

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW

September 2017  
NJEA.ORG



*an education and advocacy resource*



## There is power in the union

NJEA's new leadership team:  
President Marie Blistan, Vice President Sean M. Spiller  
(r) and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty (l).

Meet  
Marie Blistan

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LEFT: Carol Sabo of the Cape May County Special Services Staff Association, explains to viewers of NBC New York why she came to Trenton to protest Gov. Chris Christie's and Sen. Steve Sweeney's shut down of state government on July 1.

BELOW: Melissa Krupp of the Southern Regional EA presents "Understanding the Basics with Google Classroom" at NJEA's Techstock at Stockton University on July 19.



ABOVE: Yolette Pompilus of the Irvington EA, works toward certification as a Google Certified Educator during Google Boot Camp at NJEA on Aug. 1.

RIGHT: Ryan Griffin, from the Township of Franklin EA and Michael Morton of Bridgeton EA vote on a New Business Item at the NEA RA.





Lyzel Fearon (center), a student at Jefferson Elementary School in Union Township, wrote a poem about the hurtfulness of the "R" word. He recited the poem at the district's inclusive field day on May 19. The poem, in part read, "It's OK to be unique. We are not all the same." He is pictured with his mother, Lesley Fearon (r) and Union Township student Aissatou N'Diaye. Ms. Fearon is a classroom assistant, and Union Township EA member, at Jefferson. Visiting his mother's class inspired Lyzel to write and recite his poem.





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BY PATRICK RUMAKER



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Vision disabilities are among the most prevalent disabling conditions for children. Find out what parents should know and what you can do to help.

BY KRISTAN GROSS



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BY PATRICK RUMAKER



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BY SUE DECARO AND  
ERIN TAYLOR

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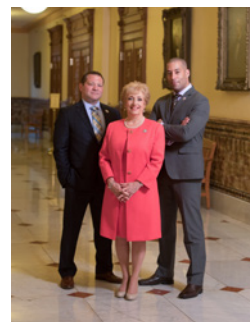
*What's next at NJEA*

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*ESSA plan falls short*



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#### ON THE COVER:

NJEA's new leadership team takes the helm. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan with Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty (l) and Vice President Sean M. Spiller are pictured in the Statehouse rotunda.

PHOTO BY  
JOHN O'BOYLE



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NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW



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

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## MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership dues are: Active professional: \$897 (full time); \$448.50 (part time) \$448.50 (on leave). Active supportive \$438 (full time) \$219 (part time) \$219 (on leave). Retired: \$84; \$985 (retired life). Retired ESP: \$59; \$610 (retired ESP life); Preservice \$32. 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*.





# Serving members and students

The busiest summers always seem to pass the fastest, and this year proved no exception. NJEA members across the state have been preparing for a new school year, learning new professional and advocacy skills, and volunteering for pro-public education candidates.

As always, NJEA is ready to help you meet the challenges you face in the new school year—and that starts with me, as your new NJEA president.

On Page 24, you'll learn more about my path to association involvement and how my commitment to my students has played a critical role in my development as a leader.

On Page 35, you'll learn about the roots of student entitlement and how to help your students see past their own scope of understanding to be more curious, engaged and well-rounded people.

NJEA believes that every child should have access to quality health

care, but in some communities that is harder than it should be. On Page 28 we take a closer look at vision care, and how NJEA has partnered with Optical Academy to provide low-cost access to vision services—as well as how to set up screenings in your community.

Finally, on Page 32 we'll take a look at how Union Township schools have joined school districts around the state in making physical education more inclusive of students with special needs through a Special Olympics program called Play Unified.

NJEA has been in my corner from the day I launched my career in education. I am proud to lead this organization and to continue its advocacy for members and the students we serve.

*Have a wonderful school year!*

*Marie Blistan*



Marie Blistan, now NJEA's president, at last summer's NEA Representative Assembly with East Brunswick EA members Lolita Clyburn (l) and Cheryll Willis (r).

## Officers Online



Marie Blistan

Twitter

**@MarieBlistan: Swedesboro-Woolwich BOE #DoTheRightThing – keep children the priority.**

NJEA President Marie Blistan live-tweeted video of a resident's speech from the June 28 school board meeting in Swedesboro-Woolwich opposing the privatization of the district's paraprofessionals. In the end, thanks to pressure from the community and NJEA members, the board voted to keep its paras.



Sean M. Spiller

Twitter

**RT @NJEA: "We make a difference every day. That's an incredible power and an incredible responsibility." -- @SpillerForNJEA**

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller retweeted an NJEA photo of the opening session of the NJEA Summer Leadership Conference on Aug. 9. The tweet included a quote from his remarks.



Steve Beatty

Twitter

**@SteveBeatty928: So many incredible and inspiring stories of people and groups dedicated to the cause of human and civil rights. #NEARA2017 @NJEA**

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty shared a photo from the NEA RA. Find it on his Twitter feed on July 1.



# Know. Lead. Act.

## Looking for member engagement tools?

Back to school is a busy time for everyone, but fall is the perfect time to hold an event that welcomes new members and helps them understand the critical work of a local association.

NJEA offers a sample agenda for a new member event that establishes your association as your members' support network.

For all members, you'll find agendas for 10-minute meetings that help you build member attendance at meetings they know won't burden their already packed schedules, the local president's handbook, a certificate of achievement for members who have reached tenure, and motivational and historical videos.

To download or order materials, visit [njea.org/engagement-tools](http://njea.org/engagement-tools).

You'll find additional resources for early-career members at [njea.org/membership/early-career](http://njea.org/membership/early-career).

## NJEA Early Educator Conference in Teaneck

Join your early career colleagues for a day of professional development and networking with early career educators just like yourself from all across the state. The conference will be held at the Teaneck Community Charter School, 563 Chestnut Avenue, Teaneck, on Saturday, Sept. 23. The day begins at 8 a.m. and concludes at 3 p.m.

The workshops are designed with new educators in mind. Documentation of professional learning will be provided.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided, and you'll have the opportunity to visit with NJEA's Member Benefits partners.

This event is free to NJEA members only.

Learn more and register at [njea.org/early-career](http://njea.org/early-career).

## Social justice art contest announced

At the 2017 NJEA Convention, one of the featured educational pieces will be a social justice exhibit called "The Awakening." Convention attendees will have an opportunity to engage in a multisensory learning experience through a walking tour. Multiple paths will take participants on a journey through information and visual displays that reveal stories of students' journeys through life.

Student art that represents the impact of educators on students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and immigrant students will be the centerpiece of "The Awakening."

The "Through Our Eyes" art contest will have middle and high school students across New Jersey illustrating, in their chosen medium, the experience of students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and immigrant students. Students may choose to illustrate any of nine provided scenarios from the perspective of the student in the situation, or that of another student onlooker.

For specifications regarding artwork, scenario details, deadlines, and prizes, visit [njeaconvention.org/awakening](http://njeaconvention.org/awakening).

Completed artwork must be received by your NJEA regional UniServ office by Oct. 6 at 5 p.m.

For any questions, contact NJEA Organizational Development Consultant Jaime Valente at [jvalente@njea.org](mailto:jvalente@njea.org).



## SELFIE OF THE MONTH

Shera Goldstein (l) and Breanna Ratkevic, both of Pennsauken Public Schools, worked toward their Level 2 Google Certification at NJEA Headquarters on Aug. 1

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

## NJEA Higher Education Collective Bargaining Summit

The NJEA Higher Education Collective Bargaining Summit on Oct. 7 will explore full funding for community colleges and political outreach. These two topics were developed from the May 2017 summit.

In the morning there will be a discussion facilitated by the NJEA Government Relations staff on the need for political action. After lunch The Art of Hosting Conversations that Matter—Open Spaces will continue the conversation. This method is an interactive means of creating a safe space for group dialogue. All participants' viewpoints are equally weighted.

The summit is open to all higher education members, and you do not have to have attended the May summit to participate.

### Date and location

**October 7, 2017**

**NJEA UniServ**

**Region 29-Higher Education**

Golden Crest Corporate Center

2279 Highway 33

Suite 508

Hamilton Square

### Schedule

**9:30 -10 a.m. – Coffee**

**10 a.m.- noon – Bargaining and Politics—How to Use One to Improve the Other**

**12-12:45 p.m. – Lunch**

**12:45-3 p.m. – Open Space**

Choose the session you want to attend based on the morning conversation.

The summit was developed by the Subcommittee on Higher Education Professional Development for NJEA and is funded by NJEA. It is being held to address the unique issues pertinent to higher education members.



## Win a Mighty Fingers project and build community spirit

Want a fun, innovative way to empower and inspire the next generation of change-makers? Then Mighty Fingers is for you!

Mighty Fingers is the brainchild of Lambertville artist Kelly Sullivan, a pioneer in the field of collaborative art and the founder of FingerSmear™ painting. Launched in 2012 and held in locations across the globe, Mighty Fingers energizes the human spirit through visualization and collaboration.

Using art and creativity as a vehicle for exploration and expression, students identify and share their thoughts about their school, their lives and their community. Using words and symbols to develop and convey their interests, values, and inner personal identity, students learn to find their voices, appreciate their own power, and discover how to use both to become the change-makers of their generation.

This project is targeted to middle school students in Grades 5-8. Up to 25 students may participate.

Five NJEA members will win a Mighty Fingers project for their school district, funded by NJEA. The funds will cover the cost of all project supplies, as well as provide a special commemorative smock for each participant. For more information, or if you want to be considered for an event, visit [www.njea.org/mightyfingers](http://www.njea.org/mightyfingers). The deadline to register is Oct. 15.

If you are selected to host a Mighty Fingers event, you must obtain administrative approval prior to an event date being set and obtain and complete permission and waiver forms for all students participating.

Additionally, you must work with your local association to develop a way for parents and the local community to get involved and see for themselves just how innovative New Jersey's public school students are. Check with your local president and UniServ field representative to see how NJEA's PRIDE in Public Education grants may cover these costs.

Want to learn more? Visit [www.MightyFingersFacingChange.com](http://www.MightyFingersFacingChange.com).

## Nominate a human and civil rights advocate

Nomination forms and documentation for the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Award are due Dec. 1, 2017. Awards will be presented at the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration next January.

Nominees may be an individual, group or organization working in the area of civil rights, and if eligible, NJEA members.

For award criteria and to make a nomination, go to [njea.org/HCRnomination](http://njea.org/HCRnomination).

For more information call 609-599-4561, ext. 2290.

## Nominations accepted for ESP awards

At the NJEA Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Conference on Feb. 2-4, NJEA will present the ESP of the Year Award to an NJEA member whose activities reflect the contributions of educational support professionals to public education. The purpose of the award is to recognize an individual who shows outstanding accomplishments in one or more of the following areas:

- Professional Practice
- Member Advocacy and Association Involvement
- Community Engagement
- Personal Achievement
- Enhancement of ESP Image

Your local association's nomination form must arrive at your county association office no later than Sept. 22.

County associations will select among local nominees. The county's nomination form for ESP of the Year must arrive at NJEA Headquarters no later than Oct. 13.

Forms for the local and county nominations can be found at [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).

In addition, NJEA is accepting nominations for the ESP Career Achievement Award and the Friend of ESP Award. For details and deadlines, visit [njea.org/esp](http://njea.org/esp).



# Boardwalk Run & Fun Walk

Friday, Nov. 10, 2017 | 9 a.m. | run and walk



Clip, complete and mail to:

**NJEA Boardwalk Run**

c/o Beneficial Bank

PO Box 13661

Philadelphia, PA 19101-3661

**Deadline for pre-entries Oct. 27**

Make checks payable to "NJEA"

## 39th Annual George M. Adams

5,000-meter race (3.1 miles)  
USATF sanctioned

Course: Traffic-free scenic boardwalk in front of Atlantic City Convention Hall

First NJEA male and first NJEA female runner will receive awards.

All Fun Walk participants will receive shirt and entry gift.

Please pick up number on Thursday, if possible, at the Boardwalk Run Booth outside Hall C.

### Age group awards to top three in these categories (male and female):

Junior up to age 19

Age 20-29

Age 30-39

Age 40-49

Age 50-59

Age 60-69

Age 70-79

Age 80+

### Entry Fees:

\$25 Pre-entry includes running shirt

\$15 No T-shirt

\$30 Thursday & Friday (includes shirt)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_  
(as of 11/10/2017)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Local Association \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Shirt size (Circle):    XXL   XL   L   M

This entry is for:

Please choose one: ☐ NJEA Member ☐ Non-member | ☐ Female ☐ Male | ☐ Run ☐ Walk

Pre-entry runners may pick up their numbers—and post-entry competitors may register for the race—at special Race Booth in new Convention Center on Thursday, Nov. 9 all day or at Registration Table at Boardwalk Convention Hall lobby at 8 am on Friday, Nov. 10. Registration for the 5,000-meter Run closes at 8:30 am Friday Nov. 10. Shirts must be picked up prior to the race or after the race on Friday, Nov. 10.

In consideration for accepting my entry, I, for myself, my heirs, and administrators, waive and release forever any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against NJEA, its agents and employees, the City of Atlantic City, and any and all participating sponsors and supporters. I also release the above named for all claims of damages, demands, and actions in any actions in any manner due to any personal injuries, property damage, or death sustained as a result of my traveling to and from and my participation in said race. I attest and certify that I am physically fit and have sufficiently trained for the completion of this event. Further, I hereby grant full permission to any and all of the foregoing to use my likeness for any purpose whatsoever.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature (if under age 18) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

FOR NJEA USE ONLY ☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Number



# Cool Stuff

## Educational shows at William Paterson University

To reserve seats for your students and for additional information on any of the shows seen below, contact Lavene Gass at [gassyoumansl@wpunj.edu](mailto:gassyoumansl@wpunj.edu) or 973-720-3178.

All performances take place at William Paterson University, Shea Center for Performing Arts, 300 Pompton Road in Wayne.

### Russian String Orchestra

Oct. 5, 2017, 12:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$8

RSVP by Sept. 28.

Founded in 1991, the orchestra, formerly known as Chamber Orchestra Kremlin, is composed of some of Russia's finest young string players, and has carved a niche for itself under the creative baton of its founder and music director, Misha Rachlevsky.

### Theater for Children with Autism

Theatreworks U.S.A. presents

Junie B. Jones

By: Marcy Heisler and Zina Goldrich

Dec. 4, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Tickets: \$8

RSVP by Monday, Nov. 13.

Adapted from the Junie B. Jones series of books by Barbara Park, everyone's favorite first-grader, Junie B. is back, in the "bestest musical ever," with singing, dancing and mischief! Please note: This performance is only open to classes and families with children with autism.

### A Literature to Life® Stage Presentation of The Giver

By: Lois Lowry

Performed by: Aurea Tomeski

Adapted and Directed by: Elise Thoron

Dec. 6, 10:30 a.m. - noon

Tickets: \$10

RSVP by Nov. 15.

Told with deceptive simplicity, this is the provocative story of Jonas, a boy who experiences something incredible and un-

dertakes something impossible. This piece features sixty minutes of solo-performance focusing on the relationship between the young Jonas and his mentor, The Giver.

### ARTISTS 4 PEACE: Be the Change Tour: Ganda Boys, Yael Deckelbaum with Kristen Hoffman

Nov. 2, 12:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$10

RSVP by Friday, Oct. 20.

Combining the traditional sounds of their Ugandan homeland with progressive pop music sensibilities, Grammy-nominated Ganda Boys deliver dynamic performances. Israeli singer/songwriter Yael Deckelbaum is an activist, whose song "Prayer of The Mothers" turned into the anthem of the movement "Women Wage Peace" that was composed of Palestinian and Israeli Women advocating for a two-state solution.

### Veterans Day Performance - The Telling Project

Nov. 7, 12:30 p.m.

Tickets: \$10

RSVP by Friday, Oct. 20

The Telling Project is a national performing arts nonprofit that employs theater to deepen our understanding of the military and veterans' experience. This theater performance highlights the personal stories of those who served, told by the veterans themselves.



## Join Team NJEA and Race for the Cure

It's a great day to raise funds for a great cause, honor the memory of those we've lost and celebrate breast cancer survivors. NJEA will again participate in the annual Susan G. Komen Central and South Jersey Race for the Cure on Sunday, Nov. 5, at Six Flags Great Adventure in Jackson.

Team NJEA welcomes all runners, walkers, and even sleepers! That's right, you can join Team NJEA and Sleep in for the Cure.

If you join Team NJEA and plan to attend the event, look for our tent. You can leave your belongings there to avoid the long lines at gear check. You also avoid the long lines at registration because we'll have your race bib. You'll get a Team NJEA racing shirt at the booth (make sure we know your size).

To learn more, contact Kathy Byrne at [kbyrne@njea.org](mailto:kbyrne@njea.org) or Dawn Hiltner at [dhiltner@njea.org](mailto:dhiltner@njea.org). To join Team NJEA or to make a donation, go to [bit.ly/teamnjea2017](http://bit.ly/teamnjea2017) (all lowercase) and scroll down to Team NJEA.

## Invite the Cat in the Hat for a visit



Want a great way to kick off your Read Across America program? Would you like the Cat in the Hat to help your school celebrate? Then consider a visit from the Cat!

NJEA members can request that visit online. It's simple: if you would like to invite the Cat to visit your school, fill out the online request form found on [njea.org/raa](http://njea.org/raa). Completing the form does not guarantee a visit, but it is the only way to be considered for one.

Visits will begin in February and continue through mid-March. Depending on when the Cat is available, the visit may be the kick-off or the finale of your ongoing Read Across America celebration.

NJEA cannot accommodate requests for specific dates, but will advise you in January of the Cat's availability to visit your school. Visit [njea.org/raa](http://njea.org/raa) often to get tips and tools to make your celebration the best it can be.

The deadline for inviting the Cat is Nov. 10.





# Cool Stuff

## Free substance abuse prevention programs

The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey offers free substance abuse prevention programs for New Jersey's fourth and fifth grade students.

### Fourth grade materials and contest

Visit [www.drugfreenj.org/2017-fourth-grade](http://www.drugfreenj.org/2017-fourth-grade) to order the free substance abuse prevention folders for your fourth-grade students. The deadline to order folders is Nov. 13, but supplies are limited and are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Your students are also invited to participate in the 2017-18 folder design contest. Students unleash their creative ideas of "Fun Things To Do Instead of Drugs" and two co-winner's artwork is produced into a folder and distributed to New Jersey fourth-grade students.

Thirty finalists will be chosen and their artwork displayed on the finalist poster that will be sent to all participating New Jersey elementary schools in September 2018. Download the contest rules and criteria from the same website as above. Your students' artwork must be submitted and postmarked by Dec. 4.

### Fifth Grade Parent Alert

An easy to read, colorful guide packed with crucial facts and resources for parents to help them talk to their kids about the dangers of substance abuse. Visit [www.drugfreenj.org/5thGradeParentAlert](http://www.drugfreenj.org/5thGradeParentAlert) to order the Fifth Grade Parent Alert for your students' parents. Deadline to order the Parent Alert is Oct. 30, but supplies are limited and are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

For more information contact Jeannine Brown at 973-467-2100, ext. 14 or [office@drugfreenj.org](mailto:office@drugfreenj.org). Visit [www.DrugFreeNJ.org](http://www.DrugFreeNJ.org) for all Partnership programs. All PDFNJ programs are offered free of charge.

## Hunchback of Seville

Free performance for NJEA members

Although NJEA members will receive discounts throughout the run of "The Hunchback of Seville," teachers and school staff members are invited to attend the Friday, Sept. 29 performance at no charge. This Theater Project production will take place at the Burgdorff Center, 10 Durand Road in Maplewood.

Charise Castro Smith's wild new comedy about the discovery of the new world and the powerful women standing over Christopher Columbus' shoulder skewers history while satirizing 21st century politics.

A coffee and cake reception with the cast follows the show.

The free tickets are available with your school ID or NJEA membership card at the box office beginning 7 p.m. on a first-come, first-served basis pending availability. Free tickets may be reserved in advance with a \$2 service charge at [www.thetheaterproject.org](http://www.thetheaterproject.org). Please present your ID at the box office when picking up tickets.

To all other performances, regular teacher/staff discounts apply: \$5 off regular price (\$30) with school ID/ \$7.50 off with NJEA membership card, Sept. 29 - Oct 15, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 2 p.m.

Contact Daaimah Talley at 908-809-8865 or [theaterproject@aol.com](mailto:theaterproject@aol.com) for more information.



## Take a ride on the State House Express

The State House Express program provides small grant awards to eligible middle school and high school teachers who wish to take their students to Trenton. The grants are designed to help pay for bus rental to the capitol for a guided tour and firsthand examination of the Legislature's role in our system of representative democracy.

Awards are generally \$300. Schools in Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Passaic, Salem, and Sussex counties are eligible for \$350 grants because of their distances from Trenton. The State House Express program is funded by the New Jersey Legislature and is administered by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University in collaboration with the Office of Legislative Services at the State House in Trenton.

Teachers may submit applications for the 2017-18 program at any time during the academic year. Awards are distributed on an ongoing basis, with a decision made as soon as the applications are received.

### Eligibility requirements are:

- Middle and high school students only (grades 6-12).
- A minimum of 25 students.
- The tour must take place before the end of the academic year in June 2018.
- All eligible teachers are encouraged to apply, including those who have received the award in the past. In special circumstances, separate grants may be awarded to different teachers in the same school.
- Other school groups or organizations who do not meet the exact criteria specified above may also apply and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Applications are available at [www.eagleton.rutgers.edu](http://www.eagleton.rutgers.edu). For more information, contact Gloria Minor at 848-932-8750 or [gminor@eagleton.rutgers.edu](mailto:gminor@eagleton.rutgers.edu). 🏠





# Teaching & Learning Symposium 2017

## Navigating Change In Education - Finding Our Way

**Saturday, Oct. 14**

Registration/Continental Breakfast 8 – 8:45 a.m.  
Program ends at 3 p.m.

In this time of change, we must come together to enhance our professional learning, support one another on our professional journey, and expand our educational community. Join us for an important opportunity to focus our efforts and find our way by selecting one (1) topic to explore in a day-long, interactive professional learning experience. Full program descriptions are on the back.

### Keynote

#### Teaching for Social Justice

A Keynote with Linda Christensen, *Rethinking Schools/Oregon Writing Project*

- Writing and Rising Up: Teaching About Social Justice and the Power of the Written Word
- Designing for Understanding in the Math Classroom
- Designing for Understanding in the English Language Arts (ELA) Classroom
- Solution Civics - Understanding & Enhancing Civic Engagement
- From Model Curriculum to Curricular Framework: Curriculum, Instruction, and Data
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): Connections for 3-5
- Integrating Engineering in the Science Classroom for 6-12
- Making Language Learning Essential in Your School Through Content and Inquiry
- Core Practices for Effective World Language Instruction
- 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
- Exploring Social Justice through Music and the Arts - **NEW**

#### Cost:

**Register early and save!**

**Early-bird special**

**(register by September 15)**

\$35 for NJEA members;

\$18 for NJSEA members

**Regular registration**

**(deadline is September 29)**

\$69 for NJEA members;

\$35 for NJSEA members

**Non-member registration**

**fee is \$190**

Registration fee includes  
program, continental  
breakfast, and lunch.

### Online registration ONLY

[www.njea.org/tlsymposium](http://www.njea.org/tlsymposium)

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

The conference provides five hours of professional learning credit. Participants must attend the entire session to receive a certificate.

NJSEA members, non-NJEA members, and Purchase Order registrations are not available online and these individuals must register by calling the registrar, Cindy Vannauker, at 609-599-4561 ext. 2263. If submitting a Purchase Order, please forward a copy of the requisition form while awaiting district approval to Cindy Vannauker by fax 609-599-1201 or email ([cvannauker@njea.org](mailto:cvannauker@njea.org)).

For more information, or if you have a special physical, communication, dietary, or disability-related need which may require assistance or accommodations to permit or facilitate your attendance/participation in the conference, please contact Cindy Vannauker at 609-599-4561, ext. 2263.

Information regarding conference cancellation can be heard on radio stations WCBS-AM 880 and KYW-AM 1060 or call 800-866-NJEA, ext. 6532. In order to receive a refund, cancellation must be requested by **September 29**. NJEA will issue refunds if the conference is cancelled or rescheduled.





# NJEA Report

## NJEA members rally behind LD 3 Senate candidate Fran Grenier



ABOVE: The county presidents in Legislative District 3 are working to elect Fran Grenier as the new senator from Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem Counties. From left: Cumberland's Deanna Nicosia-Jones, Gloucester's Sue Clark, Salem's Sue Manigila, and Grenier.

BELOW: Gene Behme, a member of the Parsippany-Troy Hills Education Association, with Senate candidate Fran Grenier.



On July 13, hundreds of NJEA members gathered in Pennsville to meet NJEA PAC-endorsed candidate Fran Grenier, a Republican running for the State Senate against Senate President Steve Sweeney, whose failure to post the pension amendment, despite numerous promises to do so, mobilized members to make a change.

Grenier, the Salem County Republican chairman, mingled with members, leaders, and staff at the Riverview Inn in Pennsville. The family-friendly event included a barbecue, photo booth, magician, face painting, and temporary tattoo artist, as well as an activism fair to educate members about the ways they could support the Grenier for Senate campaign and fight for their pensions.

In his address to the crowd Grenier emphasized his career in military and public service and expressed his deep commitment to public education. In addition to decrying the privatization of essential public school employee positions, Grenier said, "When I am in Trenton, I will be fighting tooth and nail for every possible resource to make sure the students of District 3 get a high-quality public education. I will fight for a moratorium on charter school expansion until a thorough evaluation of charter schools is completed. I will oppose any effort to provide vouchers for private schools. And I will support legislation to fund your pension plan to ensure it meets the obligations promised to you by your employers."

Grenier was enthusiastically supported at the event by NJEA Executive Director Ed Richardson and the Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem county association presidents whose members live or work in Legislative District (LD) 3.

Deanna Nicosia-Jones, president of the Cumberland County Council of Education Associations, referenced the recent July Fourth holiday in her speech. "Today we begin our journey here in LD 3. We, too, are tired of a cruel, lying, greedy, self-centered tyrant—Senator Steve Sweeney. We will declare our independence in November at the polls. We now have a better choice, and we are willing to do the work to make Fran the next Senator from LD 3."

Gloucester County Education Association President Sue Clark expressed not just her members' disappointment in Senate President Sweeney, but also their eagerness to support a candidate who shares the same values. "We understand we have a tough fight ahead of us, but we also know that seeing Fran in that LD 3 Senate seat is worth the fight! Fran is a man committed to serving his constituents—not his own self-interests or political future. Fran is a man who recognizes the importance of bringing people together; not pitting one group against another. Fran is a man who is willing to work with us and for us; and not just when it's in his best interests. That's why I am excited to stand here today with you and start this journey that will end with a new senator in LD 3!"

Sue Manigila, president of the Salem County Council of Education Associations, called on members to see a new way forward, one of hope and promise.

"Together, we can do this. Let's look beyond politics and have the courage to seek a better option. The time has finally come for someone to take on this responsibility and challenge. Let's roll up our sleeves and start the breezes blowing to get Fran Grenier elected!"

**ICYMI** Check out these stories on [njea.org](http://njea.org).

**New NJEA ad campaign highlights immigrant educator**

Published Aug. 14.

**NJEA statement on horror in Charlottesville**

Published Aug. 13.

**NJEA receives ruling in post-retirement medical benefits lawsuit**

Published Aug. 7.

**Union-led effort nets \$1.6 billion in prescription savings**

Published July 5.

The numbers

4

The number of additional Emmys for which Classroom Close-up NJ has been nominated.

**"Classroom Close-up NJ" received four nominations from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The show has already earned 15 Emmys in its 23 seasons.**

The winners will be announced Sept. 9 at a ceremony in Hershey Park, Pennsylvania. The nominations include two segments and two full shows.

1. Autism Awareness Month at Howell Regional High School

2. Comic Relief featuring Dr. Michael Conti School in Jersey City

3. Show #5  
Features Teaneck Community Charter School, Vernon Township's Walnut Ridge Primary School, Shamong's Indian Mills Elementary School and Pleasantville's North Main St. Elementary School.

4. Show #20  
Features Montville's Robert R. Lazar Middle School, Parsippany Troy-Hills' Intervale Elementary School, Haddon Township's Van Sciver Elementary School, Somerville's Van Derveer Elementary School, and Bridgewater-Raritan Middle School.

To watch the nominated shows and segments, visit [classroomcloseup.org/emmys](http://classroomcloseup.org/emmys).

## NJEA marks one-year anniversary of the "death of pension amendment" with Woodbury rally

In the midst of one of the busiest weeks on the NJEA calendar, when more than 2,000 members from across the state met in East Brunswick to attend the Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference, NJEA members took time to mark another important date: the anniversary of Senate President Steve Sweeney's failure to call for a vote on a referendum asking voters to guarantee State payments to the State pension system.

Scores of NJEA members converged on the streets of Woodbury, the heart of Sweeney's district, to remind the public of Sweeney's history of broken promises.

Wearing black, carrying signs, and following a bagpiper, members protested for two hours in the summer heat.

Wendell Steinhauer, who was just wrapping up his final term as NJEA president, addressed the crowds.

"Sen. Sweeney stood up in front of us at our legislative conference and promised to post the

constitutional amendment," Steinhauer recalled. "He lied to me and to all of us. I have not forgotten his broken promise, you haven't forgotten his promise and we will never trust him again. Let's not forget: the constitutional amendment would not have changed the law. The amendment served only to put the question of mandated quarterly pension payments to the voters. Sen. Sweeney wouldn't let voters decide because he doesn't trust voters, and if he won't trust who he is elected to represent, will make sure someone—who we can trust—will represent us."

The rally occurred in the midst of a busy summer of NJEA pension activism. In addition to canvassing members door to door across the state and working to elect pro-public education candidates at the local, county, and state level, NJEA members are also working to elect the NJEA PAC-endorsed candidate Phil Murphy for governor.



Scores of NJEA members picketed the streets of Woodbury to mark the anniversary of Senate President Steve Sweeney's failure to call for a vote to put an amendment on the 2016 ballot that would have required the state to fully fund the state's pension system through quarterly payments.



## NEA honors Dr. Lenworth Alburn Gunther with human and civil rights award

Dr. Lenworth Alburn Gunther, a retired Essex County College professor and an NJEA member for 38 years, received the NEA Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Award honoring his lifelong commitment to racial social justice. Gunther was nominated by NJEA for the award.

Gunther received the award at the NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards Dinner on July 1 in Boston.

"Dr. Lenworth Alburn Gunther embodies the spirit of Dr. Maya Angelou's beloved poem 'Still I Rise,'" said NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia. "Through his deeds and actions, this human and civil rights hero is still rising and carrying the torch forward. Tonight, we renew our commitment to stand for racial and social justice and pledge to continue to shed a light on his work as he guides and inspires us all."

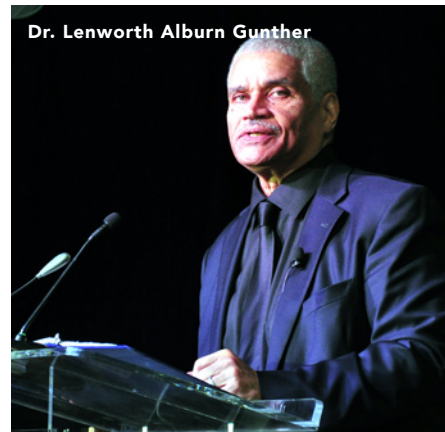
Gunther's strong sense of commitment to racial social justice grows out of his upbringing and the tumultuous struggles of the civil rights movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s. From a young age, Gunther experienced intense institutional racism. He nonetheless went on to become a Woodrow Wilson and Ford Foundation Doctoral Fellow, earning four degrees at Columbia University including a Ph.D. in American History and Russian History.

As a student at Columbia University advocated for a curriculum that mirrored the contributions of African-American and other communities of color, the working poor and the cause of human and civil rights. Two years into his teaching career,

he helped prepare Columbia University's first African-American studies curriculum.

Since retiring from the classroom, Gunther has continued to mentor educators and young activists, working with police officers and young people to foster positive community relations. He created the "Gunther Group," which studies global and domestic terrorism and gang activity. The group specializes in diversity and leadership training around the law enforcement issues. He used his expertise and extensive research to help police departments and advocacy groups in more than 1,000 communities.

Gunther also pioneered African-American Studies in New Jersey's public schools. In retirement he continues to mentor educators and police officers on diversity. Watch a video of Dr. Gunther in action at [bit.ly/guntheratwork](http://bit.ly/guntheratwork).



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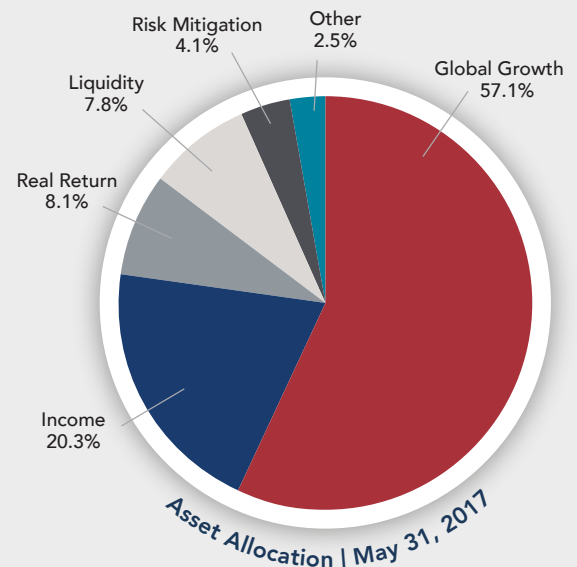
Important: Be prepared to give NJEA group #3386

## PENSION UPDATE

TOTAL PENSION FUND: \$75.02 BILLION

The totals below reflect market values as of May 31, 2017, and for comparison, Dec. 31, 2016. The figures, which are rounded, may not reflect the current market values of some alternative investments through the period noted, because of lags in reporting under industry standards.

|                                      | May 31, 2017                  |                     | Dec. 31, 2016                 |                     |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
|                                      | Market Value<br>(\$ billions) | Asset<br>Allocation | Market Value<br>(\$ billions) | Asset<br>Allocation |
| Global Growth                        | \$42.85                       | 57.12%              | \$41.64                       | 58.52%              |
| Income                               | \$15.24                       | 20.32%              | \$14.66                       | 20.61%              |
| Real Return                          | \$6.07                        | 8.09%               | \$5.94                        | 8.34%               |
| Liquidity                            | \$5.88                        | 7.84%               | \$3.28                        | 4.61%               |
| Risk Mitigation/Capital Preservation | \$3.08                        | 4.11%               | \$3.73                        | 5.24%               |
| Other                                | \$1.90                        | 2.53%               | \$1.91                        | 2.68%               |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$75.02</b>                | <b>100%</b>         | <b>\$71.16</b>                | <b>100%</b>         |



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

## East Windsor teacher wins national social justice award

Robt Seda-Schreiber, an art teacher at Melvin H. Kreps Middle School in East Windsor, received NEA's Social Justice Activist of the Year Award on June 29 at NEA's Representative Assembly in Boston.

This annual award is given to an NEA member who demonstrates the ability to lead, organize, and engage educators, parents, and the community to advocate on social justice issues that have an impact on the lives of students, fellow educators, and the communities they serve.

Seda-Schreiber was a born activist, committed to social justice. He forged his school's Gay Straight Alliance (GSA)—the first middle school GSA in New Jersey—and dedicated himself to assisting educators across the state and country to form GSAs. These groups offer safe and supportive environments for LGBTQI youth. As an art teacher, he has helped students and the community confront social, cultural and political issues.

"The very existence of GSAs saves lives every day, both literally and figuratively," Seda-Schreiber said upon accepting the award. "GSAs make kids feel safer, more accepted and indeed more loved. Sometimes, oft-times, this is what allows some students to get up in the morning, traverse those

very intimidating hallways and make it through their sometimes, oft-times, very difficult days. Being in a GSA keeps kids off the streets, out of the hospitals, away from the jails, safe from their own hands and even more so, the hands of others. GSAs are love, and love is contagious."

Seda-Schreiber also created a mural program that builds other bridges in the school and community. Students paint inspirational and aspirational artwork in school hallways and for local charitable organizations. Seda-Schreiber writes and directs plays in collaboration with his students as well. This year he directed "I Am America," a play in which students each wrote a monologue about an immigrant, celebrating his or her life and contribution to society and culture.

"In a school in a sanctuary city where so many of our kids are DREAMers, this was even more important and even more necessary," Seda-Schreiber said.

Seda-Schreiber teaches at the school he attended as a student, which gives him deep roots in the community. He believes so strongly in that sense of community and that ideal of giving back that he moved all the way back from California to do so.

Seda-Schreiber believes that educators have a

critical role in "reaching out and teaching out".

"We need to teach in the classroom, inspire in the hallways and be a force in our communities," he said. "It may not seem like it, but these are our times. We will persevere, we will rise up and we will come out the other side—stronger, faster, better, with more folks on our side and at our backs."



Robt Seda-Schreiber



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\*Visit us online or call for eligibility requirements.  
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DT330917



# NJEA PAC endorses 97 candidates for Legislature

The 125-member NJEA Political Action Committee (NJEA PAC) endorsed 97 candidates for election to the New Jersey Legislature for this November's election when it met on Aug. 5. NJEA PAC voted on the recommendations of local interview teams from each legislative district (LD) that met with the candidates and reviewed candidates' questionnaires.

These legislative endorsements are in addition to the endorsement of Ambassador Phil Murphy for governor, made last spring.

Those endorsements are:

- **LD 1** Jeff Van Drew (D) for Senate, Robert Andrzejczak (D) and R. Bruce Land (D) for Assembly
- **LD 2** Chris Brown (R) for Senate and Vince Mazzeo (D) for Assembly. Your choice among John Armato (D), Vince Sera (R) and Brenda Taube (R)
- **LD 3** Fran Grenier (R) for Senate, No endorsement for Assembly
- **LD 4** Fred Madden (D) for Senate, Paul D. Moriarty (D) and Gabriela M. Mosquera (D) for Assembly
- **LD 5** Nilsa Cruz-Perez (D) for Senate, Patricia Egan Jones (D) and Arthur Barclay (D) for Assembly
- **LD 6** James Beach (D) for Senate and Louis D. Greenwald (D) and Pamela R. Lampitt (D) for Assembly
- **LD 7** Troy Singleton (D) for Senate, Herb Conaway (D) and Carol Murphy (D) for Assembly
- **LD 8** George Youngkin (D) for Senate and no endorsement for Assembly
- **LD 9** Christopher Connors (R) for Senate and Jill Dobrowansky (D) and Brian E. Rumpf (R) for Assembly
- **LD 10** Your Choice between Emma L. Mammano (D) and Jim Holzapfel (R) for Senate, Gregory P. McGuckin (R) for Assembly
- **LD 11** Vin Gopal (D) for Senate, Eric Houghtaling (D) and Joann Downey (D) for Assembly
- **LD 12** David H. Lande (D) for Senate, Ronald S. Dancer (R) for Assembly and your choice between Gene Davis (D) and Robert D. Clifton (R)
- **LD 13** Sean Byrnes (D) for Senate, Tom Giaimo (D) and Serena DiMaso (R) for Assembly
- **LD 14** Linda Greenstein (D) for Senate and Daniel Benson (D) for Assembly
- **LD 15** Shirley K. Turner (D) for Senate, Reed Gusciora (D) and Elizabeth Maher Muoio (D) for Assembly
- **LD 16** No endorsement for Senate, Andrew Zwicker (D) and Roy Freiman (D) for Assembly
- **LD 18** Patrick Diegnan Jr. (D) for Senate, Nancy J. Pinkin (D) and Robert Karabinchak (D) for Assembly
- **LD 19** Joseph F. Vitale (D) for Senate, Craig J. Coughlin (D) and Yvonne Lopez (D) for Assembly
- **LD 20** Joseph P. Cryan (D) for Senate, Annette Quijano (D) and Jamel C. Holley (D) for Assembly
- **LD 21** No endorsement for Senate, David Barnett (D) and Lacey Rzeszowski (D) for Assembly
- **LD 22** Nicholas P. Scutari (D) for Senate, Gerald Green (D) and James J. Kennedy (D) for Assembly
- **LD 23** Christine Lui Chen (D) for Senate, Laura Shaw (D) and Charles Boddy (D) for Assembly
- **LD 24** Jennifer Hamilton (D) for Senate, Kate Mateson (D) and Gina Trish (D) for Assembly
- **LD 25** Lisa Bhimani (D) for Senate, Thomas Moran (D) and Richard Corcoran (D) for Assembly
- **LD 27** Richard Codey (D) for Senate, Mila M. Jasey (D) and John F. McKeon (D) for Assembly
- **LD 28** Ron Rice (D) for Senate, Cleopatra G. Tucker (D) and Ralph R. Caputo (D) for Assembly
- **LD 30** No endorsement for Senate, Sean T. Kean (R) and Eliot Arlo Colon (D) for Assembly
- **LD 31** Sandra B. Cunningham (D) for Senate, Nicholas Chiaravalloti (D) for Assembly
- **LD 32** Nicholas J. Sacco (D) for Senate, Vincent Prieto (D) and Angelica M. Jimenez (D) for Assembly
- **LD 33** No endorsement for Senate, Raj Mukherji (D) and Annette Chaparro (D) for Assembly
- **LD 34** Nia H. Gill (D) for Senate, Sheila Oliver (D) and Thomas P. Giblin (D) for Assembly
- **LD 35** Nelida "Nellie" Pou (D) for Senate, Shavonda Sumter (D) and Benjie Wimberly (D) for Assembly
- **LD 36** Paul A. Sarlo (D) for Senate, Gary Schaer (D) and Marlene Caride (D) for Assembly
- **LD 37** Loretta Weinberg (D) for Senate, Gordon M. Johnson (D) and Valerie Vainieri Huttie (D) for Assembly
- **LD 38** Bob Gordon (D) for Senate, Timothy Eustace (D) and Joseph A. Lagana (D) for Assembly
- **LD 39** Linda H. Schwager (D) for Senate, Jannie Chung (D) and Annie Hausman (D) for Assembly
- **LD 40** Kristin M. Corrado (R) for Senate, Paul Vagianos (D) and Christine Ordway (D) for Assembly

There were no endorsements in LDs 17, 26, and 29. Candidates are screened on their record and on their agreement with NJEA's goals and positions. To be considered for an endorsement, candidates must participate in the screening process. A "your choice" endorsement—where more candidates are listed than there are positions up for election—indicates that each of the candidates listed meet NJEA's standards for endorsement.

## Paterson EA president stands up for members, faces tenure charges

While the previous school year had its share of challenges for every local leader, one president's year stands out. Paterson Education Association (PEA) President John McEntee was served with tenure charges, targeted by the district for his outspoken and effective advocacy on behalf of PEA members.

After a member representation meeting in late December between McEntee and Sharon Davis, the vice principal of the Frank Napier Academy, district administration alleged that McEntee acted unprofessionally. The district followed that allegation with tenure charges in March with two counts of conduct unbecoming. The charges do not seek a revocation of McEntee's tenure or his dismissal, but rather his suspension, leading many to believe its motive is to intimidate the local leader and anyone who dares to stand up to administration.

McEntee has been a vocal advocate for Paterson. Like many of their urban counterparts, Paterson teachers and educational support professionals (ESP) face many challenges in the workplace: overcrowded classrooms, old and poorly maintained buildings, and a lack of school supplies. Since his election as president, McEntee unapologetically has championed those who have to toil in these conditions.

Part of that advocacy included frequent public criticism of state-appointed Superintendent Donnie Evans. In September 2016, McEntee spearheaded a vote of no confidence, citing cuts in security guards and nurses, and memorably embarrassed the administrator by publicizing Evans' role as an instrument of the state government to undermine *Abbott v. Burke*, which assures adequate funding for schools like Paterson.

In a move that can only be described as an attempt to drive a wedge between PEA members and their leader, Evans sent a memo to all staff on March 29, detailing the charges and presenting a one-sided view of the incident. His attempts backfired.

NJEA members around the state immediately supported McEntee by sending nearly 3,700 emails to Evans, expressing their dismay about the tenure charges and demanding the administrator's resignation.

Hundreds of NJEA members and leaders, as well as community residents and county freeholders also gathered outside of the Paterson Board of Education office in late March to rally on McEntee's behalf. Chants of "John McEntee, he's for me!" echoed in the streets while many carried signs of support with the message: "Hands off our president!" while others' signs proclaimed "I am John McEntee."

Since the filing, both Evans and Davis have left the district, and the PEA has been working with former Paterson schools' deputy superintendent—now the district's interim superintendent—Eileen Shafer while the district searches for a permanent replacement.

For McEntee, however, the fight is not yet over; he is scheduled to appear for his first tenure charge hearing on Sept. 14. Be on the lookout for ways that you can support McEntee in the days leading up to the hearing. Remember: An injustice to one of us is an injustice to all of us.



### Resources for teaching and learning post-Charlottesville

"We know what happens when good people remain silent," NJEA President Marie Blistan said in response to violence incited by neo-Nazis and white supremacists in Charlottesville, Virginia on Aug. 12. "We will speak and act boldly for the cause of racial and social justice, both as an example to our students and our communities, to help create the society we want to live in."

NEA's Centers for Communications and Social Justice have pulled together a variety of resources for educators, parents, and students at [NEA.org/Charlottesville](http://NEA.org/Charlottesville). Use #CharlottesvilleCurriculum to find and share education resources on social media.

In addition, as educators seek to respond to Charlottesville in this school year, Becca Mui, M. Ed., Education Manager at GLSEN, developed a list of resources for educators as they address these issues in schools. All shortened links to web resources below are case-sensitive.

#### Learn

Mui notes that before we can teach or talk with students about racism or other systems of oppression, we need to learn about ourselves and an often untaught history.

- 10 Books I wish my White Teachers Had Read, by Crystal Paul ([bit.ly/2x42yCd](http://bit.ly/2x42yCd))
- Why Talk about Whiteness? –Teaching Tolerance, by Emily Chiariello ([bit.ly/2w1vnIG](http://bit.ly/2w1vnIG))
- There is no Hierarchy of Oppressions – by Audre Lorde ([bit.ly/2wa771o](http://bit.ly/2wa771o))

#### Share

You are not alone, Mui insists. Sharing resources like these with other educators, administrators, or family members in your school community can help them learn about these issues.

- Fighting Hate in Schools – NPR ([n.pr/2war9IW](http://n.pr/2war9IW))
- We need to Start Telling the Truth about White Supremacy in our Schools – Education Post, by James E. Ford ([bit.ly/2wPzm2t](http://bit.ly/2wPzm2t))
- The First Thing Teachers Should Do When School Starts is Talk about Hate In America – Washington Post, by Valerie Strauss ([wapo.st/2wPHKiv](http://wapo.st/2wPHKiv))

#### Teach

Lesson plans and resources for you and your school.

- Lessons on Diversity, Bias, and Social Justice – ADL ([bit.ly/2v1NjZ4](http://bit.ly/2v1NjZ4))
- Understanding White Supremacy – PBS Learning Media, New York ([bit.ly/2wPLeBx](http://bit.ly/2wPLeBx))
- Power in Partnerships: Building Connections at the Intersections of Racial Justice and LGBTQ Movement – Advancement Project ([bit.ly/2i4khXs](http://bit.ly/2i4khXs))

PHOTO ABOVE: Paterson EA members showing support for President John McEntee (center) during a rally in March.



## Convention features exciting keynote speakers



**Ilyasah Shabazz**

will speak at the NJEA Convention at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 9.

Shabazz is an inspirational role model and advocate for women and girl empowerment. Her lifework is devoted to helping others find inner strength and purpose. While she is frequently asked to speak about the legacy of Malcolm X, she shares that it is her mother Dr. Betty Shabazz's wisdom, courage and compassion that guide her. She is an educator, activist, motivational speaker, and author of three award-winning publications.

Learn more at [www.ilyasahshabazz.com](http://www.ilyasahshabazz.com).

**Mike Kuczala** will speak at the NJEA Convention at 11:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 10.

Mike Kuczala is a leading authority on using movement and understanding the brain/body connection in both educational and corporate settings. His keynotes, workshops and professional development programs have been enjoyed by tens of thousands



of teachers, administrators, parents, trainers, and corporate executives across the United States.

## Higher education speaker to address academic freedom

NJEA's members who work in the state's 19 community colleges won't want to miss the Higher Education Luncheon on Friday, Nov. 10 at 1 p.m. The keynote speaker will be NJEA network attorney Steven R. Cohen. He will address the topic "Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech—Do You Have It?" The luncheon will take place at the Pearl Ballroom in the Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center.

Cohen has more than 40 years of experience in both public and private sector labor and employment law, including all phases of practice before the trial and appellate courts, the National Labor Relations Board, the Public Employment Relations Commission, the Civil Service Commission, the Office of Administrative Law, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Division on Civil Rights.

Join your fellow higher education members at this annual lunch. Reservations are required. To make a reservation, send a check for \$29 to NJEA/HE, c/o Beneficial Bank, P.O. Box 13661, Philadelphia, PA 19101-3661, or call NJEA's Higher Education office at 609-689-9580.

## Book your hotel room today for the 2017 NJEA Convention

To book a room, go to [njea.org/hotelblocks](http://njea.org/hotelblocks). You'll need to log in as a member using the on-screen instructions.

Guaranteed shuttle service will be available to these hotels only.

| Hotel         | Wed-Thurs. | Fri.  | Deadline | Group Code |
|---------------|------------|-------|----------|------------|
| Bally's       | \$98       | \$160 | Oct. 9   | SB11NJ7    |
| Borgata       | \$119      | \$119 | Oct. 16  | GBNJK17    |
| Caesars       | \$105      | N/A   | Oct. 6   | SC11MEM    |
| Golden Nugget | \$59       | \$159 | Oct. 25  | ANJEA17    |
| Harrahs       | \$74       | \$164 | Oct. 9   | SH11NJ7    |
| Tropicana     | \$84       | \$174 | Oct. 20  | HNEA17     |
| Resorts       | \$75       | \$105 | Oct. 17  | VNJEA7     |

### Rules and restrictions:

Membership verification required—one room reservation per member. A credit card will be required to hold your reservation. All room rates subject to N.J. sales tax, \$3 Atlantic City occupancy tax, and up to \$13 resort fee per room, per night. Room type (double/single) subject to availability at check-in. Additional fees for third and fourth occupants of room may be applicable. No changes or cancellations after the registration deadline.

# CONVENTION DOESN'T END WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN



NJEa members can enjoy free admission to events all over Atlantic City, with your guests. You'll need your EventBrite ticket (printed or mobile), NJEa membership card or Convention badge to take advantage of the free admission and member specials at most venues. For more information, check the NJEa Events app, visit [njeaconvention.org](http://njeaconvention.org) or preregister at [afterdark2017.eventbrite.com](http://afterdark2017.eventbrite.com). **Must be 21+ with proper valid ID.**

Going out at night? **Rooms as low as \$59.** Learn more at [njeaconvention.org/hotels](http://njeaconvention.org/hotels) to book before it's too late.

## WEDNESDAY NIGHT

### Borgata

#### Gypsy Bar

Live band: Kicking Sunrise from 9 p.m. - 12:30 a.m. | Doors open at 6 p.m. | NJEa Member specials

### Golden Nugget

#### Rush Lounge

Live band | Extended Happy Hour | NJEa Member specials

### Harrah's

#### The Pool - Wet n' Wild Wednesday\*

DJ | 10:00 p.m. | Free admission for NJEa members (and up to one guest) before midnight

### Resorts Casino

#### Bar One (NJEa sponsored)

DJ from 7 - 11 p.m. | Free admission

### Tropicana

#### Tango Lounge

Live band from 8 p.m. - 12 a.m. | Free admission

### Bally's

#### Wild Wild West (NJEa sponsored)

Live band: From Jersey with Love from 8 - 11 p.m. | Free admission

### Borgata

#### Gypsy Bar

Live band: Lost in Paris from 10 p.m. - 1 a.m. | Doors open at 6 p.m. | NJEa Member specials

### Golden Nugget

#### Rush Lounge

Live band | Extended Happy Hour | NJEa Member specials

#### Haven

DJ | Free admission for NJEa members (and up to one guest) after 10 p.m.

### Harrah's

#### The Pool - Adult Swim\*

10:00 p.m. | Free admission for NJEa members (and up to one guest) before midnight

### Resorts Casino

#### Bar One (NJEa sponsored)

DJ from 7 - 11 p.m. | Free admission

### Tropicana

#### Boogie Nights\* (NJEa sponsored)

NJEa Member specials | Free admission for NJEa members (and up to one guest) before midnight

#### Tango Lounge

Live band from 8 p.m. - 12 a.m. | Free admission

### Bally's

#### Wild Wild West (NJEa sponsored)

Live country band: Dirty Jersey | Free admission

## THURSDAY NIGHT

## COMEDY

### 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

#### Dante Hall Theater Presents

#### a JRL Production

#### Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

In this musical comedy, the inner personalities of six spellers are revealed as they compete at the annual spelling bee.

Some adult humor and audience interaction | Tickets: \$25 GA; \$18 NJEa Members

[www.dantehallstockton.org](http://www.dantehallstockton.org)

## FRIDAY NIGHT

### Harrah's

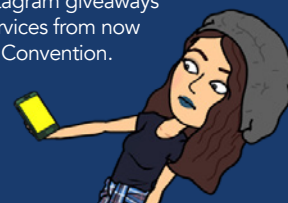
#### The Pool - Aqua Friday\*

DJ | 10:00 p.m. | Free admission for NJEa members (and up to one guest) before midnight

\*Psssst... keep an eye on our social media. We'll be running exclusive Facebook and Instagram giveaways for VIP cabana services from now until the end of Convention.



@njeaconvention





## Ambassador Phil Murphy is NJEA's choice for governor

The stakes are extremely high for New Jersey as we enter the final months of the gubernatorial campaign. After eight years of the Christie Administration, which prioritized personal aggrandizement over the public interest, the next governor will have a lot of work to do. As always, NJEA will be ready and willing to offer expertise and solutions to the next governor, but only one candidate, Ambassador Phil Murphy, has earned our endorsement, thanks to his demonstrated commitment to ensuring education and the economy are on the right track.

Chapter 78 has cut members' take home pay year after year. A severely underfunded pension system threatens not only NJEA members' future, but the future of the state after 11 credit downgrades.

Underfunded public schools have hit educational support professionals particularly hard as it is the jobs of school support staff that are first on the chopping block when districts cut back.

Standardized testing is taking too much class time and counts for too much from teacher evaluations to school ratings to high school graduation. And with lackluster support from the Christie administration, New Jersey's 19 community colleges are becoming an expensive proposition for the state's middle and working class students.

Fortunately, Ambassador Murphy is on our side on these issues, and we are committed to him, because he is committed to us. We must take the lead in seeing that he is elected on Nov. 7, so that we, too, win on Nov. 7.

### Who is Phil Murphy?

Ambassador Murphy described his childhood family as one "that was middle class on a good day." They lived paycheck to paycheck. His mother was a secretary. His father, like many men of his generation, never graduated high school and took any job he thought could help him support his family—even working as a paid pallbearer.

Murphy put himself through Harvard on loans and part-time jobs. After earning a graduate degree at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, he started his career at the bottom, working his way up to help lead a major international business by learning how economies grow and create jobs.

He's helped lead local charities to support troubled teens and domestic abuse survivors, and these groups have changed thousands of lives for the better.

Nationally, Murphy served on the board of the NAACP, the world's oldest civil rights organization.

In 2009, Murphy answered President Barack Obama's call to service and became the U.S. Ambassador to Germany after his confirmation by the U.S. Senate. Murphy has also fought for opportunity, fairness, and justice through his involvement in the Democratic Party. He served as finance chair of the Democratic National Committee, helping to elect Barack Obama.

Today Ambassador Murphy and his wife, Tammy, live in Monmouth County. They are the parents of Josh, Emma, Charlie and Sam.

As parents and as good neighbors the Murphy's saw our state falling behind. They couldn't sit by and watch hard working families struggling to stay even, much less get ahead. So they started an effort to get New Jersey moving again—New Way for New Jersey.



TOP: Ambassador Phil Murphy supports a secure retirement for public school employees. From left: NJREA 2nd Vice President Joan Wright, member Carol Kadi, Ambassador Murphy, NJREA President Judy Perkins, and 1st Vice President Walter Krichling.

BOTTOM: Ambassador Phil Murphy attended the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Dinner in January. From left: Jersey City EA President Ronald Greco, Atlantic County EA President Gary Melton, NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, and Ambassador Murphy.

## Phil Murphy on the issues

### Respect

"As a product of a public school education and the brother of a retired Boston teacher, I am a strong supporter of traditional district schools and public school employees. One of the greatest strengths we have as a state is our system of public education, and we desperately need a governor who values and promotes that system. I have been a vocal ally and advocate for public education, and I intend to continue to champion these causes as governor."

### Pensions

"Many educators joined the profession not because they were expecting to get rich, but because they wanted to make a difference in their community and because they would have a secure retirement with a defined-benefit pension. It is a central part of the promise that we have made to our school employees, and I would work to preserve it."

### Chapter 78

"Public school employees should not continue to see their take home pay decrease... I will work with all stakeholders to address the impact of Chapter 78."

### School support staff rights

"Educational support professionals (ESPs) play a critical and under-appreciated role in a child's learning experience, especially when we consider that learning does not just occur inside a classroom. I support legislation that would protect ESPs from privatization and give them due process rights."

### School funding

"SFRA [the School Funding Reform Act of 2009], when passed, was a landmark piece of legislation... and continues to be considered a national model. Unfortunately, Gov. Christie has underfunded the formula by more than \$8 billion—forcing many towns to either raise property taxes or cut school services. When the conversation earlier this year shifted to a misguided debate over how to change the formula, I continued to advocate for funding the existing formula."

### Higher Education

"I am committed to making college affordable for every New Jersey student by increasing state aid to institutions of higher education, including county colleges, to lower tuitions and fees."

### PARCC

"I have been a vocal critic of PARCC. I believe the era of high-stakes, high-stress standardized tests in New Jersey must end, and I will see that it does. We must get back to the simple premise of letting teachers use classroom time to teach to their students' needs, and not to a test. Too much emphasis is being put on a single test, as opposed to weighing a student's progress through years of instruction."

To find out more about Ambassador Murphy, and how you can help share his plans with fellow NJEA members, please visit [njea.org/murphy](http://njea.org/murphy). You'll also find downloadable materials to share with your family and fellow NJEA members.

## Dates to remember

Mark your calendars for the following important dates in the upcoming general & November school board elections:

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Oct. 17</b> | Voter registration deadline   |
| <b>Oct. 31</b> | Vote-by-Mail ballot applications due by postal mail to county clerk for general elections |
| <b>Nov. 6</b>  | Deadline for in-person Vote-by-Mail ballot applications for general elections (by 3 p.m.) |
| <b>Nov. 7</b>  | General and School Board Elections Day  |

Reminder: Whether you vote by mail or at the ballot box, remember to be on the lookout for your NJEA/NJREA PAC-endorsed candidates list. You'll find them on Page 18 of the NJEA and at [njea.org/elections](http://njea.org/elections).

The October *NJEA Review* will feature statements from each of NJEA's endorsed legislative candidates and an interview with Ambassador Murphy.

## How can I help elect Phil Murphy?

A visit to [njea.org/murphy](http://njea.org/murphy) is a great place to start.

There you'll find five videos that introduce Phil Murphy in his own words and hear what he has to say on issues such as pensions and PARCC. You'll find footage of his meeting with NJEA's local presidents representing urban districts. There are several pieces of campaign art perfectly sized to be your social media profile picture.

You'll also find downloadable fliers on issues of interest to all members as well as the association's various constituencies including educational support professionals, retirees, preservice members, and high education members. You'll also find a document that explains NJEA PAC's member-driven endorsement process.

## Get timely updates on campaign activities.

In today's fast-paced campaigns, plans can change quickly. Calls may need to be made. Doors may need to be knocked on. To get timely updates about NJEA's member campaign activities text "Murphy" to 738-674. You can enter your ZIP code when prompted to make sure you keep up with what's going on in your neck of the woods.

"Like" Phil Murphy's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/PhilMurphyNJ](http://www.facebook.com/PhilMurphyNJ). Under "Follow" be sure to click "See First" so that the latest campaign news is always at the top of your feed. Do the same for NJEA's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/NewJerseyEducationAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/NewJerseyEducationAssociation).

Look for the Murphy campaign on Twitter and Instagram as @PhilMurphyNJ.

Do the same for NJEA on Twitter (@njea) and Instagram (@insta\_njea).

Volunteer directly with Ambassador Murphy's campaign.

One of the best ways to keep public education at the forefront of the campaign is to make sure that NJEA members are regularly found at official campaign activities.

Go to latest campaign and go to [www.murphy4nj.com](http://www.murphy4nj.com) and click on the volunteer tab. Make sure to always identify yourself as an NJEA member and a supporter of public education while working with your fellow Murphy volunteers. 🇺🇸



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# There is power in the union

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Marie Blistan is  
president of NJEA

By Patrick Rumaker, NJEA staff



As a first-year special education teacher, Marie Rearick joined the Somerdale Education Association (SEA) but, buried in paperwork, she did not plan on attending her first union meeting. SEA President Barbara Johnson, however, had other plans for Marie.

Arriving in Somerdale determined to change the world, Marie started with the world in her classroom. She quickly discovered she was short on the tools needed to teach her students. She marched into the superintendent's office asking for the \$500 that, due to the passage of a new federal law, should have been set aside for her classroom.

"I told him that I had just taken a school law course the past semester, and I knew that we should get extra money from the federal and state governments for special education," Marie said.

"I don't know anything about that course," the superintendent told her, "but I do know my budget, and I don't have any more money for you."

With that, Marie left the superintendent's office. But that wasn't the end of the story.

Two weeks later, Barbara Johnson knocked on Marie's door and asked if she was coming to the SEA Rep Council meeting that day.

"I told Barbara to go ahead and that I would be down in a few minutes," Marie recalls.

That play was met with silence.

"I looked over at the door and there she was with her arms crossed," Marie said. "Barbara looked right at me and said, 'No, I'll wait.'"

Marie put her pen down and went to the meeting.

Within minutes of opening the meeting, Johnson took nominations for a new building rep. Marie's name was put into nomination and seconded before she had a chance to get her bearings. She was elected unanimously.

After the meeting, Johnson suggested that Marie go back to the superintendent and ask for the supply money again.

"I told Barbara that I couldn't do that," Marie recalled. "I said I'd already been over there, and he told me he didn't have any money. But when I looked at Barbara, she had that same look on her face that she had when she told me to come down to the meeting. I made the appointment with the superintendent."

"I'm so happy you came back!" Marie recalled the superintendent saying when they met. "After we talked I took another look at my budget, and I found you your money!"

It dawned on Marie what had really happened.

"I didn't know much, but I knew in that second the power of my union," Marie said. "I knew the union was the reason why I was in that office, and the union was the reason why I was getting the money for my classroom."

From that moment forward, Marie re-

mained a strong advocate for teachers and educational support professionals through the association.

"I realized that to be able to do my job—which was to teach—I was going to have to be part of a collective body," Marie said. "I saw the connections. When we advocate for our profession, and when we advocate for contracts, we are advocating for working conditions that are conducive to student learning."

Marie would go on to serve in nearly every leadership position in SEA, ultimately becoming its president.

## Advocacy is a family trait

Her first local president had seen her leadership potential, but Marie's impulse to advocate for others did not begin in Somerdale. She learned it from her mother, growing up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Atco, New Jersey.

Mrs. Edith Greco, Marie's mother, was a force to be reckoned with.

In the tight-knit Philadelphia neighborhood of row homes where Marie spent her earliest years, few secrets could be kept for long. Through the walls of their house, her family could hear the sounds of child abuse next door. Every day they—and others living on the street—heard the yelling, screaming and crying.

"My mother would take the children in," Marie remembered. "She bandaged them. She cleaned them up. She called the police."

When those phone calls from Mrs. Greco did not end the abuse, she attempted to organize the neighborhood to help.

"My mother held a meeting in our house," Marie said. "My mother said, 'Look. I've gone to the police but it has to be more than just me calling—we all have to sign a complaint.'"

Marie said that no neighbor would sign a complaint. They were too afraid and didn't want to get involved.

Undeterred, Mrs. Greco continued to fight for the children's safety. After several more crises that provided clear evidence of abuse, the neighboring mother was finally hospitalized and the children relieved of the abuse under which they were living.

"The attitude that I have today of not looking at the obstacles but looking at the opportunities, I truly believe came from my mother," Marie said. "She instilled in me that desire to help other people. I always saw her extending her hand and her money, of which she had very little, and anything else that she could to help others. Even if it was a child that she saw being battered in another house in our neighborhood, when others wouldn't stand up for that child, my mother did."



## NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller

Sean Spiller is a high school science teacher at Wayne Valley High School in Wayne.

Active in NJEA for a decade, Spiller served as an executive board member of the Passaic County Education Association from 2005 to 2013, and as Wayne Education Association president from 2007 to 2013. He also served on WEA's negotiations team and as a member of the local's professional rights and responsibilities and public relations/communications committees, launching production of the association newsletter and website.

From 2010 to 2013 he worked part-time for NJEA as a UniServ consultant helping to negotiate association contracts in Region 27, which encompasses all of Passaic County.

Prior to his 2013 election as NJEA secretary-treasurer, Spiller served as chair of the NJEA Congressional Contact Committee, as a member of the NJEA Urban Education Committee and as ethnic minority-at-large representative to the Delegate Assembly.

Spiller holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University and a master's degree in educational technology from Ramapo College.

An avid sports fan, Spiller began his career as an assistant editor for the Associated Press in New York City. In addition, Spiller served as captain of the Rutgers University ice hockey team, leading the skaters to two championships. He also has served as a coach for local travel and high school teams, as well as the Rutgers University women's ice hockey team.

He and his wife Lauren, also a public school teacher, live in Montclair where, since May 2012, he has served as a member of the town council. He is also a member of the Montclair Business Improvement District, a member of the Montclair NAACP, the League of Women Voters and many other local groups and organizations.



## Becoming a special education teacher

Once her family moved to Atco, Marie attended Edgewood High School, now known as Winslow Township High School. Mr. McDuff quickly became her favorite teacher.

"He taught us history by telling stories," Marie remembered. "He had high expectations and standards, but never taught in a punitive way. I was pretty shy at the time. He helped me come out of my shell. I didn't want to raise my hand in class, but he gave me some opportunities, boosted me a little bit, and eventually I decided to become a history teacher."

Marie noted that in addition to his inspiration to her as a teacher, Mr. McDuff was active in the union.

"He didn't talk about it in the class, but from what I could gather after school he had some disagreements with administrators, especially over working conditions in the classroom," Marie said. "I knew that he went to bat for his colleagues to get the supplies, books and time that they needed to prepare for their classes."

Marie attended Camden County College with the goal of becoming a history or Spanish teacher. Her financial aid package included a work-study program. For her, that meant being a counselor at Camp Happy Times in Atco, a camp for children with special needs. (The camp later became Archway Schools and then Archway Programs.)

"I learned from that camp not to look at what the children couldn't do, but at what they could do," Marie said. "The camp taught me to look past what I saw in front of me to what could be.

That was when I decided to change my major to special education."

After earning her associate's degree at Camden County College, Marie graduated from Glassboro State College (now Rowan University). Later she would earn a master's degree in reading instruction from Rowan.

"Had it not been for Camden County College, I would not be here today," Marie said. "I don't know where I would be, but it would not be here."

## Advocating for inclusion

As a special education teacher, Marie was proud of her efforts to integrate her middle school students into general education classrooms. But she noticed a peculiar pattern: students who had been successful in general education classes at the middle school level found themselves back in special needs classrooms at the high school level.

Wanting to help her students reach the same level of inclusion in the general education program at Sterling Regional High School as they had at Somerdale, Marie applied for a maternity-leave position at Sterling. She was offered the position, but was cautioned that it was only for one year.

Before that school year began, the Washington Township School District in Gloucester County offered Marie a position as a department chair. She turned that position down, because she genuinely wanted to be a part of the movement to make inclusion successful at the high school level.

"I had to build relationships at Sterling," Marie said. "They knew who I was and they knew why I wanted to come because I was always saying,

'Let's look at what our kids can do.'"

At the end of that school year, the teacher on maternity leave returned, putting Marie back on the job market. Washington Township called again with a department chair position at the high school. This time, Marie took the job.

## Association leadership

The one disappointment for Marie in taking a position as a department chair was that she was ineligible to be a member of the Washington Township Education Association (WTEA). A position in school administration was not the type of leadership Marie was looking for. After one year, she asked for, and was granted, a position as a full-time teacher at the high school.

"The reason that I left the administrative position was I knew that in order to progress in our profession and to move us forward, I needed to belong to a union that made a difference," Marie said. "I saw what the WTEA was doing, and I wanted to be a part of it."

It wasn't long before she was an active leader in WTEA as a senior building rep, a member of the WTEA Executive Committee, a member of the negotiations team, and the executive vice president. In 2005, she became president of the Gloucester County Education Association (GCEA).

## Marie's first battle with Freeholder/Senator Sweeney

In December 2006, a bill was introduced in the New Jersey Senate that would have established a 10-year pilot program for the organization of a countywide administrative school district in



Marie's family at her son Jeffrey's wedding in 2004.

From left: Son Christopher Rearick, daughter Meryl Kern, daughter-in-law Tracy Rearick, son Jeffrey Rearick, Marie Blistan, and husband Bob Blistan. Marie's husband is a retired Washington Township High School teacher. Jeffrey is a health and physical education teacher at the same high school. Tracy is a special education teacher at Walter E. Sooy Jr. Elementary School in Hammonton.

Gloucester County. The legislation would have given unbridled powers to an unelected county board of education. Local school boards could continue to exist without any real power in an advisory role, or could dissolve.

If the law were passed, a majority vote of the Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the approval of the county superintendent and state commissioner of education were all that would be required to impose the countywide school district.

Steve Sweeney was not only a state senator in 2006, he was also the president of the Gloucester County freeholder board, whose members would appoint the members of the proposed county board of education. Control of all of the public schools in Gloucester County would have been in the hands of Sen. Sweeney and his freeholder board.

By January 2007, it was clear that the scheme to take over all of the schools in Gloucester County was on the fast track.

Less than one day from the time she learned the bill was “sure” to pass, Marie organized her county leadership team to oppose it. Each member of Marie’s team worked with her to alert as many constituencies as they could: parents, local school board members, administrators, retired members and retired residents, and real estate agents—anyone with an interest in the stability of public schools.

Marie secured the 2,600 seat auditorium at Washington Township High School for a community meeting on the countywide pilot. On the day of the meeting, Jan. 16, the auditorium filled to capacity with 2,500 additional residents watching on monitors in another auditorium, two cafeterias and several classrooms. All of the Legislative District 3 and 4 representatives, including Sweeney, shared a panel with then-NJEA Vice President Barbara Keshishian and the leadership of various statewide education organizations.

“As a parent and a teacher, the legislators do not have my approval for a county consolidation plan,” Blistan said as she addressed that panel. “Under the pilot consolidation plan, a county budget of over \$500 million a year will be in the hands of political appointees. I say no.”

The pressure of that massive meeting, as well as Marie’s dogged determination before and after it, led to the quick withdrawal of the proposed countywide school district.

### Leadership in challenging times

In the wake of eight years of unrelenting attacks on teachers and educational support professionals at the hands of Gov. Chris

Christie, Senate President Steve Sweeney’s collusion in those attacks, and with U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos proudly hostile to public education, Marie recognizes that we live in challenging times.

Growing up during the time of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Malcolm X, Marie sees parallels to today’s struggles.

“I saw their passion for civil and human rights and the acts of violence that tried stop the progress of those embroiled in the struggle,” Marie said. “Today, given what is happening in Charlottesville and elsewhere, it is our mission is to educate our children and pursue racial, social and economic justice to counter the forces of evil in our midst. We must engage and empower members like never before. We must make sure that their voice is the voice of this union.

“We must connect members to the political work that has to be done so that we have the working conditions that are conducive to student learning,” Marie said. “And Chapter 78 is a working condition. Securing our pensions and benefits is a working condition. Fighting against the privatization of anyone on the school team is a working condition.”

Marie insists that a key responsibility for NJEA is having the tools in place that facilitate members being able to advocate for themselves.

“Everything in our profession is legislated and regulated,” Marie said. “We must empower our members is to get involved in politics. Involvement is not only voting but actively seeking and supporting pro-public education voices to get elected—including NJEA members who run for office. We have fought hard through the years to have our voice included in decisions with education, but it is time for us to lead our profession.”

In other words, Marie has taken to heart what she learned from her first local association president, Barbara Johnson: empower members and give them the tools to advocate for themselves and their colleagues. She had taken to heart what she learned from her mother: have the courage to stand up for those who can’t speak for themselves. And she remembers the lesson she has re-learned at every phase of her life and her advocacy: when we stand together, when we stand side-by-side and realize that what happens to one of us happens to all of us, we are stronger and better prepared to do what needs to be done. 🦋

*Patrick Rumaker is the editor of the NJEA Review. He can be reached at [prumaker@njea.org](mailto:prumaker@njea.org).*



## NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty

Steve Beatty is a social studies teacher at Bridgewater-Raritan High School in Bridgewater.

Beatty was president of the Bridgewater-Raritan Education Association from 2004 to 2017. He previously held several other offices in BREA, including second vice president and Grievance Committee chair. Beatty was also president of the Somerset County Education Association from 2013 to 2017.

Beatty served as chair of the NJEA Government Relations Committee from 2011 to 2017 and secretary-treasurer for the County Presidents Council. Beatty represented Somerset County on the NJEA Delegate Assembly.

Beatty holds a bachelor’s degree in history from Rutgers University and a master’s degree in the Art of Teaching from Marygrove College. In addition, Beatty earned a Public Sector Labor Relations Certificate from Rutgers Labor Relations School and a Labor Relations Collective Bargaining Certificate from the Cornell Industrial and Labor Relations School.

Beatty is active in his community. He is a trustee of the Bridgewater-Raritan Education Foundation and active in the Bernards Township Parent Teacher Organization.

A guitarist and athlete, Beatty was named *Star-Ledger’s* 2003-04 Swim Coach of the Year. He is an active cyclist, hiker and kayaker.

Beatty is engaged to Tamara Gross, a teacher and president of the Cinnaminson Education Association. They live in Martinsville with his two children, Morgan and Lindsay.





# Success in school tied to healthy vision

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**What  
educators  
need to  
know**

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By Kristan Gross

A child's first academic experience is equal parts exciting, transformational and scary. Every fall, boys and girls walk through their schools' doors for the first time with a new pair of shoes, supplies and backpack to boot. But are these new scholars really set up to succeed? If they've never received a comprehensive eye exam, it's very likely that they aren't. Experts note that 80 percent of what our children learn in school is through their eyes. Yet according to national averages, 25 percent of children suffer from an undiagnosed vision condition.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, vision disabilities are among the most prevalent disabling conditions for children. In fact, undetected vision conditions do more than just limit a child's ability to see. They limit his or her ability to learn, can lead to the misdiagnosis of a learning disability such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or attention deficit disorder (ADD), can increase the likelihood of becoming involved in the criminal justice system and in some instances, can even lead to blindness if not identified and treated early.

The statistics tell the story. Children with uncorrected vision:

- Are often misdiagnosed as having a learning disability. Some 40 percent of children with diagnosed learning disabilities have vision issues.
- May suffer from permanent vision loss if a vision issue such as amblyopia, better known as lazy eye, is not treated by age seven.
- Could face legal troubles. One study suggests 70 percent of juvenile offenders have been found to have uncorrected vision problems.
- Could earn up to 12 percent less income over their lifetime.

Vision impairments don't just affect school-age children. The medical journal JAMA Ophthalmology published findings that 175,000 preschoolers in the United States struggle to see because of untreated vision problems, and the report expects this number will increase to 26 percent of children by 2060.

## States take action

Recognizing the critical importance of eye exams and vision health, some states, including Illinois and Kentucky, have taken charge and made comprehensive eye exams mandatory for children before they enter their first academic experience.

In 2000, Kentucky passed a law that

mandated vision examinations for all children who enter kindergarten. The state has seen marked improvement in test scores since this law was enacted. On top of that, the program has caused no financial burden to the state. In fact, during its first year, only 0.1 percent of the \$150,000 budget that was set aside for this program actually was used.

A study conducted by the Illinois Eye Institute and Chicago Public Schools (CPS) after Illinois passed similar legislation in 2007, showed a statistically significant improvement in GPAs and math test scores after students received comprehensive eye exams and glasses. The study included an assessment of 14,663 CPS students who received comprehensive eye exams between January 2011 and January 2014. It found that 15 percent of the students were suffering from moderate to severe uncorrected refractive error—conditions that may have gone undiagnosed without this legislation and ones that are easily corrected with glasses.

Following their eye exams, those 15 percent of patients showed significantly higher GPAs and greater improvements on test scores than their student counterparts without vision problems. The study also found that students who received their eye exams during third or fourth grade experienced greater gains in math test scores than students who received eye exams during Grades 5 through 7. These findings continue to prove that early intervention is key.

## Vision care and the Affordable Care Act

What many educators and parents don't know is that today the majority of children under the age of 19 have access to a comprehensive eye exam through one of several options such as the current Affordable Care Act, Medicaid, private insurance or other philanthropic organizations that help to fill the gap.

The future of essential health benefits such as vision care for children is at risk, as the future of the Affordable Care Act is uncertain. Currently, more than 100 organizations, including the Vision Impact Institute, are advocating that children's vision coverage be maintained in any new health care legislation through some form of essential benefits.

If these benefits were to go away, it will be incumbent upon individual states, such as New Jersey, to ensure that children have affordable access to this essential care.

# Local and county associations can host Optical Academy

As reported in the main article, many children who fail an in-school vision screening do not receive the proper follow-up care. An estimated 48 percent of parents with children under the age of 12 have never even taken their child to an eye care professional. And many parents do not believe that they can afford the expense of an eye exam and corrective lenses for their children.

Your local or county association can help these children and families by hosting Optical Academy. If you can arrange for a location, such as an all-purpose room, cafeteria, gym, library, or community facility that can be used to house an Optical Academy on-site visit your association can offer a solution to the issues addressed in the article.

Optical Academy's vision team of mobile eye care professionals consists of optometrists, opticians and assistants. They conduct comprehensive eye exams for students and staff in the comfort of your own school, worksite or community center through the use of advanced digital mobile equipment.

For every 50 paid appointments, Optical Academy offers 10 free exams to students whose families are uninsured or cannot afford an exam and corrective eyewear. The school nurse is often a good resource for determining which students may need this benefit. Generally, Optical Academy requires at least 50 scheduled paying clients before confirming the on-site visit.

An ideal location allows for:

- A series of dates that can be scheduled well in advance and posted on the Optical Academy website.
- A minimum of eight hours of operation each day.
- Scheduling of appointments throughout each day.
- Permission for neighboring associations, schools, or communities to be invited, if practical.
- Parking and ease of access.

Optical Academy will work with you and your school district to set up screenings at no cost to your local education association or the district. To set up an Optical Academy screening for your community, contact at Events Coordinator Jessica Molina at 973-298-1400, Ext. 3007, or [Jessica@optical-academy.com](mailto:Jessica@optical-academy.com). You may also email Stev Padilla at [Stev@optical-academy.com](mailto:Stev@optical-academy.com).



## What parents and educators need to know

While nearly every child in New Jersey has access to affordable eye care, many parents aren't aware that these benefits are available or that their child needs to have an annual exam. Often, if parents don't wear glasses, getting an eye exam isn't on their radar. To ensure that all children receive comprehensive eye care, the American Optometric Association has put out recommendations on how to ensure your child's vision is healthy: children should get their first eye exam at six months, another at three years old, and an exam before entering school and every two years after that.

There is also the misconception that a vision screening is sufficient. Offered in our schools and by pediatricians, screenings help to identify farsightedness, which is whether a child can see faraway objects. Yet screenings typically are not administered by someone who specializes in eye health—such as an optometrist or ophthalmologist—and the test does not check for other critical visual issues such as whether or not a child's eyes work properly together.

A comprehensive eye exam is the only way to diagnose all potential vision issues, including nearsightedness, lazy eye, crossed-eyes and eye coordination. The exam can also identify major health issues such as pre-diabetes, high cholesterol, and hypertension.

Unfortunately, many children who fail an in-school vision screening do not receive the proper follow-up care. Often, this is because parents either neglect to take their children for a comprehensive exam or are unaware that their child has failed the screening and has a potential vision issue. An estimated 48 percent of parents with children under the age of 12 have never even taken their children to an eye care professional.

Some schools in New Jersey are taking their screening programs a step further. Newark Public Schools, for example, recently announced a partnership with the Helen Keller International ChildSight program and Vision to Learn to provide screenings, free eye exams for students who fail their screening and free glasses, if needed, to its 25,000 students in grades K-8.

Programs such as these are a good step forward. Nonetheless, they would be even more beneficial if they reached the gold standard as defined in the 2016 report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine: children need to receive a comprehensive eye exam prior to entering kindergarten. This gold standard

would ensure each and every kindergartner in the school district would start his or her academic career on a level playing field when it comes to vision.

A comprehensive eye exam administered by an optometrist or ophthalmologist should be added to every parent's pre-kindergarten health screening checklist, similar to any MMR or immunization requirement. Getting this testing done early in a child's life ensures that the child's eyes are healthy and working together. It also establishes a baseline by which to measure eye health throughout childhood.

## What educators can do

Until comprehensive eye exams become a standard requirement for entering school, what can educators do?

First, they can educate their students' parents on why it's important to take their child to see an eye doctor, reminding them of the impact vision health has on academic success. Second, they can look for warning signs that a child might be struggling to see. For example, if a child is squinting to see the white board, complains of headaches, struggles to read, or is constantly rubbing his or her eyes, it might be time to suggest a visit to the eye doctor.

If an educator is informed that a student has failed a vision screening, the teacher should reach out and talk to the parent to ensure the parent is aware of the issue and discuss how a comprehensive exam can benefit his or her child. If a teacher believes that a parent may be worried about cost, he or she can recommend programs such as the Optical Academy (see Page 29) that often provide free or inexpensive exams to those who cannot afford them.

The simple fact is that for one hour of a parent's time, a lifelong impact can be made on a child by simply taking him or her to get a comprehensive eye exam. Armed with this eye exam, children will be more likely to participate in class, concentrate and complete their academic assignments and socialize with their fellow classmates and friends. 📖

*Kristan Gross is the Global Executive Director of the Vision Impact Institute and is part of the Kids See: Success Initiative. In March 2017, she testified before the New Jersey Legislature's Joint Committee on the Public Schools about the impact of poor access to vision care for students. She can be reached at [kristan.gross@visionimpactinstitute.org](mailto:kristan.gross@visionimpactinstitute.org). You can learn more about the Vision Impact Institute at [visionimpactinstitute.org](http://visionimpactinstitute.org).*

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# Special Olympics Play Unified fosters athletic inclusion in Union Township

By Patrick Rumaker, NJEA staff

Note: Special Olympics New Jersey contributed to the content of this article.

When special education teacher Diana Pielech took over the classroom for students with multiple disabilities at Burnet Middle School in Union Township, she learned that the position came with an extracurricular activity: the Special Olympics Club. The most popular club activity appeared to be the Polar Bear Plunge, an annual Special Olympics fundraiser in which intrepid swimmers head to the Jersey shore on a cold winter's day and run headlong into the Atlantic Ocean.

Pielech saw other possibilities for the club.

"I didn't want my students to be seen as the ones in *that* class where they would be those 'different' kids with no one really talking to them," Pielech said. "So right off the bat, I decided that I would change the model of the club."

Pielech looked for ways to involve her students in the club and in the broader school community. An athlete herself, Pielech used her sports-related connections with students in general education classes and invited them into her classroom. Soon, they came to her class every day, and eventually they started inviting the students in Pielech's class to join them at lunchtime and other parts of the school day.

"I realized that if in just my first year I could get 50 kids interested in doing this, I could reach out to more," Pielech said. "I started doing some research and I found that I could apply for a Play Unified grant from the Special Olympics."

Pielech applied for her first grant from Special Olympics New Jersey four years ago and created a Special Olympics Play Unified Club at Burnet Middle School.

## Play Unified

Special Olympics New Jersey partners with schools and districts to create inclusive sports and social programs that ensure physical education, athletics and fitness, and extracurricular activities are accessible to all students.

Through the Play Unified School Partnership, Special Olympics New Jersey assists schools with implementing customized and sustainable inclusive sports, youth leadership, education and social programs that build self-confidence

and foster communities of acceptance where all students are empowered to reach their full potential.

Play Unified school partners are eligible to receive grants, training, equipment and technical assistance for all grade levels, Pre-K through high school. The grants support them in using Special Olympics sports, education and leadership initiatives to provide inclusive co-curricular, interscholastic and recreational activities in an environment that values and recognizes the gifts and contributions of every student.

A Play Unified School integrates the three components of Special Olympics Unified Strategy for Schools, which include Unified Sports, inclusive clubs, and whole school engagement. These are intended to permeate the school culture, curricula and student enrichment programming. Play Unified grants provide funding for schools to establish Play Unified student-led clubs and inclusive sports and social activities.

## Play Unified at Burnet

Play Unified provides a comprehensive inclusive physical education program for schools to integrate into their curricula. While Pielech hopes to bring that curriculum to Burnet, for now she is focused on the club.

There are two elements to the club grant. One part provides funding for general education and special education students to participate together in after-school activities. Students of all abilities go bowling, play basketball and golf, and enjoy other athletic and recreational pursuits together. They go to Rutgers for an interscholastic Play Unified Field Day.

"Every morning, I have 20 students who come into homeroom and socialize with my students and play games with them," Pielech said. "It's more of a buddy program and sports program that we've created to build a foundation."

The second part of the Play Unified grant builds student leadership at Burnet. In addition to taking the lead in school activities, this mix of students with and without disabilities makes

presentations twice a year at Special Olympics New Jersey Youth Leadership Summits. They also receive leadership training and have opportunities to interact with other student leaders seeking to build inclusive environments.

"The youth leadership program allows them to become the voice for inclusion, and it's really awesome," Pielech said.

## Spirit Week

A school year in which a culture of inclusion is championed, culminates with a Spirit Week every May to celebrate the acceptance of all regardless of disability. Spirit Week is celebrated beyond Burnet School and so far includes Union Township's Kawameeh Middle and Jefferson Elementary schools, and Union Township High School.

In addition to Pielech and Burnet students, a districtwide committee helps plan Spirit Week. They include Jefferson teacher Samantha Formica, Burnet teacher Erica Santiago, Connecticut Farms teacher Marcel Royal, and high school teachers Lindsay Tennen, Dana Meixner, and Adriane Damiano and the support of countless other faculty, support staff members, administrators, and students.

The themes of each day of Spirit Week celebrate the value of difference and inclusion.

"I create mini-lesson plans for teachers, so every single day the teachers are touching on disabilities and spreading the word that it's OK to be different," Pielech said. "We had Camouflage Day where we all can blend together. We had a Crazy Hair Day to remind ourselves that it's OK to be different. We had an Autism Awareness Day."

The week was kicked off with an assembly and with a view of the school and the Play Unified program from the perspective of a student's wheelchair.

"My name is Shaniya Samuels, and my message is to never judge a book by its cover," she begins as she hosts a tour of the school and interviews fellow students. "I was scared to come to Burnet because I thought that people would think I'm weird or too different. But



The Union Township High School Junior ROTC opened the field day.



The Union Township Police Department presented winning teams with medals.



Shaniya Samuels, center, is the star of a video about inclusion at Burnet Middle School.



Union Township High School and Kean University graduate Caitlin Goerlich offered opening remarks.

being in Play Unified has taught me that being different is OK."

The ten-minute video, which includes interview with students of diverse abilities, can be viewed at [bit.ly/unionsamuels](http://bit.ly/unionsamuels).

"As the video ended, I saw students crying in the audience who from outside appearances might seem to care about no one but themselves," Pielech said. "It's interesting to see the way kids react to the message when they see students with disabilities as their peers."

## Play Unified Field Day

The week culminates with an inclusive field day in which the activities are accessible to all students. Held at the Union Township High School Stadium, students are bused in from the district's Kawameeh, Burnet and Jefferson schools.

JROTC students open the event with the presentation of the colors and the National Anthem. Leaders from the Union Township Education Association, the Union County Education Association, district administration and elected leaders were there to cheer the student athletes on.

Advised by teachers Stefanie Courtney and Dana Prieto, the 200-member Key Club takes a lead role in planning the athletic activities for the field day. The club also takes an active role throughout the year building bridges between differently abled students including game days and other social events.

Union Township High School graduate Caitlin Goerlich gave opening remarks. Goerlich was born and raised in Union Township and is a 2011 graduate of Union Township High School. At three years old, she was diagnosed with kyphoscoliosis, an unusual curvature of the spine. After many surgeries and complications, Goerlich was left with spinal nerve damage and paralysis. As a result, she uses a wheelchair and drives an accessible van.

Last year, Goerlich graduated from Kean University with a bachelor's degree in English. She hopes to make her living as an author. She currently blogs at [wiki-wheelz.blogspot.com](http://wiki-wheelz.blogspot.com).

"In February, I wrote a blog post thanking Union High School and all the teachers from over the years who have helped me," Goerlich said. "They always treated me with respect and as an equal." (That post, "Thank You to My Public School Teachers" can be found at [bit.ly/goerlichthankyou](http://bit.ly/goerlichthankyou). She thanks more than her teachers, including educational support professionals and administrators, in her post.)

"I was never seen as different because of the wheelchair, but unfortunately, not every person with a disability has that opportunity," Goerlich said. "I've heard some stories about other towns and states around the county, and they don't get the support or they're treated

differently. I was shocked to hear it."

Goerlich, who now serves on the Tri-State Wheelchair Athletic Association, pointed to sports as an important way to build a more inclusive society.

"Bringing people of all abilities together gets people to understand disabilities and helps people understand each other," Goerlich said. "They realize that people with disabilities are people first."

Her keynote was followed by an activity seen in schools across New Jersey: stations with athletic pursuits challenging all students. The day concluded with an outdoor pizza lunch and extra snacks provided by the Union Township Education Association through an NJEA PRIDE in Public Education grant.

## Play Unified at Union Township High School and beyond

Adriane Damiano, a health and physical education teacher, has long worked to provide an inclusive environment for her students. Pielech's programs at Burnet have strengthened her efforts at the high school, Damiano notes.

"For physical education and health, my students with special needs are included with the general education students," Damiano said. "We have a big annual volleyball tournament and students with disabilities are on teams, just like everyone else. They're included in all the activities we do in the physical education classes."

In this school year, Damiano, Pielech, and their colleagues have started the process to create interscholastic teams for competition in the statewide Play Unified League. Currently, many school districts in New Jersey field teams in the Play Unified League. Special Olympics New Jersey works with New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association in the development of the league.

"The kids in my classes know that a student may have a particular disability, but they learn to work with each other," Damiano said. "Later on in life, my general education students will be working with people with disabilities elsewhere. They both need to know how to interact. These are lifelong lessons."

"This is about accepting everybody, whether they have a disability or not," Pielech said. "It's about understanding that it's OK to be different." 🏠

*To learn more about Special Olympics Play Unified programs, visit [www.sonj.org/unified-sports.html](http://www.sonj.org/unified-sports.html). You may contact Susan Colacello, director of School and Community Partnerships for Special Olympics New Jersey at [scc@sonj.org](mailto:scc@sonj.org). For more information about its implementation in Union Township, you may reach Diana Pielech at [dpielech@twpunionschools.org](mailto:dpielech@twpunionschools.org).*



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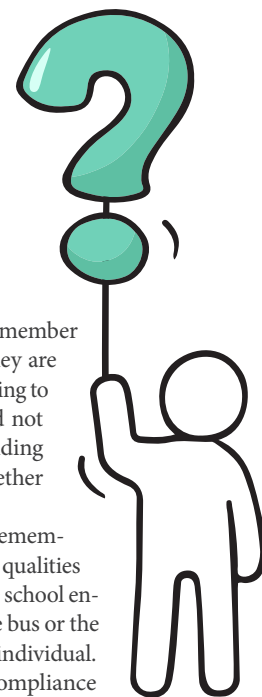
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# What is the root of student entitlement



By Sue DeCaro and Erin Taylor

Fear is rampant in our society, on all levels—from children, to parents, to teachers and school staff—and nothing good comes from allowing fear to guide our actions. But what does this look like day to day?

Many parents have good intentions and want the best for their children, but when fear is in charge, some less-than-desirable outcomes can result. This can increase tension between the parent and the teacher. Parents want their children to do well in school, be enrolled in many and varied extracurricular activities, and get into a good college, believing their children are entitled to all these things. With this focus, parents can unintentionally foster a sense of entitlement in their children.

When fear is in charge, parents may become “lawnmower parents,” trying to mow down anything challenging in the path of their child, including teachers who give their child a poor grade or coaches who do not choose their child for a team. Such parents can feel indignant toward the teacher or coach, believing their

child was entitled to a better grade or deserved to be chosen for a better team.

Many times the root of this entitlement is the fear that if the child does not get the better grade or is not chosen for the better team, certain disaster is in the child's future. The child will not get into a good college, will not get a scholarship, and will end up living in the parents' basement for all of eternity.

But how do parents make the leap from one poor grade to basement-dwelling?

## Fear

Teachers pushing student to learn and challenging students to achieve is a wonderful thing, but when teachers are motivated by fear, they may push their students from a place of exasperation,

frustration or annoyance. The students pick up on this anxiety and may either feel stressed about the class or resist the teacher. Teachers, in turn, can feel stressed by parents who are being driven by fear. But what is a teacher to do?

## Mindfulness and self-care

This is where mindfulness and self-care come into the picture. In our work, we educate teachers, school support staff and administrators on the importance of being mindful of how they are feeling each day in the classroom or school environment. We teach school employees and parents to understand what may be triggering them and how to overcome those triggers. It is vitally important to keep self-care as part of a daily practice, both inside and outside the classroom or school.

When teachers' buckets are full, meaning they are taking good care of themselves and have plenty of energy to flow through the day, they have more of themselves to give to their students. They also have more energy and patience when it comes to dealing with the parents of their students. Do you currently have any self-care practices?

When fear is driving a parent, meeting that parent with an undertone of frustration or resistance only results in power struggles between parents and teachers. The child ultimately loses. Fear does not like to be met with resistance and pressure. Fear likes to be handled gently and lovingly. But how can a teacher best do that?

## Addressing fear

First, a teacher, school support staff member or administrator needs to help the parent see that they are both on the same side—the child's. Teachers need to feel comfortable explaining to parents that every situation in life is an opportunity to learn—a good grade, a bad grade, lost homework, or other typical school experience. When teachers and other school

employees are mindful and remember to take care of themselves, they are much more successful at listening to parents with compassion and not backing down, but rather finding a productive way to work together in the child's best interests.

Second, school staff must remember the unique strengths and qualities that each student brings to the school environment, the classroom, the bus or the playground. Each child is an individual. When we expect uniform compliance from each child, we may be setting him or her up for failure. It is important to remind ourselves of what we've always known as educators, to meet each student where he or she is and go from there.

Third, school staff must work hard to build a trusting, supportive relationship with each family that keeps open lines of communication between home and school. When this type of relationship is established, issues that arise with individual students can be handled much more effectively.

Educating our students is not only about academics, but also about developing and relating to the whole child. We must remember that we are not just teaching from day to day, but rather raising the next generation. 🌱

*Erin Taylor and Sue DeCaro are Certified Parent Coaches®, educators, public speakers, authors, social entrepreneurs and co-founders of Building Connected Communities ([buildingconnectedcommunities.com](http://buildingconnectedcommunities.com)).*

*DeCaro's two children are graduates of Pennsylvania's public schools. Taylor's three children currently attend public schools in New Jersey.*

*Taylor and Decaro have presented at numerous events and have been featured on many podcasts and radio programs. They can be reached at [info@buildingconnectedcommunities.com](mailto:info@buildingconnectedcommunities.com).*

**Fear does not like to be met with resistance and pressure.  
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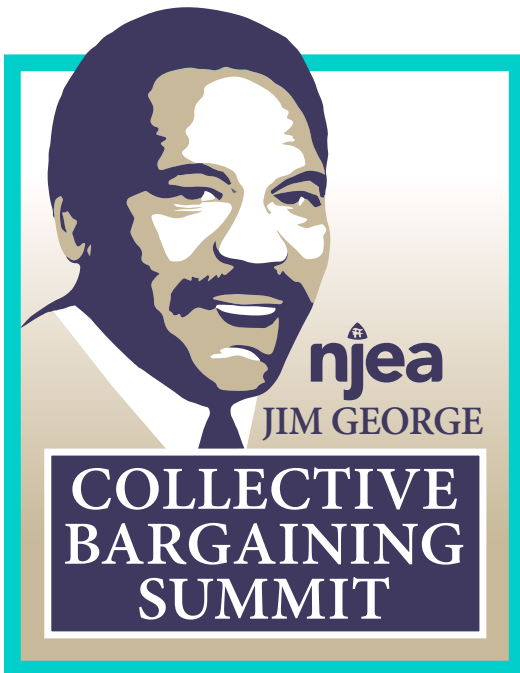


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# Art hazards: toxic materials abound

By Allen Barkkume

When we think of predicting, evaluating and controlling chemical hazards in a school setting, the chemistry lab or the custodian's closet comes to mind. But the truth is that the art classroom is home to the largest supply of toxic chemicals in the building.

From the lung-debilitating silica crystals in clay, to the neurotoxic vapors of solvents, to the carcinogenicity of heavy metal pigments, the art room is full of hazardous materials. Chemical dust, fumes, and vapors can be released during dry-mixing, spraying, heating, burning, sanding, and other art processes, exposing staff and students by inhalation, skin contact, and accidental ingestion.

## Labeling

The regulatory programs we use to label art materials can be confusing and even counterproductive. Materials labeled “nontoxic” may have toxins in them. “Nontoxic” means that a material or its ingredients were tested for toxicity and found to be safe. However, if a material has not yet been tested, it is still considered nontoxic in the same way we consider a defendant innocent until proven guilty. In addition, some manufacturers label their products “natural.” Be aware that turpentine, asbestos, lead, and even citrus oil are all natural but very dangerous if used incorrectly.

Many of the art materials found in the classroom come with their own Safety Data Sheet (SDS). Although the SDS offers critical information about storage, use, and emergency instructions, it

is limited by one important stipulation: if a product contains proprietary ingredients, they do not have to be listed on the SDS. For example, an aerosol glue product may list ingredients for the aerosol propellant, but not for the adhesive itself. This severely limits the information provided by an SDS.

You might see a label that declares a product compliant with ASTM D 4326 -94 (2016). This standard applies to art materials but states, “Since knowledge about chronic health hazards is incomplete and warnings cannot cover all uses of any product, it is not possible for precautionary labeling to ensure completely safe use of an art product.”

## Controlling exposures

Predicting the exposure to toxic materials is the first half of a good health and safety plan. The next half is controlling those exposures. There is a clear hierarchy of controls, and we should make it a priority to seek out the most effective controls first, saving the weaker protections for situations in which there are no alternatives.

The most effective thing to do when faced with a toxic chemical in the classroom is to find a safer substitution. The lead-based “flake white” paint has now been replaced with the relatively benign titanium white. Substitution is a good solution in the art classroom, because student art work does not serve the same





## The chemical exposure risk in an art room can be higher than anywhere else in the building.

purpose as the work of a professional artist. One is intended to be a valuable cultural product meant to last thousands of years, while the other is primarily an educational tool. Some components that make art materials last forever are the same ones that make them toxic. Many of the persistent pigments used in traditional artwork can be eliminated for the expected intentions of student work.

The next level on the hierarchy of controls is to use engineering solutions. Installing a booth vented to the outside to be used for spraying solvent-based paints, glues, and other such products is an example of an engineering solution. This practice is not as good as getting rid of the solvent-containing products altogether, but it is the next best thing.

After that, we can use administrative controls, also known as general housekeeping. These could include wet-mopping clay dust, washing hands frequently, and abstaining from food or drink in the art room.

The final level of protection is to guard sensitive body parts. Goggles, gloves and respirators (commonly called facemasks) are a means to protect us when no other controls are available. However, even with this, we must be careful to match the right protection for the exposure—regular rubber/latex gloves can be dissolved by solvents such as paint thinner.

### Local association action plan

The chemical exposure risk in an art room can be higher than anywhere else in the building. Many art materials have proprietary ingredients that are kept secret, despite their potential toxicity. These materials may be used in creative ways not intended by the manufacturer, leading to higher exposures than expected.

The health and safety of an art classroom should not be left up to the art teacher alone. Instead, every local association should have

an art materials action plan to achieve the following:

- Designate an association representative who ensures the local association action plan is implemented.
- Ensure that the school district approves the purchase of the least toxic art supplies.
- Make Safety Data Sheets available to art teachers.
- Provide art teachers proper personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Install a booth that exhausts to the outside in the art room.
- Provide art teachers training on how to minimize exposure to art materials.

This plan should be coordinated by the local association with its UniServ field representative.

Just because art materials can be toxic does not mean our students should avoid artmaking altogether. It means we should be informed and have a plan.

### For more information

New Jersey Right-to-Know Hazardous Substance Fact Sheets (HSFS), New Jersey Department of Health. Each HSFS gives easy-to-understand information on an individual chemical's health hazards and how to control exposures. Available in English for 1,700 chemicals and in Spanish for 900 chemicals, you'll find it at [web.doh.state.nj.us/rtkhsfs/indexfs.aspx](http://web.doh.state.nj.us/rtkhsfs/indexfs.aspx). 🏠

*Allen Barkkume holds a Master of Science in Architectural Research from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, and is pursuing a Master of Public Health in Industrial Hygiene from the City University of New York's School of Public Health. He was a Bloomfield High School art teacher for ten years, and is a consultant with the New Jersey Work Environment Council, which is a frequent partner with NJEA on school health and safety concerns.*



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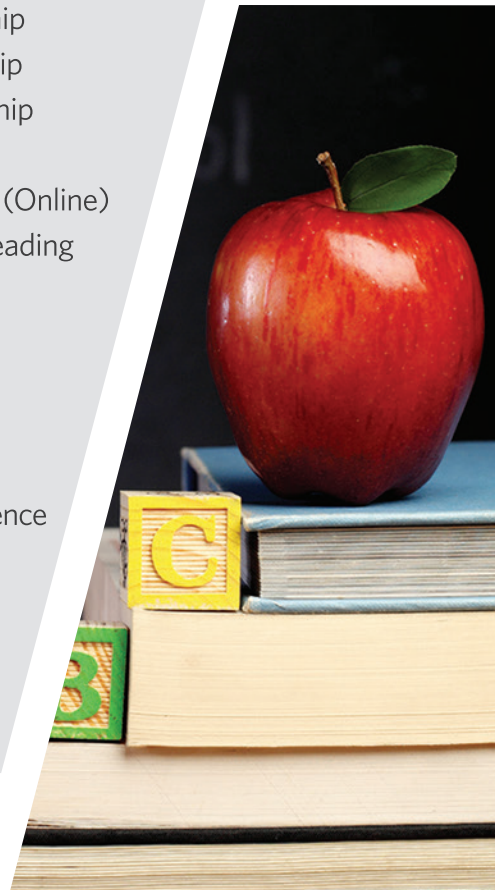
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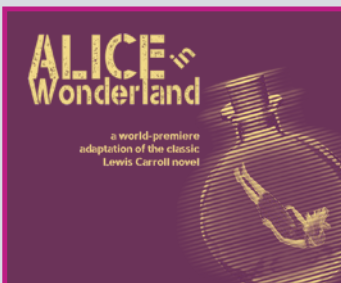
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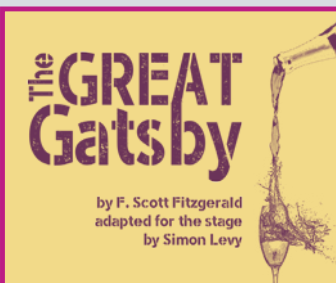
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# Back to school: What's in your tech toolbox?

By Kimberly Mattina

As educators, our minds are always turned on. We are always learning, and we are constantly thinking of new ways to help our students be successful. Let's not forget, however, that as educators we also need guidance to be effective, efficient, organized and successful.

As a technology integration coach and a Google Certified Trainer, I wanted to share some tech tips and recommendations with you to help you get started this school year. Many of my recommendations revolve around G Suite for Education (GSFE).

## Tips for Google Classroom

1. Instead of listing all of your classroom resources, websites, and so forth on the About page, list them in a Google document and attach that link to the About page. This will allow you to sort them in any order you choose, format them and manage them more easily. Be sure the setting permissions to the Google document are set appropriately. Additionally, you can insert this link onto your school webpage.
2. Title the assignment with a number and a description, and provide the same naming convention to any attachments for that assignment. This will allow you to easily associate files to the assignments in Google Drive. For example: "001 All About Me."
3. Always include general directions and technology directions in all of your assignments. This will provide guidance to the students when the assignment is completed.
4. Install the Chrome extension "Open Side by Side" by Alice Keeler. This Chrome extension will split the screen and have the Google Classroom work page open on one side, and the student document open on the other side. This will allow you to easily navigate between the student document and Google Classroom grading page without having to tab back and forth between windows. It is available in the Chrome web store. If

you cannot install it, contact your Google administrator or your IT department for assistance.

5. Use Topics on your posts to organize and filter your stream so that the information can be found easily. For example, create a topic called "Week of ...," and insert it on any assignment for that week. This will allow students to display all the posts for that specific week.

## Tips for YouTube

1. Use your channel to upload screencasts and animations. This will help you flip your classroom and allow students to learn at their own pace.
2. Create playlists on your channel to organize your content.
3. Have your students subscribe to your channel so they get notifications when a new video has been uploaded.
4. Use Snagit, Screencastify or Screencast-O-Matic to create short tutorials of your content.

## Tips for Google Forms

Here is a list of new features of Google Forms that may help improve your workflow:

1. All consumer users now have the ability to upload a file into Google Forms. Previously this option was only available to GSFE users. This can be helpful for parents and guardians to provide you with notes concerning their child.
2. Another update is having intelligent response validation. This feature will allow you to quickly add a validation to a Forms question, making your workflow quicker.
3. Another new feature to Forms is the ability to set up default values when creating new Forms. This is a huge time saver. This can be found in the Preference menu and can be applied to all new Forms that are created.

4. You have the option to rearrange header sections. Now you can quickly and easily rearrange sections in your Forms.
5. Finally, you now have the ability to use a checkbox grid question. This new question type will allow you to select multiple options in a category. One example use for this tool is scheduling.

## Introducing Flipgrid

I recently learned about a tool called Flipgrid. When I realized how powerful and easy it is to use, I immediately fell in love with it. Flipgrid will allow you to create a video dialog or discussion with your students. Students use their device's webcam to respond and participate in the discussion. This tool gives everyone a voice, and I recommend that you try it. I will be using this tool with my students as a reflection or exit ticket. The best part is, it's free! Simply visit [www.flipgrid.com](http://www.flipgrid.com) for more information and to create an account.

I work with and train many educators, and most of them want easy and practical ways to implement and use technology in their classroom. With this article, I hope I was able to provide you with some information and guidance that can be helpful to you during the school year. 🙌

*Kimberly Mattina is a technology integration coach and social media advisor at the William Davies Middle School in Mays Landing. She is a Top Contributor in the G Suite for Education forum, a Google Certified Trainer and a Google Certified Educator.*

*Mattina is the co-founder and co-host of "The Suite Talk," which is a talk show about G Suite for Education. In addition, she is technology consultant and the owner of at The Tech Lady, LLC, which is a computer repair and consulting business. Mattina manages a blog, "The Tech Lady," which can be accessed at [www.thetechlady-km.blogspot.com](http://www.thetechlady-km.blogspot.com). Her website, The Tech Lady Express and be found at [goo.gl/cGRpE8](http://goo.gl/cGRpE8). You can also follow Mattina on Twitter. Her handle is @The\_Tech\_Lady.*



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# A CLOSER LOOK

## monthly highlights

"Classroom Close-up NJ" received four Emmy award nominations from the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. The winners will be announced Sept. 9. See Page 15 to find out which segments earned the nomination.

This summer, "Classroom Close-up NJ" aired encore performances from the 23rd season. This month the season finale will feature current host Marie Blistan passing the host duties on to Sean M. Spiller. Three other shows will re-air in September, including features from West Milford, Neptune, Jersey City, Howell, Pleasantville, Teaneck, Mullica, Rochelle Park and Atlantic City. On Oct. 1, be sure to tune in for the season premiere.

## watch

### SEPTEMBER 3

Students in Northvale show off freshly picked carrots as they learn how to grow, market and sell their vegetables. Special education teacher Jodi Sardanis owns a health club and a raw café, so living and eating healthy is her passion. She orchestrated the creation of three courtyards: an edible garden, a Native American area, and a sustainable yard.

### SEPTEMBER 17

Children in Trenton celebrate science during the Franklin Elementary Science Fair. The entire school community—including students' families—is involved in this annual event. Students in third through fifth grade submit projects that are evaluated and judged by students and adults. The winners compete at the district level.

### SEPTEMBER 24

A student from Robert R. Lazar Middle School in Montville is mesmerized by STEM and she shares her passion with students from Interval Elementary in Parsippany Troy-Hills. Discover how third and seventh graders from two different school districts learn from each other thanks to a STEM PALS project.

### 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.

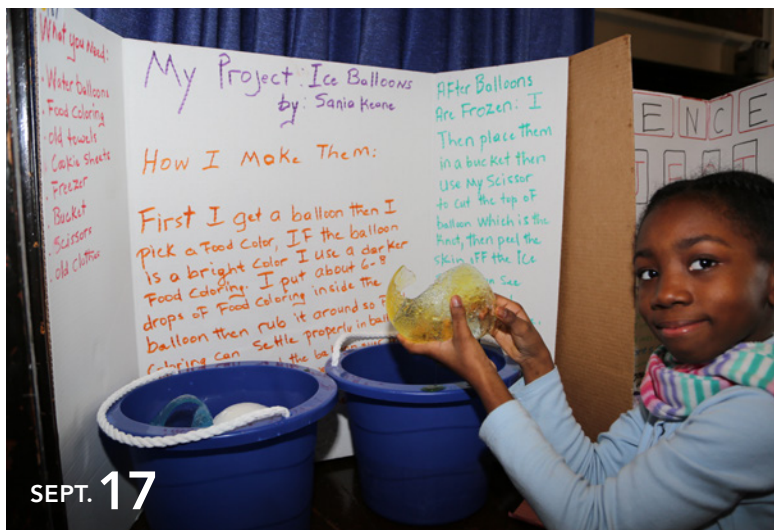


classroomcloseup.org

Visit [classroomcloseup.org](http://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.



SEPT. 03



SEPT. 17



SEPT. 24





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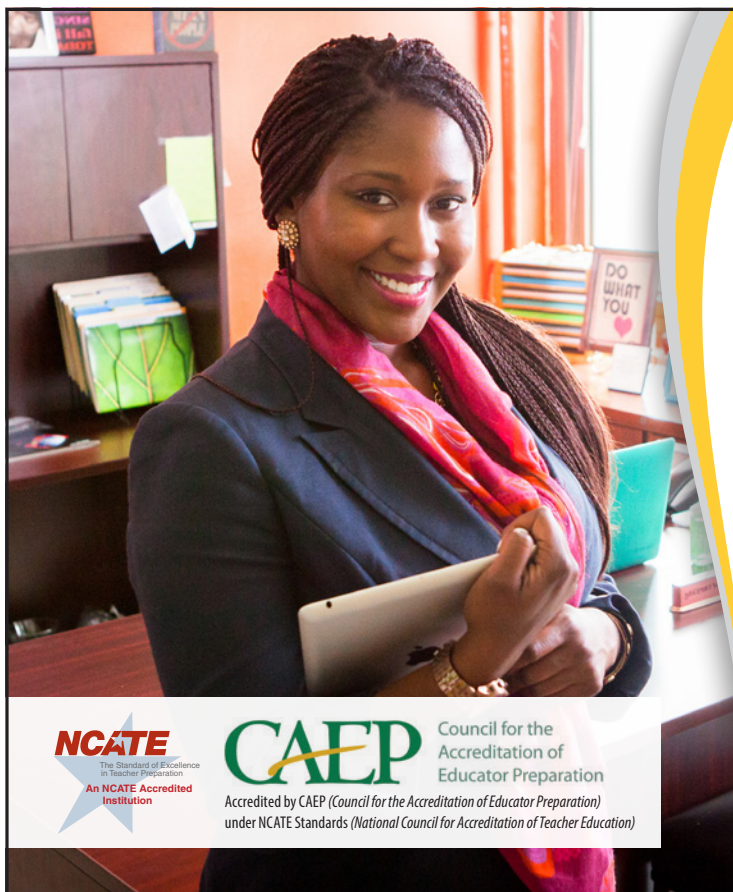
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# Teacher Leadership:

## Influencing your colleagues from the classroom

By Richard Wilson, NJEA Staff

Walk down the hallway of any school in New Jersey and ask school employees, “Who are the real leaders in this building?” Some might name the principal or other administrators who serve in traditional leadership roles. Some might name association leaders who work to protect the rights of school staff. And, chances are, by the time you get to the end of the hallway, the names of two or three teachers will probably emerge, those trusted educators who are the go-to colleagues. The ones everyone goes to for advice on instructional strategies, classroom management, and the latest trend in technological innovation. Those teachers have always been there, but now we have a name for them, teacher leaders.

In their 2004 *Review of Educational Research* article, “What Do We Know About Teacher Leadership? Findings From Two Decades of Scholarship,” researchers Jennifer York-Barr and Karen Duke define teacher leadership as “the process by which teachers individually or collectively influence their colleagues, principals and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement.”

That definition points to a new model for schools, a paradigm in which teachers exert their influence on entire schools, working collaboratively to use their experience from everyday contact with students to drive the instructional agenda of their schools.


Not only do we have a name, but there is also a new endorsement on instructional certificates for those who would like more formalized learning in teacher leadership. Beginning in the fall of 2018, teachers will be able to enter into programs in colleges and other educational institutions that will bring them to a teacher leader endorsement. NJEA is making plans to be one of those providers, creating its own teacher leader academy.

The teacher leader endorsement will be based on the Teacher Leader Model Standards, which were created in 2008 by a con-

sortium of educators from across the United States. The group included several teachers from New Jersey, bringing the unique view of the Garden State to the table.

The standards address a variety of roles and responsibilities for teacher leaders. They range from the strictly academic tasks of supporting colleagues through professional development, professional learning communities, and examining data and assessment, to broader leadership roles of working with families and communities and advocating for students and the profession at local, state and national levels.

If you are interested in being part of a new paradigm of school leadership, leading from the classroom, take a look at the standards, and watch for information about the evolution of teacher leadership over the coming year, as well as the introduction of programs that will lead to the new teacher leader endorsement.

More information about the report of the New Jersey Teacher Leader Endorsement Advisory Board can be found at [njea.org/TLReport](http://njea.org/TLReport). 

*Richard Wilson is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. He is currently on special assignment to assist in the development of NJEA's teacher leader academy. He can be reached at [rwilson@njea.org](mailto:rwilson@njea.org).*

**Teacher Leadership: the process by which teachers individually or collectively influence their colleagues, principals and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement.**

## Teacher Leader Model Standards

**Domain I:** Fostering a collaborative culture to support educator development and student learning

**Domain II:** Accessing and using research to improve practice and student learning

**Domain III:** Promoting professional learning for continuous improvement

**Domain IV:** Facilitating improvements in instruction and student learning

**Domain V:** Promoting the use of assessments and data for school and district improvement

**Domain VI:** Improving outreach and collaboration with families and community

**Domain VII:** Advocating for student learning and the profession

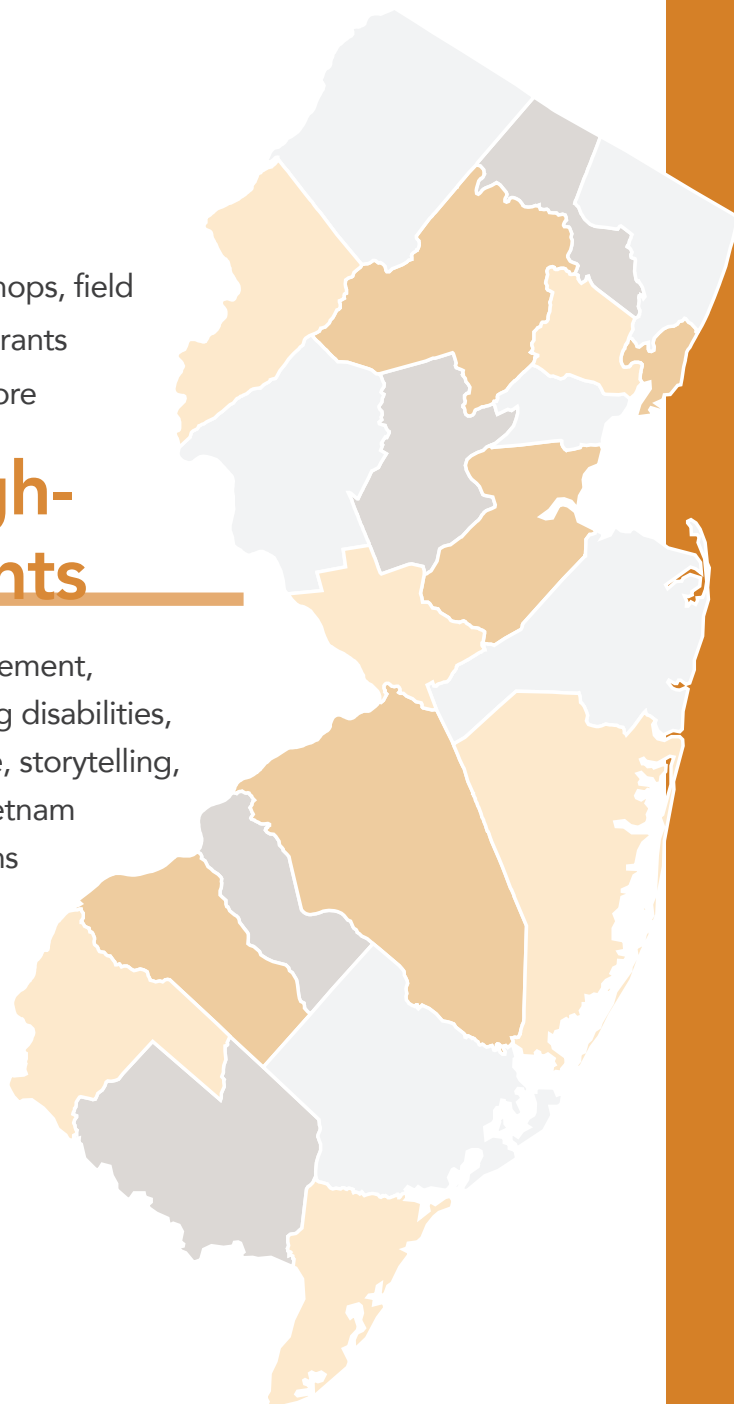


# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY:

Workshops, field trips, grants and more

## high-lights

Bereavement, learning disabilities, science, storytelling, and Vietnam veterans



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

## showcase

### New Jersey Science Convention: Weaving NGSS Across the Curriculum

The New Jersey Science Teachers Association (NJSTA) and the New Jersey Science Education Leadership Association (NJSELA) are co-sponsoring the 41st annual New Jersey Science Convention (NJSC) October 24 & 25 at the Princeton Marriott Forrester.

The convention represents an exceptional opportunity for science teachers of Grades K-12 to experience interactive and hands-on professional development. The conference will focus on Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), effective classroom instruction, integration of technology and the latest information on classroom resources. In addition to presentations by experienced classroom teachers, NJSC 2017 will also host presentations by New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and college professors along with nationally renowned speakers and presenters.

The venue provides a level of interaction that allows teachers to connect with colleagues from schools all over New Jersey and maintain ongoing collaboration. NJSC 2017 will provide science teachers of Grades K-12 with professional development that supports the type of teaching needed to prepare students for a competitive global society.

If you register by Oct. 15, the cost is \$175 for one day's attendance and \$295 for both days. After Oct. 15, registration fees increase to \$190 for one day and \$310 for two days. For additional information, contact Nancy Evans Bennett at 973-889-1959 or [nbennett@aol.com](mailto:nbennett@aol.com). You may also visit [www.njscienceconvention.com](http://www.njscienceconvention.com).

### Healing in the Classroom

The Karen Ann Quinlan Hospice and the Joseph T. Quinlan Bereavement Center in Newton invite teachers, school counselors, social workers, and psychologists to participate in a two-day program designed to help create on-site grief support systems for bereaved students. Learning to recognize possible grief-based behaviors in your classroom will allow you to respond appropriately and to quickly assist your students. These are skills that you can use throughout your career with children of many ages.

The workshop will take place on Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 11-12. Training topics will include:

- Recognizing grief in children and teens
- Developmental perspectives in grief
- Normalizing grief
- Supporting young people as they process their grief
- Addressing death and loss within the school community
- Creating/facilitating peer support groups

Participants will each receive a copy of the books *Finding the Words: How to Talk with Children and Teens about Death, Suicide, Funerals, Homicide, Cremation and other End-of-Life Matters* and the *Healing in the Classroom Workbook*.

The event runs 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. each day and the cost is \$200, which includes lunch on both days. The registration deadline is Oct. 6. Contact Diana Sebzda, Director of Bereavement at 973-948-2283 or [dsebzda@karenannquinlanhospice.org](mailto:dsebzda@karenannquinlanhospice.org). You may visit [www.karenannquinlanhospice.org](http://www.karenannquinlanhospice.org) for more information.

## Navigate the Maze: Fall Conference and Resource Expo

Educators of all grades are invited to the Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey (LDANJ) Conference on Oct. 21 at Middlesex County College.

With 25 sessions to choose from, the conference will offer a variety of workshops addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities and attention issues. Topics include dyslexia, mathematics, writing, basic rights in special education, assistive technology, transition to college and work, and much more. Additionally, there will be time provided to visit the Vendor, School and Post-Secondary Resource Expo.

Nelson Lauver, who has dyslexia, will deliver the keynote, "Don't Give Up on That Kid." Lauver is an author, blogger, broadcaster and speaker.

The cost is \$25 for members and full-time students. For nonmembers, the cost is \$50. Breakfast and lunch are included. The registration deadline is Oct. 1.

For more information, email [info@ldanj.org](mailto:info@ldanj.org) or call 732-645-2738. Visit [www.ldanj.org](http://www.ldanj.org) for conference and registration information. To register online, visit [www.ldanjOct21.eventbrite.com](http://www.ldanjOct21.eventbrite.com).

## Gleaning Insight from Critical Moments: Working Below and Between the Lines of an Oral Text

The 25th annual New Jersey Storytelling Festival will take place on Saturday, Sept. 16 at Howell Living History Farm in Lambertville. As part of the event, Paula Davidoff and Julie Della Torre will co-present a free workshop from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Educators of Grade 3 through high school will experience a story using multiple modes of learning: listening, speaking, writing and movement. Participants will use discussion, writing and creative drama activities to examine critical story moments in order to gain a deeper understanding of story themes and characters. The workshop activities are designed to give teachers tools for student-directed literature study.

For more information, please contact Denise McCormack at [magicwords101@yahoo.com](mailto:magicwords101@yahoo.com) or visit [www.njstorynet.org](http://www.njstorynet.org).

## Teacher Open House: New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation in Holmdel invites educators of all grades to the Memorial and Educational Center to learn about class field trips and other professional development opportunities the foundation has to offer. The open house will take place Sept. 30 and will feature a tour guided by a Vietnam veteran. The tour includes information about educational resources such as traveling trunks, curator packages, assistance with in-school speakers and opportunities to hear oral histories.

Additional professional development opportunities will be available during the year, including the Annual Forum, now in its 17th year. "More Than Just History: The Science of the Vietnam War" is the topic this year.

The cost for the open house is free but registration is required. The deadline is Sept. 23. You may contact Keri Giannotti at [kgiannotti@njvvmf.org](mailto:kgiannotti@njvvmf.org) or 201-694-5501. Visit the NJVVMF website at [www.njvvmf.org](http://www.njvvmf.org) for more information.

# More to learn across the state

## Social studies conference slated for Oct. 23

Don't miss the annual conference of the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies (NJCSS) on Monday, Oct. 23. Themed "Teaching the Three R's: Rights, Reforms, Regions," this conference for K-12 social studies teachers will be held at the Busch Campus Center of Rutgers University in Piscataway. The conference registration fee includes a one-year NJCSS membership (Sept. 1, 2017 – Aug. 31, 2018). Registration is \$80 if postmarked/transmitted by Oct. 10. After Oct. 10, the fee is \$100. The fee includes a "business breakfast," but lunch is not included. The day begins with registration 7:30 a.m. The opening session begins 8:30 a.m. The day concludes at 1:05 p.m.

You'll find a link to the registration form at [www.njcss.org](http://www.njcss.org). Click on the "Annual Conference" tab. You may register online and provide payment via PayPal. If registering by postal mail, make your check or purchase order payable to "NJCSS" and mail it to: New Jersey Council for the Social Studies, Rutgers University, Busch Campus, 640 Bartholomew Road, Suite 103, Piscataway, NJ 08854. Email [hank.bitten@rutgers.edu](mailto:hank.bitten@rutgers.edu) for any questions.

## Beyond Looking: Art Educators of New Jersey Annual Conference

The Art Educators of New Jersey (AENJ) annual conference, "Beyond Looking," will be held Oct. 1-3 at the Ocean Place Resort & Spa, in Long Branch. The theme for this year's conference will challenge you to look and see beyond the everyday through enhanced perception and observation.

The conference offers over 140 presentations and hands-on workshops presented by artists, scholars and fellow educators. Innovative ideas for art-making, designing arts curricula and assessments, applying social media and digital technologies to artistic endeavors, art and special populations, 21st-century skills and more will be addressed.

An Exhibitor Fair features commercial vendors and colleges displaying the latest books, software, equipment, studio and art supplies, and art media. Also featured will be the President's Party and Awards Event, a Museum Information Fair, Creative Marketplace, YAM Exhibits, 1st Annual Members Pop Up Art Show, and Monday afternoon Social Hour.

Keynote speakers include children's book author Hervé Tullet, artist and educator Jean Shin, artist Lily Yeh, private art adviser Kristy Bryce, and photographer, writer and filmmaker Corinne May Botz.

An early bird registration fee of \$135 expires at 11:59 p.m. on Sept. 17. Beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Sept. 18 and continuing onsite, the fee is \$185. The conference registration fee does not include membership in AENJ.

For conference details, room rates, membership rates and to register, visit [www.aenj.org](http://www.aenj.org) or email [bcalvo@aej.org](mailto:bcalvo@aej.org).

## NGSS professional development workshop series

The Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community



# More to learn across the state

College will offer a new series of four one-day workshops designed to support teachers and supervisors of grades K-5 and grades 6-12 with the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Participants will engage in NGSS-aligned investigations that consist of Performance Tasks modeled after the NGSS Performance Expectations. Participants will develop their own Performance Tasks to begin planning NGSS-aligned lessons.

## NGSS Workshops for Grades K-5

- Nov. 14: Developing and Using Models to Represent Natural Phenomena
- Dec. 12: Using Crosscutting Concepts to Investigate Natural Phenomena
- Jan. 30: Constructing Explanations and Arguments for Natural Phenomena
- March 6: Planning NGSS-Aligned Lessons

## NGSS Workshops for Grades 6-12

- Nov. 15: Developing and Using Models to Represent Natural Phenomena
- Dec. 13: Using Crosscutting Concepts to Investigate Natural Phenomena
- Jan. 31: Constructing Explanations and Arguments for Natural Phenomena
- March 7: Planning NGSS-Aligned Lessons

All workshops are held at Raritan Valley Community College in North Branch. Workshops begin promptly at 9 a.m. and end by 3:30 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The workshops are led by Dr. Wil van der Veen, a nationally recognized expert in science education and a member of the New Jersey State Leadership Team for the NGSS. Participants will work in small groups that are facilitated by experienced classroom teachers from the NGSS Teacher Leader Program.

The fee is \$125 per workshop. Register early! Many workshops fill up weeks in advance. For more information and to register visit [www.raritanval.edu/ngss](http://www.raritanval.edu/ngss) or contact Mariel O'Brien at [mariel.obrien@raritanval.edu](mailto:mariel.obrien@raritanval.edu) or 908-526-1200, Ext. 8942.

For long-term professional development on the NGSS in your district, contact Dr. Wil van der Veen at [wil.vanderveen@raritanval.edu](mailto:wil.vanderveen@raritanval.edu).

This workshop series is supported by grants from the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium and the Sanofi Corporation.

## Science comes alive with Starlab

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

The Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community College in North Branch is offering training in the setup, use, maintenance and repacking of the Starlab system. Training will be held on Nov. 29 and begin promptly at 9 a.m. The training will end by 4 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The Starlab training is led by Mariel O'Brien, an astronomy educator who has used Starlab extensively with K-12 students, and is co-facilitated by K-12 educators from the NGSS Teacher Leader Program.

The fee is \$150. Teachers who complete the training are eligible to rent Starlab for a fee of \$375/week. For more information and to register visit our website at [www.raritanval.edu/ngss](http://www.raritanval.edu/ngss) or contact Mariel O'Brien at [mariel.obrien@raritanval.edu](mailto:mariel.obrien@raritanval.edu) or 908-526-1200 Ext. 8942.

## State Bar Foundation offers free mock trial workshops

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation will sponsor free mock trial workshops for elementary, middle and high school teachers in October at the New Jersey Law Center in New Brunswick. Teachers attending the workshops will receive professional development hours.

The Foundation's Law Fair/Law Adventure Workshop for teachers of Grades 3-8 will be held on Oct. 17, 8:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Teachers will learn about the elements of a mock trial, and will find out how to enter the Foundation's Law Fair Competition for Grades 3-6 and Law Adventure Competition for grades 7 and 8. This year's workshop will feature a lively mock trial performance by 2017 winning students. The entire audience will serve as jurors.

The New Jersey State Bar Foundation's High School Mock Trial Workshop for teacher- and attorney-coaches will be conducted on Oct. 26, 9 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Speakers will explain the contest structure and judging process. Last year's championship teams will enact the new criminal case for 2017-18.

To register, or for more information, contact Sheila Boro at 732-937-7519 or [sboro@njsbf.org](mailto:sboro@njsbf.org) or visit [www.njsbf.org](http://www.njsbf.org).

**Special note:** "Classroom Close-up NJ" will be on location at the Oct. 17 workshop described above to capture video content for a segment the show is producing on the New Jersey State Bar Foundation's Law Fair/Law Adventure Mock Trial program. "Classroom Close-up NJ" is a co-production of NJTV and NJEA with additional funding from PSE&G. The show has won 15 Emmys and focuses on the accomplishments of teachers and students in New Jersey's public schools.

## Join the New Jersey Community College Association (NJCCA)

The New Jersey Community College Association (NJCCA) is an interactive networking, political action and lobbying group. The goals of NJCCA are to create a forum where public higher education is promoted, advocate for exceptional standards of professional excellence, and serve as a liaison among the multiple local associations in the county colleges. The association

advocates for all NJEA county college members.

Quarterly meetings are held to discuss and take action on issues affecting higher education and to support affordable higher education. NJCCA holds an annual breakfast meeting at the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. This year it begins at 9:30 a.m. on Friday, Nov. Mike Flynn, NJEA's higher education lobbyist will provide NJCCA members with updates on the current political landscape. We will also discuss the survey findings from NJCCA's April 2017 lunch meeting at the Higher Education Conference in Princeton.

Association membership is open to full-time, employed community college NJEA members. Annual local association dues (based on the number of members range from \$50-\$250) and individual members are \$20.

For more information contact NJCCA President Maureen Behr at [moseynj@yahoo.com](mailto:moseynj@yahoo.com) or NJCCA Secretary Lucy Deane at [ldane@bergen.edu](mailto:ldane@bergen.edu).

### Camden County College offers mini-courses and free lecture series

The Camden County College Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility (CCLR) is offering five-week mini-courses starting in September. Each course costs \$30. For \$75, you may take unlimited mini-courses through Aug. 31, 2018. In addition, the CCLR offers a free lecture series, special events, and a free 15-week course.

For more information, visit [www.camdencc.edu/civiccenter](http://www.camdencc.edu/civiccenter) or call 856-227-7200, ext. 4333 for details.

#### Mini-courses

##### Evenings at Blackwood campus

- Sept. 25-Oct. 23 – The Vietnam War
- Sept. 26-Oct. 24 – The Great War and Its Marvelous Inventions
- Oct. 5-Nov. 2 – A Glimpse into the Black Science Female Fiction Authors
- Oct. 5-Nov. 2 – Wonderful World of Microorganisms

##### Evenings at Rohrer Center in Cherry Hill

- Sept. 25-Oct. 23 – It Happened on Broadway: Exploring the American Musical
- Sept. 26-Oct. 24 – The Great Challenge: Educating a Nation
- Sept. 26-Oct. 24 – A Hero Among Us: Uncovering the Mono-Myth
- Sept. 27-Oct. 25 – Through the Lens of a Camera: The Holocaust and Movies

#### Free 7 p.m. lecture series at Blackwood Campus Refugees and Migration

- Sept. 11 – 1177 B.C.: The Year Civilization Collapsed
- Sept. 25 – Displacement and Forced Migration of Syrians and Iraqis: Cultural Impacts in the Middle East and Beyond

- Oct. 2 – Displacement and Migration in the Eastern Mediterranean during the 19th/20th century
- Oct. 16 – International and U.S. Refugee Law and Policy
- Oct. 30 – Fleeing Inquisition: European Refugees in 18th Century Istanbul

#### Autism

- Oct. 3 – A Basic Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Oct. 10 – Using Creative Arts for Therapy and Social Skills in School Settings
- Oct. 17 – Safety and Sexuality
- Oct. 24 – Autism Goes to the Movies
- Nov. 14 – Comorbidity with Autism Spectrum Disorder: Anxiety, ODD, CD and ADHD

#### The Roaring 20's

- Sept. 27 – A Complicated Normalcy: Presidential Politics in the Roaring Twenties
- Oct. 4 – Prohibition and the Birth of Organized Crime in 1920's America
- Oct. 18 – Harlem: City of Dreams
- Oct. 25 – Mass Media, Mass Culture, and the "Golden Age" of Sports Celebrity
- Nov. 8 – Popular Culture in the Roaring Twenties: The Age of Excess
- Nov. 15 – Was the 1920 Women's Suffrage Amendment a Triumph for Women or the End of Feminism?

#### Sex, Gender, and Sexuality: Navigating a Shifting Landscape

- Sept. 18 – "Becoming an Image": Gender and Contemporary Art
- Sept. 28 – The Science behind Biological Sex
- Oct. 5 – Gender-Fair Classrooms
- Oct. 12 – Talking about Gender Change
- Oct. 19 – Sexuality and Well-Being
- Oct. 26 – Creating Safe Spaces: An Interfaith Exploration

#### Free 7 p.m. lecture series at Jewish Community Center, Cherry Hill *Art: The Magic of What's Real (continued)*

- Sept. 19 – Dorothea Tanning
- Sept. 26 – Paul Cadmus (1904 – 1999)
- Oct. 3 – Peter Blume (1906 – 1992)
- Oct. 10 – George Tooker (1920 – 2011)
- Oct. 17 – Honore Sharrer (1920 – 2009)

#### Free Special Events

- Sept. 18 – Constitution Day Lecture: Founding Fallacies

#### Free 15-Week Course

- Aug. 31-Dec. 20 – Topics in American History: The 20's and 30's
- Aug. 31-Dec. 21 – Topics in American History: Contemporary Middle East 🏠



# NJEA Preservice

Leadership matters

## Getting involved with NJEA Preservice

Why I wish I had done it sooner

By Kiersten Perks, Rutgers University Camden

I have wanted to be an educator for as long as I can remember. I could never see myself doing anything else so when I attended community college after high school, it made sense to get my associate's degree in education.

When the time came to transfer to a four-year school, I sought one that either had an Education Department or a Teacher Preparation Program. I had never heard of NJEA Preservice, formerly NJSEA, until my senior year of college. Somehow I managed to spend roughly six years in college with the intent of becoming a teacher and never heard of it. I had no idea about the NJEA Convention, what the union was, what it did, or any of the opportunities on which I was missing out. If only I'd known.

The first time that I learned about NJEA Preservice was when one of my professors asked in class if any of us was going to NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. Most of my classmates wore an expression similar to the one that I wore, which was something of a cross between confusion and intrigue. I went home that day, looked it up, signed up, and booked a room.

I had the luck to be staying at the same hotel as the NJSEA Ambassadors. They are students on campuses throughout the state

who promote NJSEA and what it can provide to future educators. I also was fortunate to be rooming with someone who had been an ambassador. We attended a networking event, and I met the other ambassadors.

Convention is a big event, and I felt overwhelmed on my first day. When I told one of the ambassadors that I met about how I felt, she said she had felt the same way her first year and it would get easier. It felt like someone had put air back into my lungs and I could breathe just by having someone validate my feelings and tell me it would get easier.

I spent the rest of that night with the ambassadors and it was like being surrounded by family. They joked around, cheered each other on, and welcomed anyone who approached them. I knew that I wanted to be an ambassador because I wanted to do for someone else what they had done for me that night.

The next day, I went and attended workshops by myself but it wasn't long before I saw familiar faces. I checked out the exhibit floor, attended a workshop about dyslexia, learned more about guided reading, and bought so many books that I could barely carry them. I was completely sold on being an ambassador and as soon as the email came out that

included the application for it, I couldn't submit it fast enough.

### Becoming an ambassador

I have done more as an ambassador and as a member of NJEA Preservice in the 10 months that I have been involved than I had previously done throughout my entire college career. As soon as I became an ambassador, one of the chairs asked me if I would be interested in attending the NJEA Walter J. O'Brien Legislative & Political Action Conference. Then she suggested that we attend the Early Career event hosted by Central Connection—an NJEA member group in central New Jersey—the night before.

I also attended the Northeast NEA Regional Conference in Springfield, Massachusetts, did another Early Career event with some of my ambassador friends, attended a conference held just for NJEA Preservice members, and then attended the NEA Student Leadership Conference.

NJEA is very generous in the invitations it extends to Preservice members. I attended an LG-BTQIA workshop in Gloucester County. NJEA Preservice members are invited to attend County Legislative Action Dinners as well.

### A network of support

The event opportunities and traveling are great but the most useful benefit of joining NJEA Preservice for me has been the network of aspiring educators that I now have at my fingertips.

NJEA Preservice is made up of aspiring educators from all different colleges throughout New Jersey, which is especially important as our state is in the process of expanding the requirements for becoming a teacher. I have not completed edTPA yet, but I will be doing it for my student teaching this semester. I am fortunate enough to have the support of NJEA Preservice as I go through it and fortunately, some of the members have already done it.

There is something about wanting to be a teacher that is difficult to explain to someone who is interested in a different professional field and when I am surrounded by aspiring educators like myself, I feel inspired. In sharing my story, I am asking you to continue the sharing in hopes that those you know will be inspired to be as fortunate as I have been. 🙌

**The event opportunities and traveling are great but the most useful benefit of joining NJEA Preservice for me has been the network of aspiring educators that I now have at my fingertips.**

# Graduate Studies for Educators



Whether you prefer to take courses online or on-campus, Rowan University makes it convenient to acquire the education you need to advance your career. We offer more than 30 graduate-level programs including Doctoral and Master's Degrees, Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Certificates, Certifications, and Endorsements in the following areas:

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- Educational Leadership
- Educational Technology
- Elementary Education
- English as a Second Language
- Higher Education
- History
- Learning Disabilities
- Mathematics
- Music
- Reading Education
- School Administration
- School Psychology
- Special Education
- Subject Matter
- Writing

**Attend the October 7th Information Session**

**Register Online | [global.RowanU.com/education](https://global.RowanU.com/education)**



**GLOBAL LEARNING & PARTNERSHIPS**



# NJREA

Past, present and future

## Calling all education advocates

Mark your calendar for NJREA's 2017 Convention in Atlantic City on Nov. 8 and 9 at the Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City. The theme of this year's convention is "Bridging the Past to Build the Future."

The room rate for NJREA members is just \$75 per night plus applicable taxes and fees. To reserve your room, call 888-797-7700, identify yourself as an NJREA member, and mention this code: VNJR17. Reservations will be accepted until Oct. 27. Rooms sell out quickly, so be sure to reserve your room as soon as possible.

### Wednesday's highlights

NJREA's popular "Member Information Session" will again officially kick off this year's convention on Nov. 8. This segment focuses on both public education and retiree issues with time for questions and answers.

The annual Elizabeth Allen Luncheon will follow the session. Reservations are required. Any member wishing to sit with his/her county must indicate his/her interest on the coupon form insert found in the September NJREA Newsletter or on the NJREA webpage.

This year's breakout sessions will focus on mental and physical wellness and tips on how to avoid online identity theft, as well as learning general cyber security awareness. At the Vendors' Fair attendees can browse the great deals and discounts NJREA/NJEA membership has to offer. The day will conclude with the annual NJREA Cocktail Reception. Come enjoy good food, friendship, and music with your NJREA family at this fun event.

### Thursday's activities

On Nov. 9, NJREA will host its annual breakfast buffet. Reservations are also required for this meal. After breakfast, a Health Benefits Session will be conducted by members of the NJEA Research staff. This is your opportunity to hear the latest on retirees' health benefits and what you can do to protect them. Please note: If you are coming to the informational meetings on either day, but are not staying for lunch or breakfast, please check the appropriate box on the coupons and return them before the deadline so that the NJREA Planning Committee will have materials and a badge for you at registration.

Later that day, NJREA will host an afternoon session for active NJEA members at the Atlantic City Convention Center, where a panel of retirees will discuss "Getting Ready for Retirement... What You Need to Know." If you know someone who is planning to retire soon, encourage him or her to attend this worthwhile session.

Before you leave, plan to visit NJEA's annual convention to see the exciting exhibits and visit NJREA's booth in the convention center. It's worth the trip!

## NJREA awards scholarships

The 2017 NJREA Scholarship Committee, which included Committee Chair Jo Ann Horvath and NJREA members Cindy Braddock, Kathy Collins, Anne Flora, Jo Ann Horvath, Joan Jensen, Judy Perkins, Arlene Rogers, and Linda Young, announced two scholarship winners.

### Fred E. Aug Two-Year Community College Scholarship

Toms River High School North graduate Samantha Gorlick is the recipient of the 2017 Fred E. Aug Community College Scholarship. Samantha is attending Ocean County College this fall and intends to become a chemistry teacher.



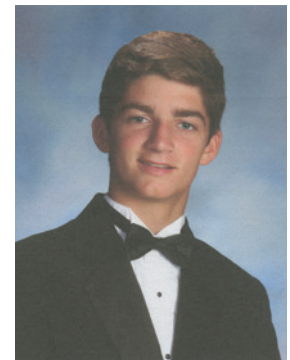
Community service is very important to Samantha. She has tutored area children, participated in the local "Adopt a Family" program, distributed Thanksgiving baskets to those in need, and collected for Toys for Tots, and joined the Toms River's annual Christmas tree drive. Samantha also helps care for her disabled father, who suffers from a rare spinal cord injury.

In high school, Samantha was enrolled in the honors academic program in English, history, science, Spanish, and mathematics. Her other

interests include playing the trumpet, photography, poetry, sewing, swimming and drawing.

### Isabelle M. Hickman Four-Year Scholarship

New Egypt High School graduate Ryan Devine is NJREA's 2017 Isabelle M. Hickman Four-Year Scholarship recipient. Ryan is attending Dickinson College and plans to major in engineering and business.



Ryan spearheaded "Play It Forward," a program to collect and distribute gently used sports equipment to residents of New Jersey and New York who cannot afford it. After reading a 2016 article about homeless people in the Trenton area needing shoes, he initiated "Show Your Sole," a shoe-collection drive that distributed over 600 pairs of new and gently worn shoes.

Ryan served as captain of the school's varsity basketball team and treasurer of the Spanish club. He also participated in varsity track and field, student government, the student advisory board, the National Honor Society, the Environment Club, the Ski and Surf Club, the Interact Rotary Club, and the Fishing and Archery Club. He has also helped with cooking meals at the Ronald McDonald House and volunteered for the Special Olympics.

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

**BURLINGTON COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 19 at Marco's at the Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. The cost is \$10. To make a reservation, call Doriann Dodulik-Swern at 856-722-8952.

**CAPE MAY COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/breakfast on Wednesday, Oct. 11 at the Avalon Links Restaurant in Swainton. The cost is \$10. To attend, call Diane Church at 609-884-7800.

Join **ESSEX COUNTY REA** for its annual fall meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Beverly Johnson-Showers at 862-955-4133.

**GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its fall meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 12 at Nicolosi Catering in Woodbury. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 856-228-6854.

Join **HUDSON COUNTY REA** on Wednesday, Oct. 18 for its fall meeting/luncheon at La Reggia's Ristorante in Secaucus. Wayne Dibofsky from Healthcare Assistance will be the guest speaker. To attend, call Arlene Brown at 732-493-0662.

**HUNTERDON COUNTY REA's** fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at the Flemington-Raritan Diner in Flemington. Additional information will be sent to members later this month. To attend, call Joyce Kucyn at 908-479-6656.

**MERCER COUNTY REA's** fall meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 25 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. NJEA staff will be discussing current issues affecting retirees. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Pat Durastanti at 609-737-7992.

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, Oct. 19 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. A spokesperson from Middlesex County Department of Aging will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Ann Chomko at 732-675-1734.

**MONMOUTH COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its fall meeting/luncheon held on Tuesday, Oct. 10 at the Double Tree Hotel in Tinton Falls. Attendees will be able to meet and greet local legislative candidates. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

Join **MORRIS COUNTY REA** for its fall meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, Oct. 11 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

**OCEAN COUNTY REA's** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, Oct. 12 at the Days Hotel in Toms River. A Members' Benefits fair will be held prior to the meeting, and Sean Hadley, NJEA Government Relations, and Kara Ward of CASA will be the guest speakers. The cost is \$28. To make a reservation, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

**PASSAIC COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, September 27 at the Brownstone House in Paterson. To reserve, call Kitty Sausa at 201-445-7577.

**SALEM COUNTY REA's** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 18 at the St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem. Nicki Burke will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$15. To attend, call Peggy Kavanaugh at 856-935-0075.

**SOMERSET COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, Oct. 4 at The Landing in Hillsborough. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-359-3540.

Join **UNION COUNTY REA** for its fall meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 31 at The Westwood in Garwood. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Donna L. Mertz-Burkhardt at 908-686-2390.

**NJRE-CENTRAL FLORIDA** will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, November 8 at Chesapeake Bay Grille in Leesburg. A discussion of events affecting NJEA/NJREA members will be the focus. To attend, call Steve Mockus at 352-638-2609.

The next meeting/luncheon of **NJRE-SOUTHWEST FLORIDA** is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 17 at the DeRomos Restaurant in Bonita Springs. A spokesperson for Lovers Key State Park will be the guest speaker. For details, call Ron Winsett at 239-948-2982. 📍



## 2017 NJREA Convention Program

All activities will take place in the Resorts Casino Hotel.

### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

10 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Vendors' Fair

11 a.m.

Member Information Session\*

12:15 p.m.

Elizabeth Allen Luncheon\*

1:30 p.m.

Delegate Council Meeting

2:30 p.m.

Breakout Session 1

3:35 p.m.

Breakout Session 2

8 p.m.

NJREA Cocktail Reception

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 9

8 a.m.

Buffet Breakfast\*

9 a.m.

General Session

Topic: [Health Benefits](#)

NJEA staff will present all discussions unless otherwise noted.

\* Reservations required in advance



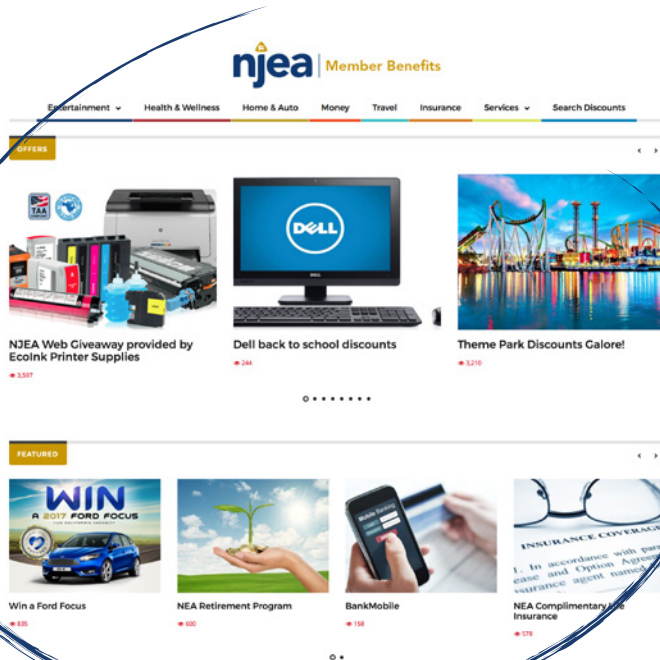
# Get your money's worth

[memberbenefits.njea.org](http://memberbenefits.njea.org)

*Get the most for your money! NJEA Member Benefits seeks to enrich the lives of all members and their families by offering programs designed to save you money and increase your buying power.*

*Whether you are looking for insurance, big-ticket items, or special deals on hundreds of everyday purchases, you will find valuable consumer offers.*

Be sure to visit the Member Benefits section at [memberbenefits.njea.org](http://memberbenefits.njea.org).



## New Critical Illness Insurance

Announcing a special enrollment of our new Critical Illness Insurance plan for active and retired NJEA members under the age of 65.

Critical Illness Insurance helps protect against unexpected financial hardship due to a critical illness. Critical Illness Insurance pays benefits when a covered person is diagnosed with a critical illness for the first time and the diagnosis occurs during the covered person's lifetime. When diagnosed with a covered illness, you receive a single payment that you can use for anything. Covered conditions include diagnoses such as cancer, heart attack, major organ transplant, stroke, heart failure, renal failure, and Alzheimer's disease.

Coverage is available for active members and their spouses/civil union partners/domestic partners in the amount from \$10,000 up to \$200,000. During this special open enrollment period, active members may purchase up to \$20,000 of coverage without having to answer health questions. Coverage in the amount of \$5,000 is available for retired members who enroll prior to age 65.

You should receive a mailing announcing the special enrollment, including an informational brochure and enrollment form. If you need help with questions or enrolling, contact Educators Insurance Services at 800-704-1365.

## September web giveaway

One winner will receive the following prize:

A Member Appreciation Event for his/her school from California Casualty\*\* – the provider of NEA Auto & Home Insurance - In appreciation of membership, a local California Casualty representative will coordinate a celebration at the member's school with valuable member benefit information and refreshments valued up to \$150.

### Bob Schrek of Woodbridge Township EA won

Two tickets to SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment\* properties (except Discovery Cove) valid through Dec. 31, 2017.

A golf outing for two—including lunch and cart fees—at Battleground Country Club\* in Manalapan.

### Katy Vaca of Plainfield EA won

Two tickets to SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment\* properties (except Discovery Cove) valid through Dec. 31, 2017.

\$100 Visa gift card and a one-hour massage from Paramus Medical and Sports Rehabilitation\*.

**Priscilla Larino of Edison Township EA won** four Fire Power Tour tickets to the Battleship New Jersey.

\*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.

\*\*Sponsored Vendors: Products and services that are sponsored by NJEA Member Benefits are believed to have broad-based appeal and provide superior quality and value. To the best of NJEA's understanding, these products and services are worthy of sponsorship. However, NJEA cannot be responsible for the quality or performance of these products and services, which ultimately are the responsibility of the vendor.



# 2017 URBAN ED SYMPOSIUM AGENDA:

## Friday, Oct. 20

- 4 p.m. Registration/Check-in
- 6 - 7 p.m. Dinner
- 7 - 9 p.m. Keynote

## Saturday, Oct. 21

- 8 - 9:15 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:15 - 11:45 a.m. General Session
- 11:45 - 1:15 p.m. Check-out/Lunch
- 1:15 - 2:45 p.m. General Session
- 2:45 - 3:15 p.m. Closing Remarks

**This conference offers six hours of professional learning credit. Participants must attend the entire session to receive a certificate.**

NJSEA members, non-members and Purchase Order registrants should contact Felicia Davis at (609) 310-4260 or [fedavis@njea.org](mailto:fedavis@njea.org) to register. Refunds will not be issued after October 6. NJSEA will issue refunds if the conference is cancelled or rescheduled. For more information or if you have a special physical, communication, dietary, or disability-related need which may require assistance or facilitate your attendance/participation, please contact Felicia Davis at (609) 310-4260 or [fedavis@njea.org](mailto:fedavis@njea.org).

Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration fee includes program and meals. No on-site registration. Only registered participants may attend.

**REGISTER ONLINE:**  
[njea.org/urbaned](http://njea.org/urbaned)

*JOIN US for an exploration of the impact of trauma on the brain development of children prenatal through three years and the implications across the life course. We'll take a deeper look at historical and generational trauma and the key components to build self-healing, thriving communities.*

*We will use an Open Space Technology (OST) methodology to explore the possible ways to implement the new learnings. Open space meetings result in transformative experiences for the individuals and groups involved. They are a simple and powerful way to catalyze effective working conversations and to truly invite organizations to thrive in times of swirling change.*



**Dave Ellis** is the owner and Principal Consultant at Dave Ellis Consulting, LLC, a group dedicated to using Worldview Intelligence and the Art of Hosting Conversations That Matter for training on equity and inclusion, strategic planning and community engagement. He has hosted discussions with groups ranging from 10 to 2,000 participants on topics from strategic planning for communities and nonprofits and equity to community engagement with state and other agencies. He has been exploring the impact of early childhood trauma on adult issues and been instrumental in conversations on equity, diversity, race, power and privilege in Minnesota. Ellis is the recipient of the Hawkinson Foundation for Peace & Justice 2016 Honorary Award.



**Laura Porter** has more than a decade of experience leading successful implementation of ACE Study concepts in Washington State in partnership with over 30 communities and nine Tribes. In addition to her work in Washington, Laura works with leaders in over 20 states, providing education, facilitation, and empowerment strategies for building self-healing communities. Laura provides support and services to a wide range of groups... from parents and youth who are convening neighborhood conversations, to philanthropic leaders and government officials who are using ACE science in investment and policy decisions. She and Dr. Robert Anda founded ACE Interface to help leaders to use ACE concepts to build Self-Healing Communities.

## REGISTRATION (ONLINE ONLY)

### Early-bird Registration Per-Person Rates (Register by September 22)

|                                |                                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Member Commuter: \$59          | Non-member Commuter: \$219         |
| Member Double Occupancy: \$74  | Non-member Double Occupancy: \$234 |
| Member Single Occupancy: \$119 | Non-member Single Occupancy: \$279 |

### Regular Registration Per-Person Rates (Register by October 6)

|                                |                                    |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Member Commuter: \$79          | Non-member Commuter: \$259         |
| Member Double Occupancy: \$99  | Non-member Double Occupancy: \$284 |
| Member Single Occupancy: \$159 | Non-member Single Occupancy: \$359 |



# Staff news hires and promotions



NJEA congratulates **THOMAS HARDY** on his promotion to UniServ Regional Director for the Northeast. In this role, Hardy is the Regional Director for Union, Hudson, Essex, and Bergen counties. Hardy initially joined NJEA staff in February 2003 as a UniServ organizing specialist. Hardy also served as a UniServ field rep in the Region 21 office in Livingston.

Hardy was a fifth-grade teacher in Guilford County, North Carolina. He had been a school bus driver and teacher assistant before attending High Point University.

During his time at HPU, Hardy participated in a Study Abroad program in Oxford England. In 2002, he was accepted into NEA's Affirmative Action Intern Program. Hardy later trained members nationally in the NEA Intern Program and NEA UniServ Pre-Employment Development Program. In 2014, Hardy was honored by the Work Environment Council (WEC) for his commitment to ensuring public school safety and health for educators and students.

Hardy has worked to expand NJEA's health and safety program, managing Industrial Hygiene Consultant staff that provide technical assistance to our local associations. He has also led in the creation of NJEA's Minority Leadership Training Program (MLTP).

Hardy lives in West Orange with his life partner Franz Smith. They are raising Smith's younger brother, Anthony.



NJEA congratulates **ANNALISA RUSSELL** on her promotion to executive assistant to the NJEA president. Russell has served as a confidential assistant in the executive office since April 2014. In that position she worked with the NJEA vice president. From 1998 to 2014, Russell had served as an administrative assistant in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division. During those years she was actively involved in the coordination and logistics of the annual NJEA Convention.

Russell was initially hired at NJEA in May 1985 as a secretary in the Organizational Management and Convention office. She attended Bradford Business School and holds a certification in secretarial science. Russell also attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and holds a certificate in meeting and event management. She resides in Hamilton Township, Mercer County with her husband, Claude.

NJEA welcomes **KRISTEN BUTLER** as manager of the Accounting and Finance unit in the Business Division. She joined NJEA staff on May 22. Prior to coming to NJEA, Butler was employed by Novak Francella, LLC, a public accounting firm that has conducted NJEA's audits for many years. During her time there she has worked consistently on NJEA's audits each year and has become very familiar with the association's finances, accounting practices and corporate structure, as well as building relationships with leaders and staff.

Butler earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. She is a licensed CPA. Butler lives in Lumberton.



NJEA congratulates **DAWN GOATLEY** on her promotion to Human Resources Specialist on June 16. Goatley had previously served as administrative assistant in the Research and Economic Services Division, a position she had held since September 2013. Goatley had been a secretary in that division since November 2011. She was initially hired by NJEA in January 2005 as an office assistant in the Region 3 UniServ office in Voorhees. Goatley resides in Southampton with her husband, Richard.



NJEA congratulates **ANNETTE ILAGAN** on her promotion to Senior Human Resources Specialist on June 1. Ilagan initially joined NJEA staff in December 2012 as an employee benefits administrator in the Human Resources Office. Prior to NJEA, she worked for twelve years as a Human Resources Generalist with the RMJM Group, Inc., an international architectural and design firm. Ilagan resides in Lawrenceville, with her husband, Dem.



# Employment Opportunities at NJEA



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

NJEA is an equal opportunity employer.



Visit [njea.org/jobs](http://njea.org/jobs) regularly for the latest postings.



NJEA welcomes **RICHARD DRISCOLL** as a computer technician in the Information Systems unit of the Business Division. Prior to joining NJEA staff on July 3, Driscoll was employed by Concord Engineering in Voorhees as a help desk/network engineer in 2014. Prior to that, he worked for AAA South Jersey. Driscoll lives in Berlin with his wife, Kimberly.



NJEA welcomes **ANNA WALTMAN** who joined NJEA staff on Aug. 1 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 2 office in Woodbury.

Waltman was a graduate teaching associate for the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where she taught freshman composition and American literature. She served as the UMass Amherst Graduate Employee Organization/UAW Local 2322 Co-chair from 2013-2015 and was chief negotiator for the 2014 contract. She also

served as recording secretary from 2015 until July 2017. Waltman was an active participant in the Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions. In 2017, she completed a three-year term on the American Association of University Professors Subcommittee on Graduate and Professional Studies.

Waltman holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and Political Science from Goucher College and a Master of Arts in English Literature from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. A South Jersey native, she comes from a family of public servants and teachers. Waltman lives in Pitman.

NJEA welcomes **NANCY BACHRACH** as a confidential assistant in the NJEA Executive Office. She will work most closely with NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller. Prior to joining NJEA staff on Aug. 1, Bachrach served for 11 years as office manager of the Bridgewater-Raritan Education Association. For BRE, she prepared and controlled confidential matters and documentation, including BRE contracts, salaries, audits, elections and grievance materials, and other matters. She was also responsible for managing the membership database, the BRE president's scheduling and correspondence, and contact with local political leaders. Bachrach lives in Bedminster with her daughters, Nicole and Natalie.



NJEA welcomes **RYAN EDWISH** who joined NJEA staff on July 3 as a UniServ field rep in the Region 21 office in Livingston. Since 2001, Edwish had been a mathematics teacher in the Morris Hills School District. Since 2016, he had served as a UniServ consultant assigned to the Region 17 office in Parsippany. Edwish was the president of the Morris Hills Regional District Education Association since June 2014.

Edwish earned a master's degree in curriculum, instruction, and assessment from Walden University and a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Bloomsburg University. He lives in Rockaway Township.





# Proud Moments



The **SAYREVILLE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Middlesex) is proud of the celebration it sponsored at Harry S Truman School. All attendees enjoyed a Flag Day Ceremony performed by Sayreville's American Legion Post 211. Patriotic music was provided by the Sayreville War Memorial High School Band under the direction of Dr. Paul Caruso. Pictured from left: Jean Szkodny, Tina Kiernan, Sharon Casazza, Lisa Greene, Lisa Haines and Vicky Haney.

The **EAST WINDSOR EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Mercer) was proud to have been well represented at the United Way's Strike Out Hunger event at the Sun Bank Center in Trenton. On June 27, they joined other community volunteers to pack thousands upon thousands of meals, including almost 175,000 baggies of oatmeal, so that children who would miss their schools' breakfasts and lunches wouldn't go hungry in the summer.



## PROUD OF OUR GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The **MIDDLESEX EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** was proud to march in the annual Memorial Day parade honoring past and present veterans. This year the MEA distributed 300 glider planes to residents as they marched along the parade route.



The **SUSSEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** is proud of SCEA Night at Skylands Ballpark in June where they honored students and their public school heroes at the game. The Grades K-2 winner, Graham Hanston, honored teacher Lydia Selitto. The Grade 3-5 winner, Joseph Catalano, honored security guard Joshua Reid. The Grade 6-8 winner, Gavin Waschmann, honored teacher Steven Brazanskas, and the high school winner, Channing Infinito, honored teacher Zachary Goldstein.



Submit your best local association PRIDE photo to [ProudMoments@njea.org](mailto:ProudMoments@njea.org).



# September & beyond

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

## 9/8

Friday

NJEA Executive Committee and County Presidents' Council Meeting

## 9/9

Saturday

NJEA Delegate Assembly Meeting

## 9/28

Thursday

NJREA Fall Luncheon Meeting

## 10/13

Friday

NJEA Executive Committee Meeting

## 10/14

Saturday

NJEA Teaching and Learning Symposium

## 10/20-21

Fri. & Sat.

NJEA Urban Education Symposium

## 10/27-28

Fri. & Sat.

Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit

## 11/8-9

Wed. & Thurs.

NJREA Convention

## 11/9-10

Thurs. & Fri.

NJEA Convention



## Member Benefit Plan report available

This is a summary of the annual report for the NJEA Member Benefit Fund, Employer Identification Number 21-0524390, Plan No. 510 for the period from Oct. 1, 2015 to Sept. 30, 2016. The plan provides for group insurance and other welfare benefits. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

### Insurance information

The plan sponsor, NJEA, has a group contract with Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay temporary and long-term disability claims incurred under the terms of the plan. The premiums under this contract are paid by those NJEA members who chose to select coverage under the contract. The total premiums paid for the plan year ending Sept. 30, 2016, were \$34,039,243.

### Basic financial statements

The value of plan assets, after subtracting liabilities of the plan was \$2,258,853 as of Sept. 30, 2016, compared to \$2,141,491 as of Oct. 1, 2015.

During the plan year, the plan experienced a increase in its net assets of \$117,362. During the plan year, the plan had total income of \$397,121, including earnings from investments of \$6,771 and other income of \$390,350.

Plan expenses were \$279,759. These expenses included \$69,008 in administrative expenses and \$210,751 in membership benefits paid on behalf of participants and beneficiaries.

### Your rights to additional information

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

To obtain a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof, write or call the office of Lorraine Jones, NJEA, Member Benefit Fund, 180 W. State Street, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211, Phone: 609- 599-4561, ext. 2222. The charge to cover copying costs will be \$5 for the full annual

report, or \$0.15 per page for any part thereof.

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

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



# Governor's plan falls short of promise of ESSA

In August, the state received final approval from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) for its plan to implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). NJEA believes in the promise of ESSA, with its emphasis on multiple measures of achievement, stakeholder engagement, and increased opportunity for innovation in student learning, but the state's implementation plan falls short of the mark.

Hopeful that ESSA would bring relief from the long-discredited No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), NJEA members participated robustly in the state's efforts on stakeholder engagement, but only modest changes resulted for this year.

## No major changes on testing

The state's ESSA implementation plan for testing is especially problematic. It still relies too heavily on student test scores.

While the USDOE under ESSA continues to mandate standardized testing annually in Grades 3-8 and once in high school, it at least offered some flexibility concerning the weight given to standardized test results. The state did not take advantage of this reprieve from NCLB's punitive measures.

Instead, despite NJEA's strenuous objections, the state doubled-down on standardized testing by making it the single most important factor in school accountability. In some districts, a combination of PARCC scores and student

growth may account for as much as 85 percent of a school's accountability.

What's more, the state believes it must comply with federal mandates of student participation in testing by counting all scores below 95 percent participation as "zeroes" for the purposes of accountability.

In response to strong resistance from NJEA, the state agreed to temper this approach by publishing two scores—one including the participation rate and one without (i.e. only students taking the assessment). The state plan also included language indicating that it would relax these requirements in response to guidance from the U.S. Department of Education. NJEA will continue to fight for the right of parents to refuse to have their children participate in standardized testing.

In that fight, we have a strong ally on our side. NJEA's endorsed candidate for governor, Ambassador Phil Murphy, has promised to scrap the PARCC test, eliminating it as a measure in teacher evaluation and as a high school graduation requirement.

And once the new governor is inaugurated in January, NJEA will work to amend the state plan to reduce the weight of standardized testing.

## Chronic absenteeism added as a quality indicator

ESSA requires each state to add a "quality indicator" to its implementation plan. NJEA proposed an index of measures

focused on what's important for student learning, such as adequate support, materials and other resources. While the state agreed to continue developing multiple measures, for the upcoming school year only one quality indicator was added: attendance.

Under the plan, schools will be required to report on the number of students considered "chronically absent," which is defined as students missing more than 10 percent of the days required to be in school. Exceptions may be made for religious holidays, college visits, and a few other limited circumstances. This score will count up to 15 percent of a school's accountability.

While NJEA supports efforts to address chronic absenteeism—and the NJEA Review has published several articles on the issue—focusing solely on counting and reporting absences will not address what's needed to enhance student learning.

## Flexibility on graduation rates

The state's implementation plan offers some hope for students who do not complete high school in four years. The state is taking advantage of newfound flexibility in ESSA by allowing for a five-year graduation rate.

The state is also considering the benefit of an extended graduation rate calculation of up to six or seven years, although this would require approval from the USDOE.

## Local stakeholder engagement to move schools forward

Despite some major disappointments in the state plan, ESSA's emphasis on local stakeholder engagement reflects a turning point for bottom-up change in our public schools. Stakeholder engagement provides a chance for NJEA members to build a public school system at the local level that works best for their students.

NJEA members should create or join a local ESSA Stakeholder Team to help shape the direction of public education in New Jersey. Reach out to your local president to volunteer. Interested NJREA members should send their contact information to Sean Hadley [shadley@njea.org](mailto:shadley@njea.org).

While the just-approved ESSA plan addresses many areas of school accountability, there are other areas still under development. The fate of many schools currently identified as needing improvement will rest with decisions made by next governor's administration.

NJEA will work closely with that new administration to address many of the issues with the state plan as developed under Gov. Chris Christie's administration. NJEA will not stop in its advocacy to provide schools—and our members—with the support and resources they need. 🏠



# Breakfast After the Bell

has graduated to the next level.

The first generation of Breakfast After the Bell students have navigated from kindergarten through 12th grade... and the benefits are piling up!

Look at these facts:



**46%**  
increase in  
attentiveness

**33%**  
reduction in  
tardiness

**87%**  
participating  
principals  
recommend  
the program

**17.5%**  
higher  
math test  
scores

**1.5**  
fewer  
absences per  
student

**20%**  
increase in  
graduation  
rates



*His future looks bright!*  
[breakfasteveryday.org](http://breakfasteveryday.org)

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Keep an eye on our social media.

Not only will you see the #bestof the convention through the years, but you will be the first to see everything #njeaconvention 2017 has to offer.

We will also be running exclusive Facebook and Instagram giveaways from now until the end of the convention. Don't be the last to know!

  @njeaconvention

