and net (gain) loss on disposal of fixed assets	115,448,476	-	-	115,448,476	107,498,562	-	-	107,498,562
Depreciation and amortization	2,049,573	-	-	2,049,573	1,818,369	-	-	1,818,369
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	(91,311)	-	-	(91,311)
Postretirement benefit cost	14,847,50	-	-	14,847,50	11,590,960	-	-	11,590,960
Total expenses	<u>132,345,551</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>132,345,551</u>	<u>120,816,580</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>120,816,580</u>
Increase (decrease) in net assets	5,140,273	4,431	210,325	5,355,029	2,904,892	100,743	(139,961)	2,865,674
Net assets at beginning of year	(25,754,070)	20,569	2,513,610	(23,219,891)	(17,302,780)	(80,174)	2,653,571	(14,729,383)
FASB ASC 715 other comprehensive income	(61,777,290)	-	-	(61,777,290)	(11,356,182)	-	-	(11,356,182)
Net assets at end of year	<u>\$(82,391,087)</u>	<u>\$25,000</u>	<u>\$2,723,935</u>	<u>\$(79,642,152)</u>	<u>\$(25,754,070)</u>	<u>\$20,569</u>	<u>\$2,513,610</u>	<u>\$(23,219,891)</u>

NOTES TO CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Aug. 31, 2016 and 2015

NOTE 1. NATURE OF THE ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

TYPE OF ACTIVITY – The New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) was established to promote the education interests of the State; to promote equal educational opportunity for all students; to secure and maintain for the office of teaching its true position among the professions; and to promote and guard the interests of employees who are in employment categories eligible for membership, exclusively in the State of New Jersey.

METHOD OF ACCOUNTING – The financial statements are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting.

Basis of Presentation – NJEA reports the amounts for each of three distinct classes of net assets and changes therein - permanently restricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets and unrestricted net assets - based on the existence or absence of donor-imposed restrictions.

BASIS OF CONSOLIDATION – The consolidated financial statements include the accounts of the New Jersey Education Association, the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc., Garden State Forward, NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group, and the Bolivar L. Graham Intern Foundation, Inc. NJEA maintains a political action committee as a separately segregated fund. The assets, liabilities, and activity of this related fund are not included in the accompanying financial statements. All significant intercompany account balances have been eliminated in consolidation.

INVESTMENTS – Investments in fixed income mutual funds, equity mutual funds, the international equity mutual fund, the balanced mutual fund, and short-term investments are carried at fair value as provided by the broker, which generally represents quoted market prices or net asset value of the mutual funds as of the last business day of the year. The investment in the mortgage-backed security is carried at estimated fair value as provided by the broker. The real estate limited partnership is carried at estimated fair value based on the net asset value of the limited partnership as provided by SEI.

Membership Dues – Membership dues are recognized as revenue based on the membership period covered by the

individual member's dues. Allowance for uncollectible accounts is considered unnecessary and is not provided.

FIXED ASSETS – Fixed assets are stated at cost. Major additions are capitalized while replacements, maintenance, and repairs which do not improve or extend the lives of the respective assets are charged to expense on a current basis. Depreciation and amortization of fixed assets are computed using the straight-line method at rates calculated to allocate the cost of the applicable assets over their estimated useful lives, which are generally from two to fifteen years on furnishings, fixtures, vehicles, and equipment, and from ten to fifty years on buildings and improvements. Depreciation and amortization expense totaled \$2,049,573 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$1,818,369 for 2015.

DEFERRED REVENUE – Deferred revenue consists of exhibit fees, NEA grants and reimbursements, membership dues, subscriptions, and advertising received in advance.

CASH – For purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents are considered to be amounts in bank checking accounts and overnight sweeps accounts, subject to immediate withdrawal.

FUNCTIONAL ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES – The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the consolidated statements of activities.

RESTRICTED NET ASSETS – NJEA records applicable membership assessments, gifts, and other assets as additions to the permanently restricted net assets of the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc. Investment income from the Foundation's investments is temporarily restricted for use for the Foundation's program service. The Foundation was organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes to advance and improve the quality of education and the teaching profession in New Jersey through the study, creation and funding of innovative programs or projects which will further educational and instructional excellence. It is intended that grants for all Foundation programs or projects will be funded by earnings from the Foundation's investments.

NJEA records all applicable contributions and donations received from members, the general public, and NJEA affiliates for the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund (the Disaster Relief Fund) (formerly the Hurricane Sandy Back to School

Fund) as temporarily restricted net assets of NJEA. These contributions and donations can only be used for either a direct benefit to a member such as replacing belongings lost as a result of the hurricane or for general support to a school such as replacing damaged books, repairs, etc. Contributions from NJEA to the Disaster Relief Fund are unrestricted contributions that are designated for the Disaster Relief Fund. These contributions can be for either a direct benefit to a member or for general support to a school. Contributions from the NJEA Member Benefits Fund to the Disaster Relief Fund are unrestricted contributions that are designated for the Disaster Relief Fund. These contributions can only be used for a direct benefit to a member and cannot be used for general support to a school.

NJEA records all applicable contributions to Garden State Forward as temporarily restricted net assets of NJEA. The purpose of Garden State Forward is to make independent expenditures regarding New Jersey candidates, or support of committees or organizations that make only independent expenditures regarding such candidates. Garden State Forward is funded by contributions from NJEA.

Temporarily restricted net assets are "released from restrictions" when the amounts are expended for the purposes specified.

ESTIMATES – The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

RECLASSIFICATION – Certain reclassifications have been made to prior year amounts to conform to the current year presentation.

NOTE 2. RECEIVABLES

Amounts due from the National Educational Association (NEA) represent funds due on various projects and programs supported in total or in part by NEA.

Advances to employees represent initial expense advances made to employees. Upon termination or retirement, a final expense reconciliation is required for all amounts advanced.

NOTE 3. INVESTMENTS

The following summary presents the cost and fair value for each of the investment categories as of August 31, 2016 and 2015:

	2016 Cost	2016 Fair Value	2015 Cost	2015 Fair Value
UNRESTRICTED:				
Fixed income mutual funds	\$56,347,078	\$56,258,406	\$63,265,783	\$61,830,857
Equity mutual funds	25,111,446	26,614,065	16,069,163	18,403,424
International equity mutual fund	15,249,100	16,079,695	14,922,738	15,305,746
Balanced mutual fund	5,392,224	7,130,511	5,193,730	6,895,608
Short-term investments	168,907	168,905	139,075	139,075
Mortgage-backed security	201,441	93,108	250,241	119,843
Real estate limited partnership	6,160,000	10,257,030	4,360,000	7,444,940
Total unrestricted	<u>108,630,196</u>	<u>116,601,720</u>	<u>104,200,730</u>	<u>110,139,493</u>
TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED:				
Fixed income mutual funds	1,002,967	979,942	969,718	931,035
Equity mutual funds	1,287,927	1,309,405	1,150,140	1,185,476
International equity mutual fund	460,695	453,521	450,705	443,534
Balanced mutual fund	<u>135,781</u>	<u>184,416</u>	<u>124,687</u>	<u>167,955</u>
Total temporarily and permanently restricted	<u>2,887,370</u>	<u>2,927,284</u>	<u>2,695,250</u>	<u>2,728,000</u>
Total investments	<u>\$111,517,566</u>	<u>\$119,529,004</u>	<u>\$106,895,980</u>	<u>\$112,867,493</u>

Investment income for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 consisted of the following:

	2016	2015
UNRESTRICTED:		
Interest and dividends	\$ 4,663,483	\$ 5,815,321
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	2,372,298	(7,527,613)
Investment fees	(401,251)	(334,581)
	<u>\$ 6,634,530</u>	<u>\$ 2,046,963</u>
TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED:		
Interest and dividends	19,911	13,459
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	6,972	(239,372)
Investment fees	(6,755)	(6,787)
	<u>\$ 20,128</u>	<u>\$ (232,700)</u>

NOTE 4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Basis of Fair Value Measurement:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that NJEA has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques maximize the use of relevant observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016:

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$ 57,238,348	\$ 57,238,348	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	27,923,470	27,923,470	-	-
International equity mutual fund	16,533,216	16,533,216	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	7,314,927	7,314,927	-	-
Short-term investments	168,905	168,905	-	-
Mortgage-backed security	93,108	-	93,108	-
Real estate limited partnership	10,257,030	-	-	10,257,030
	<u>\$119,529,004</u>	<u>\$109,178,866</u>	<u>\$93,108</u>	<u>\$10,257,030</u>

LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2016:**REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**

Beginning balance	\$7,444,940
Unrealized gains	2,812,090
Ending balance	<u>\$10,257,030</u>

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2015:

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$ 62,761,892	\$ 62,761,892	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	19,588,900	19,588,900	-	-
International equity mutual fund	15,749,280	15,749,280	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	7,063,563	7,063,563	-	-
Short-term investments	139,075	139,075	-	-
Mortgage-backed security	119,843	-	119,843	-
Real estate limited partnership	7,444,940	-	-	7,444,940
	<u>\$112,867,493</u>	<u>\$105,302,710</u>	<u>\$119,843</u>	<u>\$7,444,940</u>

LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2015:**REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP**

Beginning balance	\$6,493,620
Unrealized gains	951,320
Ending balance	<u>\$7,444,940</u>

THE UNFUNDED COMMITMENTS AND REDEMPTION INFORMATION ARE AS FOLLOWS AT AUGUST 31, 2016:

	Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice period
REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP				
SEI Core Property Fund	\$10,257,030	\$ -	Quarterly	65 days*

* - Withdrawal request is capped at 90% with a 10% holdback in escrow until the completion of the fund's annual audit.

The investment objective of the SEI Core Property Fund is to invest in a diversified strategy of property funds.

The availability of observable market data is monitored to assess the appropriate classification of financial instruments within the fair value hierarchy. Changes in economic conditions or model-based valuation techniques may require the transfer of financial instruments from one fair value level to another. In such instances, the transfer is reported at the beginning of the reporting period.

For the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2, or 3.

The SEI Core Property Fund is measured at fair value, without adjustment by NJEA, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

NOTE 5. FIXED ASSETS

The following is a summary of fixed assets by category as of August 31, 2016 and 2015:

Category:	2016	2015
Buildings		
180 West State Street	\$12,408,020	\$12,267,728
186-190 West State Street	5,103,787	4,992,650
Regional offices	3,204,169	2,973,505
Total buildings	20,715,976	20,233,883
Land	1,119,714	1,119,714
Computer equipment	6,961,559	6,442,756
Furniture, equipment, and vehicles	4,326,957	4,137,204
Total fixed assets	33,124,206	31,933,557
Less: accumulated depreciation	(19,101,447)	(17,052,723)
Net fixed assets	<u>\$ 14,022,759</u>	<u>\$ 14,880,834</u>

NOTE 6. OBLIGATIONS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

NJEA is obligated under certain leases accounted for as operating leases. For the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, rent expense relating to these leases amounted to \$1,572,566 and \$1,724,537, respectively. As of August 31, 2016, the future minimum rental payments required under these non-cancelable operating leases are as follows:

Year Ending August 31,	
2017	\$1,268,834
2018	988,350
2019	785,100
2020	642,300
2021	503,900
Thereafter	434,000
Total	<u>\$4,622,484</u>

Under the normal course of operations, NJEA expects to continue to lease the facilities and equipment or similar facilities and equipment covered under such leases beyond the expiration of the current agreements.

NOTE 7. LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

Long-term liabilities as of August 31, 2016 and 2015 consist of deferred compensation arrangements of one former NJEA president totaling \$284,293 and \$273,856, respectively, and obligations under capital leases totaling \$933,435 and \$1,124,393 as of August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

At August 31, 2016, the fixed assets under capital leases had an original cost of \$1,145,228 and accumulated amortization of \$341,759, of which \$227,839 was charged to expense during the year ended August 31, 2016.

The following is a schedule by years of future minimum lease payments required under these capital leases with the present value of the net minimum lease payments as of August 31, 2016:

Year Ending August 31,	
2017	273,707
2018	273,707
2019	273,707
2020	273,707
Total minimum lease payments	1,094,828
Less: Amount representing interest	(161,393)
Present value of net minimum lease payments	<u>\$ 933,435</u>

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS

NJEA has a defined benefit pension plan covering substantially all employees. Under terms of the plan, eligible employees contribute 3.50% of their salaries and NJEA contributes an amount that is based on the recommendation of the consulting actuary. NJEA has multiple non-pension postretirement benefit plans. The plan provides postretirement medical and life insurance covering substantially all employees. NJEA reports in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standards Codification 715, "Compensation-Retirement Benefits" (FASB ASC 715).

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
Projected benefit obligation at August 31	\$430,178,710	\$370,500,205	\$216,177,014	\$166,243,888
Fair value of plan assets at August 31	364,890,232	322,588,428	64,757,697	60,927,145
Funded status	<u>\$(65,288,478)</u>	<u>\$(47,911,777)</u>	<u>\$(151,419,317)</u>	<u>\$(105,316,743)</u>
Accumulated benefit obligation at August 31	<u>\$382,601,970</u>	<u>\$331,407,998</u>	<u>\$216,177,014</u>	<u>\$166,243,888</u>
Accrued benefit cost recognized in the consolidated statement of financial position	<u>\$(65,288,478)</u>	<u>\$(47,911,777)</u>	<u>\$(151,419,317)</u>	<u>\$(105,316,743)</u>

Amounts recognized as deductions from net assets include:

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$(7,950,334)	\$ 266
Net loss	134,342,233	109,174,869	95,258,006	50,697,480
	<u>\$134,342,233</u>	<u>\$109,174,869</u>	<u>\$87,307,672</u>	<u>\$50,697,746</u>

The amounts that will be amortized from net assets into net periodic benefit cost over the next fiscal year are:

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$(574,031)	\$ 266
Net loss	8,927,113	7,190,912	7,276,928	3,463,865

Weighted average assumptions at August 31

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
Discount rate	3.59%	4.46%	3.59%	4.46%
Expected return on plan assets	7.50	7.50	8.00	8.00
Rate of compensation increase	6.58	6.58	6.58	6.58

The expected return on plan assets was determined by review of historical rates of return on assets similar to those in the Plans' portfolios.

For measurement purposes, the per capita costs of covered health care were assumed to be the following:

Age	Traditional	PPO with Old Post-65 Rx Plan	HMO	Current Retirees with New Post-65 Rx Plan
55	\$ 13,737	\$ 13,324	\$ 13,102	\$ N/A
60	16,650	16,138	15,863	N/A
65	9,449	9,449	9,449	7,745
70	10,690	10,690	10,690	8,636
75	11,643	11,643	11,643	9,319
80	12,114	12,114	12,114	9,696

The healthcare trend rate has a significant effect on the amounts reported. If the assumed rate increased by one percentage point, that would increase the liability as of August 31, 2016 by \$44,084,056.

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2016	2015	2016	2015
Benefit cost expensed	\$ 7,209,337	\$ 3,031,472	\$ 13,700,470	\$ 11,594,319
Benefit cost FASB ASC 715	25,167,364	24,781,675	36,609,926	(13,425,493)
Employer contributions	15,000,000	15,000,000	4,207,822	6,016,765
Plan participant contributions	1,113,940	1,093,654	-	-
Benefits paid	(14,250,969)	(13,654,883)	(4,397,609)	(4,374,867)

The Pension Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2016 and 2015 is 7.50%. The Other Postretirement Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2016 and 2015 is 8.00%. As defined in FASB ASC 715, this assumption represents the rate of return on plan assets reflecting the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested or to be invested to provide for the benefits included in the benefit obligation. The assumption has been determined by reflecting expectations regarding future rates of return for the investment portfolio, with consideration given to the distribution of investments by asset class and historical rates of return for each individual asset class.

Changes Since the Prior Valuation

The discount rate assumption for the postretirement benefit plan was changed from 4.46% as of August 31, 2015 to 3.59% as of August 31, 2016 to match the discount rate used for the Sponsor's pension plan.

There was a plan change effective January 1, 2016. NJEA offered a one-time cash payment to Medicare eligible participants to switch to a higher copay prescription drug plan. About 70% of the Medicare eligible participants are enrolled in the higher copay prescription plan. The future Medicare eligible retirees do not have the option to enroll in the new plan.

In addition, effective June 1, 2016, the NJEA medical insurance moved from Horizon BCBS to Continental Benefits and there were slight changes to the plan's design.

NJEA's overall strategy is for its Plans to invest in securities that will achieve a rate of return sufficient to meet or exceed the benefit plans' actuarial interest assumption. In general, NJEA's goal for its Plans is to maintain the following allocation ranges:

	Pension Benefits	Other Benefits
Equity securities	50%	65%
Debt securities	34%	30%
Real estate	8%	5%
Opportunity investment	8%	-

Following is the information about the fair value measurements of the Pension Plan's assets:

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Basis of Fair Value Measurement:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the Plan has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations	\$ 41,581,319	\$ 41,581,319	\$ -	\$-
Common collective trust-opportunity hedge fund of funds	26,358,544	-	-	26,358,544
Common collective trust-real estate	29,521,577	-	-	29,521,577
Equity mutual funds	42,692,208	42,692,208	-	-
International equity funds	39,217,513	39,217,513	-	-
Fixed income mutual funds	171,157,857	171,157,857	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	13,026,553	13,026,553	-	-
Money market mutual fund	1,334,579	1,334,579	-	-
	<u>\$364,890,150</u>	<u>\$309,010,029</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$55,880,121</u>

LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016

	Beginning Balance	Realized Gains (losses)	Unrealized Gains (losses)	Purchases	Sales/Repayments	Ending Balance
Common collective trust-opportunity hedge fund of funds	\$22,994,883	(1,010,857)	\$358,544	26,000,000	(21,984,026)	\$26,358,544
Common collective trust-real estate	26,462,199	-	3,059,378	-	-	29,521,577
Total	<u>\$49,457,082</u>	<u>\$(1,010,857)</u>	<u>\$3,417,922</u>	<u>\$26,000,000</u>	<u>\$(21,984,026)</u>	<u>\$55,880,121</u>

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2015

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations	\$ 33,810,204	\$ 33,810,204	\$ -	\$ -
Common collective trust-opportunity hedge fund of funds	22,994,883	-	-	22,994,883
Common collective trust-real estate	26,462,199	-	-	26,462,199
Equity mutual funds	42,143,545	42,143,545	-	-
International equity funds	35,261,988	35,261,988	-	-
Fixed income mutual funds	146,610,541	146,610,541	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	14,175,648	14,175,648	-	-
Money market mutual fund	1,129,406	1,129,406	-	-
	<u>\$322,588,414</u>	<u>\$273,131,332</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$49,457,082</u>

LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2015

	Beginning Balance	Realized Gains (losses)	Unrealized Gains (losses)	Purchases	Sales/Repayments	Ending Balance
Common collective trust-opportunity hedge fund of funds	\$22,985,193	\$ -	\$ 9,690	\$ -	\$ -	\$22,994,883
Common collective trust-real estate	23,092,387	-	3,369,812	-	-	26,462,199
Total	<u>\$46,077,580</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$3,379,502</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$49,457,082</u>

NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (CONTINUED)

The SEI Opportunity Collective Fund and SEI Core Property Collective Investment Fund are measured at fair value, without adjustment by the Plan, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2016.

In accordance with relevant accounting standards, the unfunded commitments and redemption frequency information and redemption notice periods are as follows at August 31, 2016:

	Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period
Common collective trust - opportunity hedge fund of funds:				
SEI Opportunity Collective Fund	\$26,358,544	\$ -	Quarterly	65 days*
Common collective trust - real estate:				
SEI Core Property Collective Investment Trust	29,521,577	-	Quarterly	65 days#
Total	\$55,880,121	\$ -		

* - Withdrawal request is capped at 90% with a 10% hold back in escrow until the completion of the fund's annual audit.

- Withdrawals may be limited to 25% of the net asset value of the fund on any given redemption date in circumstances where the fund's Trustee believe that any such redemption could compromise the ongoing performance or operations of the fund.

The investment objective of the SEI Special Situations Collective Fund is to invest in a diversified strategy of hedge fund of funds.

The investment objective of the SEI Core Property Collective Investment Trust is to invest in funds that acquire, manage, and dispose of commercial real estate properties.

Following is the information about the fair value measurements of the Other Postretirement Plan's assets:

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$15,390,933	\$15,390,933	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	35,830,310	35,830,310	-	-
International equity mutual fund	9,368,450	9,368,450	-	-
International fixed income mutual fund	199,992	199,992	-	-
Money market mutual fund	3,967,810	3,967,810	-	-
	<u>\$64,757,495</u>	<u>\$64,757,495</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2015

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$15,683,808	\$15,683,808	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	36,574,720	36,574,720	-	-
International equity mutual fund	8,088,835	8,088,835	-	-
International fixed income mutual fund	301,852	301,852	-	-
Money market mutual fund	277,810	277,810	-	-
	<u>\$60,927,025</u>	<u>\$60,927,025</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>



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NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (CONTINUED)

The amount expected to be contributed to the plans for the year ended August 31, 2016, for pension benefits is \$16,000,000. Benefits expected to be paid during the ensuing five years and thereafter are approximately as follows:

	Pension Benefits	Other Benefits
2017	\$ 16,543,719	\$ 4,812,558
2018	17,253,380	5,175,924
2019	18,136,077	5,885,925
2020	19,064,813	6,301,028
2021	19,889,547	6,830,870
2022-2026	<u>109,246,662</u>	<u>41,313,164</u>
	<u>\$200,134,198</u>	<u>\$70,319,469</u>

NOTE 9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES

NJEA is a member of the National Education Employees Assistance Fund (NEEAF). NEEAF is a not-for-profit corporation established for the purpose of guaranteeing loans for members of the National Education Association (NEA) and Participating Affiliates required during employment crises through pooling of credit of the NEA and the Participating Affiliates.

The NEEAF by-laws state that any State Association may become a member by delivering to the Corporation (NEEAF) a notice accepting membership; said notice to be accompanied by an irrevocable letter of credit (LOC), restricted cash, or line of credit; committing \$2.00 per State Association member on the basis of the number of active and educational support membership in the State Association as of January 15 of the membership year. The irrevocable letter of credit, restricted cash, or line of credit shall be for a period of at least 12 months to expire as of March 31 of any year and shall be renewed at its expiration in order to maintain continuing participatory rights.

For the period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016, NJEA designated \$345,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. For the period April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, NJEA designated \$345,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, there were no guaranteed loans to members outstanding.

NOTE 10. LITIGATION

Certain claims, suits, and complaints arising in the ordinary course of business have been filed or are pending against NJEA. In the opinion of NJEA's management and legal counsel, the ultimate outcome of these claims will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position of NJEA.

NOTE 11. TAX STATUS

NJEA is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey and is qualified under the provisions of Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code as a labor organization exempt from Federal income tax.

The Bolivar L. Graham Intern Foundation, Inc., the Frederick L. Hipp Foundation for Excellence in Education, Inc., and the NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group are not-for-profit organizations incorporated under the laws of the State of New Jersey. They are qualified under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and are exempt from Federal income tax.

Garden State Forward is a qualified organization under Section 527 of the Internal Revenue Code which provides for the exemption from Federal income tax of "exempt function income" of a political committee that is a separate segregated fund of an exempt organization which is not a political organization. Contributions received are exempt function income provided that the receipts are primarily expended for an exempt function, which is described in Note 1, or for some or all of its administrative expenses. However, interest income, if any, will be taxed.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to evaluate tax positions taken by NJEA and recognize a tax liability if NJEA has taken an uncertain position that, more likely than not, would not be sustained upon examination by the U.S. Federal, state, or local taxing authorities. NJEA is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress. Typically, tax years will remain open for three years; however, this may differ depending upon the circumstances of NJEA.

NOTE 12. CASH CONCENTRATIONS

NJEA places its cash with institutions deemed to be creditworthy. Cash balances may, at times, exceed insured deposit limits. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, NJEA had cash totaling \$13,763,488 and \$14,759,441, respectively, in excess of FDIC insured coverage. This included the cash maintained in overnight sweeps accounts which invest in money market mutual funds which are not insured by the FDIC.

NOTE 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

NJEA has a common officer with the New Jersey Education Association Member Benefit Fund (the Member Benefit Fund). During the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, the Member Benefit Fund donated \$4,000 and \$6,000, respectively, to the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund.

NJEA has common officers with the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (the Center). During the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, NJEA donated \$1,000,000 and \$755,000, respectively, to the Center for the purpose of providing professional learning experiences, resources, and research to educators.

NOTE 14. LONG TERM DEBT

During the year ended August 31, 2013, NJEA obtained a note payable from Beneficial Bank totaling \$1,900,000. This note requires monthly payments of \$38,505. The note payable has a variable interest rate and final payment is due on November 1, 2017. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, the balance of the note payable was \$563,115 and \$993,344, respectively.

Interest payments for the note payable totaled \$31,876 and \$48,716 for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

Year Ending August 31,

2017	\$447,924
2018	<u>115,191</u>
	563,115
Less: current portion	<u>(447,924)</u>
Long-term portion	<u>\$115,191</u>

NOTE 15. LONG TERM CAPITAL ASSETS

Management has elected to designate a portion of NJEA's investments and investment income for the purchasing of long term capital assets. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, investments designated for this purpose totaled \$39,045,914 and \$41,889,645, respectively. Investment income earned on the designated investments totaled \$2,759,022 and \$(1,928,642) for the years ending August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively.

NOTE 16. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

NJEA invests in various investments. Investments are exposed to various risks such as economic, interest rate, market, and sector risks. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investments, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in the values of investments will occur in the near term and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the Consolidated Statements of Financial Position.

The liabilities for accrued pension cost and accrued postretirement benefit cost - other are based on certain assumptions pertaining to interest rates, inflation rates, and participant demographics, all of which are subject to change. Due to uncertainties inherent in the estimations and assumptions process, it is at least reasonably possible that changes in these estimates and assumptions in the near term would be material to the financial statements.

NOTE 17. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

NJEA has evaluated subsequent events through December 13, 2016, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and they have been evaluated in accordance with relevant accounting standards. 📅

Identify floors that may emit mercury vapor

By Adrienne Markowitz and Eileen Senn

Not all health hazards in schools are well-recognized. Until recently, very few people had heard that some rubber-like floors in school gyms, tracks, and other locations can emit mercury vapor. Investigations between 2003 and 2010 by five state health departments and the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) were not well-publicized. NJEA first learned about this problem in Bergen County when a middle-school gym floor, which was being replaced, was tested and found to have high enough mercury levels to require disposal as hazardous waste. The local association wisely reached out to its UniServ field representative for help. NJEA asked industrial hygiene consultants from the NJ Work Environment Council (WEC) to research the issue and prepare a description of the problem, recommended actions, and feasible solutions.

NJEA shared these findings with the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), putting them on notice that it is the responsibility of local boards of education to eliminate any mercury exposures in schools from these floors. NJSBA put a notice about the floors on its website in January.

Now NJEA, WEC, and the Healthy Schools Now Coalition (HSN) are focused on educating and organizing school staff, students, parents and communities about the floors and reaching out to the media and state agencies including the New Jersey Schools Development Authority.

The mercury floor problem and health effects

Rubber-like polyurethane floors using 1,000 to 2,000 parts per million (ppm) of phenyl cercuric acetate (PMA) catalyst have been installed in schools and elsewhere since the 1960s. PMA breaks down and releases odorless, colorless mercury vapor. The floors and items that have been in contact with them emit mercury vapor indefinitely.

Mercury vapor can damage the central nervous system, kidneys, lungs, skin and eyes and is especially harmful to young children and fetuses whose bodies are still developing. Therefore, children and pregnant, or soon-to-be pregnant, women and older students are the most vulnerable.

The risk varies depending on how much mercury a person is exposed to, how long and often a person is exposed, and his or her age and health status. School staff that spends the most time in rooms with mercury-containing floors is likely to have the most mercury vapor exposure. For gym floors, this would likely be physical education and athletic staff. Custodians who clean and maintain the floors may also have significant exposure, especially if they use methods that raise dust or abrade the floor, such as buffing or vacuuming.

The low-level mercury exposures anticipated from mercury floors will hopefully not lead to immediate adverse health effects among those exposed. Medical testing and treatment are not anticipated to be needed. But the levels of exposure will vary in each situation depending on floor condition and room temperature and ventilation. Some exposures may turn out to be quite high. And in most schools the exposures have been ongoing for decades. Therefore, exposed school staff who have health concerns and families that have health concerns about their exposed children should see the “For more information” sidebar for where to access specialized medical help.

Local association action plan

School boards and district administrators may hesitate to identify mercury-containing floors because they perceive them as a problem that could be quite costly to address and upsetting to the public. Therefore, an organizing approach should be taken by school staff, parents and communities. A local association health and safety committee working with its UniServ field representative would be ideal to spearhead the effort. In addition, a joint union-management committee could be convened to deal with mercury floors.

Find and report suspect floors

It isn't known how many of these floors currently exist, whether they are still being installed, or what schools have them. Local associations can help to find out in two ways. First, they can formally request the school superintendent to provide any information that confirms or rules out the presence of mercury in floors in the district. Second, they can explore each school, track, bus garage and administration building to note all rubber-like floors that match the description of suspect floors in the box titled “How to recognize a suspect floor.” Anyone aware of a floor meeting the description of a suspect floor should promptly report its location and description to local education association leadership.

Test suspect floors and air for mercury

The only reliable way to determine whether a floor contains mercury is to collect several small, full-thickness bulk samples for analysis for mercury by an accredited laboratory. Therefore, locals should ask districts to test bulk samples of suspect floors. If floor bulk sampling results are above 1 ppm, a representative number of full-day, breathing zone air samples should be collected in the room for analysis for mercury by an accredited laboratory. If needed, a local association's health and safety

Anyone aware of a floor meeting the description of a suspect floor should promptly report its location and description to the local education association leadership.

How to recognize a suspect floor

Suspect floors are synthetic polyurethane—not wood or vinyl tile. They are resilient and rubber-like, water-resistant, and may be tinted any color. They are usually one-piece and poured in place but sometimes pieced. They can be in school multipurpose rooms, gyms, cafeterias, auditoriums, stages, and indoor and outdoor tracks.

committee can go through its UniServ field representative to request technical assistance from WEC industrial hygiene consultants who can help in formulating next steps and in interpreting consultant reports and sampling results.

Insist that districts implement solutions

After school boards and districts identify and test suspect floors, the local should insist that the district control exposures from, and eventually remove and replace, every mercury-containing floor. The local should insist that the district clearly and regularly communicates mercury risks and control measures with all those affected—staff, students, parents and families, contractors, and visitors. Everyone should be educated about the health hazards of mercury-containing floors and how to minimize their exposures. Signs warning of the mercury hazard should be posted in all locations with mercury-containing floors.

Districts must:

- Prevent installation of new mercury catalyst floors: If a new rubber-like floor is being considered for installation, a written statement should be obtained from the manufacturer that it does not contain a mercury catalyst.
- Do not cover or seal floors: Attempting to encapsulate, cover, or seal a mercury-containing floor may not be effective and may create more contamination and cost.
- Limit mercury exposures: Measures including keeping the floor and room cool and well-ventilated may limit mercury exposures. Ongoing air sampling in each season will be necessary.
- Remove mercury-containing floors using precautions: If air samples are above the most protective health-based levels, removal of the floors will be necessary. During removal, the floors will release substantially higher amounts of mercury, so trained contractors must use precautions to protect themselves and the school from being contaminated. The district must check with DEP Hazardous Waste at 609-943-3019 about disposing of the floors. 🏠

Adrienne Markowitz holds a Master of Science in Industrial Hygiene from Hunter College, City University of New York. Eileen Senn holds a Master of Science in Occupational Health from Temple University in Philadelphia. They are consultants with the New Jersey Work Environment Council, which is a frequent partner with NJEA on school health and safety concerns.

Not every polyurethane floor used mercury as a catalyst and not every floor which used mercury as a catalyst is a public health hazard. But some are, especially if they are damaged or deteriorated and in hot rooms with poor ventilation, no outdoor air being pulled in, and no air-conditioning.

For more information

- ✓ “WEC, NJEA, HSN Alert: Mercury Hazard to Staff and Students from Rubber-Like Floors in Schools,” February 2017. Go to njwec.org/2017/02/mercury.
- ✓ Mercury Hazard in Schools from Rubber-Like Polyurethane Floors, Health and Safety Guide, First Edition, September 2016. (Thomas will create a link for this document)
- ✓ “Medical Treatment for an Elemental Mercury Exposure Incident,” 3-pages, December 2012. Mt. Sinai Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health. Go to bit.ly/mercuryfactsheetsinai.
- ✓ “Physicians in New Jersey specializing in occupational and environmental illness,” New Jersey Department of Health listing. Go to bit.ly/environmentalillnessdocs.
- ✓ “Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU),” Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, 866-265-6201. Go to icahn.mssm.edu/research/pehsu. PEHSU can provide clinical consultation and education to families, health care professionals, public health officials and community organizations that have concerns regarding children's environmental health.



Finding apps from STEM to STEAM

The STEM to STEAM movement has evolved over the past several years and is advancing as a methodology to meet the needs of students in the 21st century.

Nancy Tsupros of Washington and Jefferson College defines STEM education as an interdisciplinary approach to learning. She writes that in STEM, rigorous academic concepts are coupled with real-world lessons in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in contexts that make connections between school, community, work and global enterprise.

STEAM adds the arts. It is an inquiry-based, project-based instructional approach offered in real-world contexts where students generate strategies and products that meet defined, standards-based outcomes. STEAM lessons allow educators to choose from a variety of lessons to find ones they can most easily adapt for their students.

"We dare our students to be wrong, to try multiple ideas, listen to alternate opinions and create a knowledge base that is applicable to real life as opposed to simply an exam," says Deron Cameron, the former principal of University Place Elementary School in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. His school was the first in the U.S. to be STEAM certified. Learn more at steamedu.com.

STEAM apps

A variety of apps are available that support a STEAM approach to instruction.

Screencastify

Screencastify is an extension for Google Chrome. It allows you to record your screen activity for creating tutorials, online lessons, and runs entirely in Chrome. It is useful for flipped classrooms, class projects, and compatible with EDPuzzle. You'll find it at www.screencastify.com.

EDPuzzle

EDPuzzle allows teachers to create lessons by importing videos from anywhere on the internet, cropping if necessary to select only relevant content. Teachers can add their own voices to the video and insert questions that students must answer before continuing. A spreadsheet of results makes it easy to review which students have completed the assignment and how they did on the quiz questions. Go to edpuzzle.com.

SketchUp

SketchUp is a site for learning 3-D modeling software, including Youtube tutorials. While the site can be challenging, it's well worth the effort. It is ideal for architectural plans, theater set design, and more. Visit www.sketchup.com.

Build with Chrome

Build with Chrome enables every student to become an engineer, while using virtual Legos in a 3-D space. Choose a brick, rotate it as needed, place the brick on a Lego board. This simple approach allows the teacher to give each student the chance to create something in a three dimensional space while looking at a two dimensional screen. Start building at www.buildwithchrome.com.

Scratch

This coding tutorial site allows users to create, build, collaborate, try, fail, try again and succeed. Students can produce their own projects, animations, games, music, stories and more, sharing around the world if they choose. By snapping blocks together to construct projects, students learn to think creatively, reason systematically and work collaboratively. (scratch.mit.edu)

goREACT

Become a virtual chemist by dragging elements from the periodic table to the reaction area. This app includes suggested reactions to help students get started. There are nearly 300 chemical reactions supported on the app. Find this virtual chemistry set at goreact.com.

Elements 4D

This app is part educational story and part game. Great for an introduction to chemistry, where students take two molecules, touch them together, and see the new compound. It is a fun way to learn about real-life chemistry. Visit elements4d.daqri.com.

Photomath

This app takes a picture of an equation using a smartphone camera and provides a solution with the steps for solving it. Recently added is the ability to read handwritten equations as well as a smart calculator that students can use to manually edit equations. Find solutions at photomath.net/en/.

CyArk

CyARK is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to use new technologies to create a free 3-D online library of the world's cultural heritage. There are 53 topics with full lesson plans that incorporate famous structures, with a variety of STEAM activities, from around the world. Start exploring at www.cyark.org/education.

All students benefit from STEAM and STEAM programs because they teach independent innovation and allow students to explore greater depths of all of the subjects by utilizing the skills learned. 🧠

The NJEA Technology Committee

The NJEA Technology Committee is one of over 50 NJEA committees made up of NJEA members. It is charged with the following responsibilities:

- Study the impact of technology on educational programs.
- Review technology curricula proposals and initiatives for educational appropriateness.
- Review state-supported funding proposals and make recommendations for funding improvements to provide the equipment, personnel, programs, and training necessary to institute all aspects of technology education.
- Educate NJEA members, legislators, and policymakers about the varied components of technology education.
- Recommend the types of programs needed in every school district to ensure students become technologically literate.
- Develop and initiate training opportunities for school personnel.

Committee members:

Committee Chair: Virginia Hoden, Ocean County
 Jane Armellino, Hunterdon County
 Diego Alvear, Union County
 Stephen Bouchard, Atlantic County (retired)
 Christopher Bowman, Burlington County
 Pamela Burnell, Atlantic County
 Gerard Carroll, Bergen County
 Sabina Ellis, Essex County
 Gregory Filipski, Somerset County
 Olive Giles, Mercer County
 Jessica Hoertel, Morris County
 Brian McLaughlin, Monmouth County
 Keith Presty, Middlesex County
 Karen Schwing, Ocean County
 Jasmine Slowik, Warren County
 Julie Stratton, Cape May County
 Bethany Weber, Salem County
 Stephen Whitehead, Gloucester County

The NJEA staff contact to the committee is Darryl Ensminger, associate director, Professional Development and Instructional Issues.

Dr. Joy Barnes-Johnson, a teacher at Princeton Regional High School, also contributed to this article.

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A CLOSER LOOK *monthly highlights*



APRIL
09

If you missed some shows in March, you can catch encore performances this month. From the NJEA Convention to a shark and a STEAM tank, see what's happening across the state in New Jersey's public schools. On April 2 and 9, NJTV will pre-empt the 7:30 p.m. shows, but you can catch them at 7:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. If you miss any of the stories, go to classroomcloseup.org.

watch

APRIL 9

New Jersey's Teacher of the Year, Argine Safari, smiles as her students prepare for a concert. Born in Armenia, the music teacher from Pascack Valley High School not only has passion for the arts, but also for respect of diversity and all cultures.

APRIL 16

On Easter Sunday, be sure to tune in to find out why Mickeala Bland started a Feminist Club at Union Senior High School. Find out some surprising facts about how recently women gained simple rights, such as applying for a bank account.

APRIL 30

The judges look stern during a Shark Tank Jr. presentation by students at Hunterdon Central Regional High School. Students from the entrepreneurship class turn their passions into a concept and pitch the idea to the sharks. They write a business plan and make their pitch.

Air times

NJEA's "Classroom Close-up NJ" has won 15 Emmy awards. It inspires and educates the public about the great things happening in New Jersey public schools. The show airs on Sundays on NJTV at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

**Classroom
Close-up NJ**
classroomcloseup.org

Visit classroomcloseup.org to watch individual segments, the entire show, or to see what's coming up. On Twitter, follow @CCUNJ and "like" the show at [facebook.com/crcunj](https://www.facebook.com/crcunj). The show continues to gain fans, especially since it is available online and can be downloaded or emailed to family and friends.



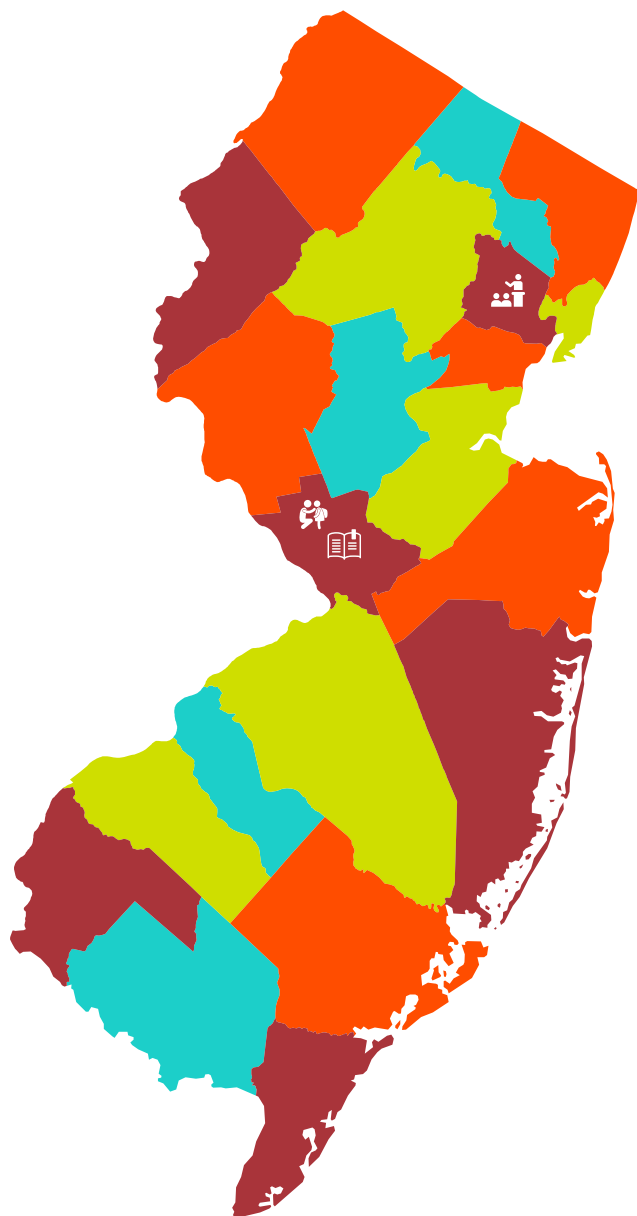
APRIL
16



APRIL
30

SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY:

Workshops, field trips, grants and more



highlights

Inclusion, teaching drama, and the transition to life after high school

These experiences have been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on njea.org. Providers seeking endorsement should call NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.

showcase

15th Annual Summer Inclusion Conference

The N.J. Coalition for Inclusive Education (NJCIE) will sponsor its 15th annual Summer Inclusion Conference, June 27-28. Montclair State College will host the two-day event. The conference draws speakers and presenters from across the country who specialize in the inclusion of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The featured speaker this year is Dr. Marilyn Friend, a well-known author and speaker on topics related to students with disabilities in the classroom. Her specialty is co-teaching and collaboration.

Over 60 workshops will be provided over two days on a variety of topics in special and general education, IEPs and Child Study Team function, Response to Intervention, Multi-tiered Systems of Support, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Mathematics and Literacy Instruction, and many more.

The cost for the event is \$150 per day or \$255 for both days. The registration deadline is June 23. For more information, contact Fred Buglione at 732-613-0400 or fredb@njcie.org. You may also visit www.njcie.org.

Summer institute for English language arts educators

The English Department at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) is offering a summer institute, "Teaching Drama (without fear)", for English language arts teachers July 10-13, 2017. Drama is a genre particularly well-suited to classroom study and yet often neglected, perhaps because language arts and English teachers have not always studied drama in much detail. This summer institute is designed to increase teachers' confidence and resources in reading, analyzing, teaching, and critiquing drama from the Western tradition—both European and American. A community of teachers and learners, the institute promotes curiosity and inquiry and offers mentorship from experts in drama, the English language, and pedagogy.

Each day offers a morning workshop/lecture that gives background and raises questions to consider about the day's topic. The afternoon session involves participants in a hands-on activity appropriate for classroom use.

The cost for the four-day institute is \$825 and provides 20 hours of professional development, covers a wide range of topics, and is taught by TCNJ faculty. For registration, go to bit.ly/tcnjellsummer.

For more information contact George Hefelle at 609-771-2540 or email aspire@tcnj.edu or visit bit.ly/tcnjellsummerdetails.

The transition to life after high school begins at 14

The Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey (LDANJ) invites teachers of grades 8-12 to attend the conference "Life After High School-Transition Begins at 14" being held on May 13 at NJHA Conference and Event Center in Princeton. This conference will have a variety of workshops related to preparing students with learning disabilities and attention issues for the transition to life after high school. Topics will include the difference between high school and college, the gap year, coaching, how to find the right college, a DOE presentation on transition IEPs, and more.

LeDerick Horne, author of *Empowering Students with Hidden Disabilities: A Path to Pride and Success*, will present the keynote. In addition to 16 workshops, there will be a Vendor Expo to provide additional information and resources.

The cost is \$50 for LDA members and \$75 for non-members. To register go to www.ldanj513.eventbrite.com. For more information, contact Leslie Rubinstein at 732-645-2738 or info@ldanj.org. The registration deadline is May 1. Visit www.ldanj.org for more information.

More to learn across the state

Winners! Workshop: A Closer Look at the Year's Best Books for Children

Join Judy Freeman to explore the top 100 books of 2016 for children in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. Examine children's responses to the books, network with fellow children's literature lovers; gather a treasure trove of new teaching ideas to enhance your curricula.

Judy Freeman is a consultant, writer, and speaker on children's literature, storytelling, and all aspects of librarianship. A former New Jersey school librarian, she gives conferences, workshops, speeches, and performances throughout the U.S. and internationally for teachers, librarians, parents, and children, and is a national seminar presenter for the Bureau of Education and Research.

Choose from three dates and venues:

- South Jersey: May 9, The Mansion on Main Street, 3000 Main St., Voorhees
- Central Jersey: May 10, The Imperia, 1714 Easton Ave., Somerset
- North Jersey: May 12, Birchwood Manor, 111 North Jefferson Road, Whippany.

The \$209 registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, and the brand new, comprehensive The WINNERS! Handbook, with a thoroughly annotated and indexed list of the year's best children's books, plus a huge array of ideas, lesson plans, teacher's guides, stories, songs, and a valuable list of exemplary websites.

Go to www.JudyReadsBooks.com for details and a registration form.

Free lecture series at Camden County College

At its Blackwood campus, the Camden County College Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility will offer a series of lectures this month on autism, art, and America and the Middle East.

Autism


- April 4 – Legal Issues for Families and Individuals with ASD after Age 21
- April 18 – Defining Autism: From Nonverbal to National Speaker

America and the Middle East

- April 5 – America and Iraq: Past, Present (and Future?)
- April 12 – Turkey in Turbulence
- April 19 – The Middle East is Changing
- April 26 – US-Saudi Arabia Relations in the 21st Century

Art

- April 4 – World War I and American Art
- April 25 – Philadelphia Firsts: A History of Philadelphia through Art
- May 2 – Frank Furness and George Hewitt: Architects of a Historic Moment
- May 9 – Modern Spirit: Henry Ossawa Tanner

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NJSEA leadership matters

How educators lead

By Jessica Quijano, NJSEA Vice President, The College of New Jersey

Leadership is typically thought of as a role in which a bold, wise and amiable person takes initiatives to lead a group of individuals, but that is the generalization of the leadership role that can obstruct the potential for emerging leaders. Rather than embracing everyone's individual story, the concern becomes how to fit into a predetermined mold. The problem is that there is no one type of leader.

Cindy Atlee and The Storybranding Group (www.storybranding.com) state that there are twelve archetypes of leaders. Dr. Carol S. Pearson created the archetypes, and The Storybranding Group adopted them to focus on the differences in how people think and act. It highlights the concept that someone's identity is a symbol of his or her individual strengths, values, passions, and purposes.

Educators are leaders by nature, and they are models of leadership for their students in the classroom or on a local, state or national level. They are the advocates for their students as they seek to bring to fruition the potential all students hold.

When it comes to classifying leaders, particularly those new leaders in a school setting, such as preservice educators, there exist four domains, each containing different archetypes with which a leader could identify. Educational leaders may connect strongly with a certain archetype or perhaps two or three. The intersections of

these archetypes, the uniqueness of our identities, and the collaboration with other educational and leadership styles allow leaders to reach their potential.

Leaders who make things work

Caregiver: Caregiver educators advocate for all students they encounter. They respond to a student's needs and aim to improve quality of life for the student. The Caregiver values compassion, dedication, generosity and helpfulness.

Ruler: Ruler educators are peacemakers who make decisions and use their influence wisely. They have the ability to defuse complex situations, and they value responsibility, competence, leadership, savvy and stewardship.

Creator: Creator educators are dreamers. They generate ideas for improving current circumstances, such as curriculum or pedagogy, with authenticity. They value imagination, expression, invention and innovation.

Leaders who get results

Hero: Hero educators are achievers who create goals and missions that they are determined to complete. Any challenge or obstacle can and will be overcome. Heroes thrive on the idea of making a difference in his or her school community, and they value determination, courage, discipline and energy.

Revolutionary: Revolutionary educators are challengers by nature. They view school, state, and national

policies as places for reform. Revolutionaries challenge the status quo—traditional practices that they do not believe benefit students. They value radical thinking, risk, rebelliousness and edginess.

Magician: Magician educators are catalysts in their schools and communities. They effectively transform the school climate while encouraging students to realize their visions and dreams. Magicians see all possibilities, especially the situations in which everyone can benefit. They value vision, inspiration, intention and synchronicity.

Leaders who build communities

Jester: Jester educators are entertainers, and they believe that learning should be light-hearted and fun, which could help alleviate some baggage students may bring into the classroom. They are clever and witty and model being present in the moment. Jesters value joy, humor, playfulness and resourcefulness.

Everyperson: Everyperson educators are realists who band together as a community. They acknowledge differences and build a community through camaraderie and support. They place a premium on students having their voices heard in the larger community. Everyperson educators value empathy, unity, fairness, and dignity.

Lover: Lover educators are connectors as they share their passions with all whom they encounter, committing themselves to enhancing the


quality of life for students and the community. They appreciate the individual and foster relationships that allow each recipient to flourish. The Lover educator values appreciation, passion, commitment and connection.

Leaders who learn and grow

Innocent: Innocent educators preserve what is right. They are optimistic that what is right will be achieved by carrying out ideals and values that benefit students. These educators take what is given to them, observe, analyze and renew the traditional ideas of being an educator. They value belief, hope, simplicity and renewal.

Explorer: Explorer educators experience new adventures and encourage new initiatives. They push for continual growth of the individual, the class as a whole, and themselves as educators by embracing new perspectives and utilizing new paths and techniques. The Explorer values discovery, freedom, individuality and integrity.

Sage: Sage educators are philosophers and investigators. They think through materials, circumstances, and daily occurrences to find insights and answers. Sages are curious to figure out why students behave in certain ways, and, without straying far from truth and reality, they conceive their own actions and methods. They value truth, clarity, knowledge and curiosity.

How do you lead? 

Educators are leaders by nature, and they are models of leadership for their students in the classroom or on a local, state or national level.

NJREA past, present and future

Enrollment in Medicare

As required by law, retired members or their dependents who qualify for state-paid, post-retirement medical benefits and are eligible for Medicare must enroll in both Parts A and B of Medicare. Medicare Part A is paid for while actively employed while Part B is paid for during retirement, usually through a deduction in the benefit recipient's Social Security check. State law requires the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHBP) to reimburse these eligible retirees and their dependents for the cost of enrolling in Medicare Part B.

Most members and their dependents will qualify for Medicare benefits under one of the following four conditions:

- Have reached age 65.
- Have received Social Security disability benefits for 24 months.
- Have end-stage renal disease.
- Have ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease).

If a member is currently receiving Social Security retirement benefits, he or she will be automatically enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B. The member does not need to contact anyone, but will receive a package in the mail three months before his or her 65th birthday with the new Medicare card.

However, if a member is 65, but is not receiving Social Security retirement benefits, he or she will need to actively enroll in Medicare. Members should sign up for Medicare approximately three months prior to turning 65 by visiting www.socialsecurity.gov or by calling Social Security at 800-772-1213.

When a Medicare-eligible member or dependent receives a Medicare card, the member must send a copy of the card to show proof of enrollment in Parts A and B to the Division of Pensions and Benefits in order to continue to receive post-retirement medical benefits without interruption. If this is not sent before the member is eligible for Medicare, his or her health benefits could be temporarily terminated. NOTE: Retirees enrolled in SEHBP should not sign up for alternate supplemental Medicare coverage; enrollment in another plan would result in the loss of SEHBP coverage.

The Division of Pensions will send a reminder letter to those who are about to qualify by means of turning 65. However, the Division of Pensions will not send a reminder letter to those who qualify by means of receiving Social Security disability benefits for 24 months, or contracting end-stage renal disease or ALS.

Any questions about this process should be directed to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at 609-292-7524.

NJREA leaders greet Ambassador Phil Murphy at the NJEA Legislative Conference. From left: NJREA Secretary Joan Wright, NJREA Treasurer Carol Kadi, Murphy, NJREA 1st Vice President Judy Perkins and NJREA 2nd Vice President Walt Krichling Jr.

New pension taxation law benefits retirees

Within the legislation that increased the gas tax by 23 cents a gallon in October, there were adjustments made for taxes in other areas. As a result, beginning in 2017, certain retirees may be able to exclude an additional amount of retirement and pension income from their New Jersey income taxes. By 2020, the amount of retirement and pension income that could be excluded from New Jersey income taxes will increase five-fold.

For those retirees who qualify—some age and income restrictions do apply—the exclusion amount will increase over a five-year phase-in period. The phase-in schedule is listed below:

Filer Type	Previous	2017	2018	2019	2020
Joint	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$60,000	\$80,000	\$100,000
Individual	\$15,000	\$30,000	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$75,000
Separate	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$50,000

It's important to note that no changes have been made to the federal income tax provisions for public employee pensions as a result of this law.

To learn more about whether or not you qualify for the exclusion, visit bit.ly/njpensiontaxlaw or contact the Division of Taxation at 609-292-6400.

Individuals with specific questions regarding their personal taxes should seek guidance from a tax professional.



For questions, call your county REA.
For trip details, check the county newsletter.

ATLANTIC COUNTY REA will hold its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 2 at Joseph's Restaurant in Egg Harbor City. Cost is \$27. To attend, call Linda Young at 609-226-6202.

BERGEN COUNTY REA welcomes you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 9 at the Seasons Restaurant in Washington Township. Cost is \$25. To attend, call Rina Goldman at 201-660-8200.

BURLINGTON COUNTY REA's spring meeting/luncheon will be on Thursday, May 11 at Marco's at Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Lisa Donatiello at 609-410-7197.

THE CAMDEN COUNTY REA welcomes you to its upcoming breakfast/workshop on Wednesday, April 26 at the CCREA office in Voorhees.

The **CCREA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on May 12 at Valleybrook Country Club in Blackwood. (NOTE: This is a different location than reported previously.) The guest speaker will be Ginger Gold Schnitzer, NJEA Government Relations director. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Barbara Haase at 856-627-3391.

Join **ESSEX COUNTY REA** for its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 17 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean Spiller will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Beverly Johnson Showers at 862-955-4133.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA welcomes you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 4 at Nicolosi Catering in Woodbury. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 856-228-6854.

HUDSON COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 3 at the LaReggia Restaurant in Secaucus. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Arlene Brown at 732-493-0662.

HUNTERDON COUNTY REA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 25 at the Mountainview Chalet in Asbury. Ambassador Phil Murphy will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$22 for HCREA members and \$27 for non-members. To attend, call Joyce Kucyn at 908-479-6656.

The **MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, June 8, at The Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. MCREA scholarship winners will be honored. The cost is \$30. To reserve, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

MORRIS COUNTY REA welcomes you to its next three events. The MCREA's scholarship fundraiser will be held on Friday, April 21 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Ginny Osborne at 973-697-2845.

The **MCREA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 10 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. Jim Del Giudice, local historian, will be the guest speaker.

MCREA will host its annual scholarship awards/luncheon on Wednesday, June 7 at The Mansion at Mountain Lakes. Cost for each event is \$26. To attend either luncheon, call Nancy Condit at 973-335-0990.

OCEAN COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 11 at Jack Baker's Lobster Shanty in Point Pleasant. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

Join **PASSAIC COUNTY REA** for its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, June 7 at The Brownstone in Paterson. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at 201-445-7577.

SALEM COUNTY REA will hold its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 17 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem. To attend, call Peggy Kavanaugh at 856-935-0075.

SOMERSET COUNTY REA's upcoming meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 3 at The Landing in Hillsborough. Jamie Novak, author and humorist, will be the guest speaker. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-359-2870.

The **SUSSEX COUNTY REA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Monday, June 5 at the Lafayette House in Lafayette. Annual scholarships will be presented. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Linda Adams at 973-827-6285. 🏠

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Member Testimonial

"I became familiar with the Buyer's Edge** program about eight years ago when we gutted our kitchen. We purchased all our new appliances through Buyer's Edge. We also worked with the cabinet place to purchase new cabinets and granite countertops. We actually moved our appliances—switched the refrigerator and the oven—which the designers helped us to figure out. We even went to the granite yard and selected the exact piece we wanted.

"We moved to another house about three years ago. We used Buyer's Edge again to purchase more new appliances. I worked with Miles this time and he was fantastic. We saved thousands of dollars, literally. I also have my mortgage through NJEA Member Benefits with Wells Fargo.

They were amazingly helpful as we sold and bought at the same time, which had us closing sale and purchase on the same day. Our mortgage rate was the best we could find and that was based on lots of research.

"I am pleased with our benefits and plan to continue utilizing them going forward. I have also shared Buyer's Edge information with quite a few of my colleagues at Hartshorn School."

Best,
Lisa Panarelli, Millburn EA

NJEA Web Giveaways

April Web Giveaway

One winner will receive a BOSE—SoundLink Bluetooth Speaker (choice of red, blue, black or white) from Buyer's Edge, Inc**

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Recent Winner:

Anne Gilmore from Washington Township EA (Gloucester County) won these three prizes:

- A Kindle from Discover Bank.
- \$200 travel credit toward a trip of \$1,500 or more from Trafalgar Guided Vacations. Trafalgar is sponsored by NEA Member Benefits.
- Two tickets to any SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment* park, excluding Discovery Cove, valid through Dec. 31, 2017.



Be sure to register online each month for the web giveaways!

*Member Discount Program and Access: Products and services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access are provided as a service to NJEA members and do not constitute an endorsement by NJEA or a representation regarding the products' quality or characteristics. NJEA makes no warranties expressed or implied, including the warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose regarding any products or services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access.

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Staff News

hires & promotions



NJEA welcomed **NELLO CICCONI** on March 1 as an associate director in the Communications Division responsible for video production.

Ciccone brings a wealth of knowledge about NJEA and its members' long history with NJEA, both on the crew of "Classroom Close-up NJ" and as a video consultant for Association projects since 2005. He has been an Adjunct Professor for Digital Video Production at the Community College of Philadelphia since 2013.

Ciccone received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies from the College of New Jersey. 🏠

Employment Opportunities at NJEA

Visit njea.org/jobs regularly for the latest postings.



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

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4/8
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NJEA EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEETING

4/25
Tuesday

NJEA PAC OPERATING
COMMITTEE

4/29
Saturday

PRIORITY SCHOOLS
CONFERENCE

5/5-6
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& RECRUITMENT
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4/1

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4/14

BALLOTING FOR NJEA
ELECTIONS ENDS

4/21

MINORITY LEADERSHIP AND
RECRUITMENT CONFERENCE

Event date: May 5-6

HAVE A QUICK TIP?

Do you have a great idea regarding classroom or school bus management? A better way to complete a mundane task? A favorite website? An app you and your students can't live without? The Review's "Bulletin Board" column includes quick tips from experts like you. Submissions should be 250 words or less.

You need not be a classroom teacher to make a submission. Secretaries, bus drivers, custodians, paraprofessionals and other educational support professionals should consider a submission.



Once blocked in New Jersey, vouchers loom large as federal support grows

NJEA members worked tirelessly to defeat school vouchers six years ago when the state came perilously close to approving the idea. Now, the issue threatens New Jersey public education again with a pro-voucher administration taking hold in Washington, D.C.

In 2011, a coalition of Democratic leaders and a once-powerful Gov. Chris Christie began moving a piece of voucher legislation known as the Opportunity Scholarship Act. The proposal set up a billion-dollar scheme of corporate tax credits and other public monies to fund a private school voucher program. Thanks to sustained objections by NJEA members—including a raucous Senate hearing held outdoors to accommodate busloads of private school students and scores of NJEA and NJREA members—Senate and Assembly leaders failed to get support to move ahead.

The issue receded from the public view in New Jersey until the election of President Donald Trump and his appointment of Betsy DeVos as Secretary of Education. Without any background in education, DeVos is singularly unqualified for the appoint-

ment. Her only credentials are the millions of dollars she and her family have donated to pro-voucher candidates for office nationally and particularly in Michigan, where her influence has led to a flood of unregulated, for-profit charter schools in Detroit.

Trump reiterated his support for vouchers in his Feb. 28 address to a joint session of Congress. Only 150 words of his 4,800 speech were devoted to education—and all of those words were a call to support vouchers. He termed education the “civil rights issue of our time,” but offered only solutions that would dismantle public schools.

H.R. 610—a symptom of the threat

For the president to get a voucher program, the most likely path is through the budget and appropriations process. That process does not require a supermajority in the U.S. Senate, where solid Democratic opposition looms.

With the threat of a filibuster, bills that need the 60-vote supermajority are unlikely to move. For example, H.R. 610, dubbed the Choices in Education Act of 2017, has received a lot of attention. H.R. 610 is a conglomeration of three broad topics: repealing the

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), repealing child nutrition standards and instituting a voucher program. ESSA was widely supported by Republicans in the last legislative session.

H.R. 610—with such a broad reach—would require many Democratic votes in the U.S. Senate. A sign of the bill’s lax support is its paltry list of sponsors—only three as of press time—and an unwillingness of any senator to introduce a companion version in the Senate.

While H.R. 610 may not be the vehicle to achieve vouchers, the threat is real and a nationwide voucher push is likely to appear in some form this year. For this reason, it remains critical to speak out on the threats of vouchers, tuition tax credits and other related schemes.

NJEA believes in a strong and inclusive system of public education that enables all students to succeed. Vouchers, education savings accounts, and tuition tax credits harm students, communities, and undermine public schools. There is no valid evidence that such schemes improve the performance of either the students receiving them or those left behind in public

schools. Instead, vouchers and other related initiatives only rob public schools of vital funding and resources and deprive students of the rights and protections guaranteed in public schools. 🇺🇸

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- Next Generation Science Standards - Connections for 3-5
- Integrating Engineering in the Science Classroom for 6-12
- Making Language Learning Essential in Your School Through Content and Inquiry
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- Practical Approaches for Educating Everybody's Children
- Strategies for Supporting Students: The Ins & Outs of Dyslexia
- Literacy to Illuminate - Literacy Across the Content for 6-12



Keynote

Teaching for Social Justice

A Keynote with Linda Christensen,

Rethinking Schools/Oregon Writing Project