

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REVIEW

APRIL 2018  
NJEA.ORG



*an education and advocacy resource*



## Empowering students through art

- JCEA fights for economic justice
- Read Across America celebrated statewide
- Motivate students through their love of animals
- 2018 Summer Leadership Conference



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# WE ARE JCEA



JCEA President Ron Greco encourages members to remain firm.



NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller addresses JCEA members rallying at the Jersey City Board of Education office.

## JCEA stands strong for economic justice

As the *NJEA Review* was going to press, the nearly 4,000 members of the Jersey City Education Association took a bold stand for economic justice, affordable health care and great public schools for Jersey City's students and families. JCEA's decision to go on strike on March 16 followed months of fruitless attempts by the local association to negotiate a successor agreement to the contract that expired on Aug. 31, 2017.

The strike lasted one school day before a tentative agreement was reached with the Jersey City Board of Education early in the evening on Sunday, March 18 after 13 hours of nonstop bargaining. School was scheduled to open that Monday with JCEA members returning to their schools to do what they do best: provide a great public education for the children of Jersey City.

JCEA members had been working under the terms of that expired agreement, which included onerous health care contributions that have led to most Jersey City educators seeing reductions in their take-home pay year after year. JCEA members demanded that the board of education recognize that those contribution levels are unsustainable and to work with the association to provide meaningful relief.

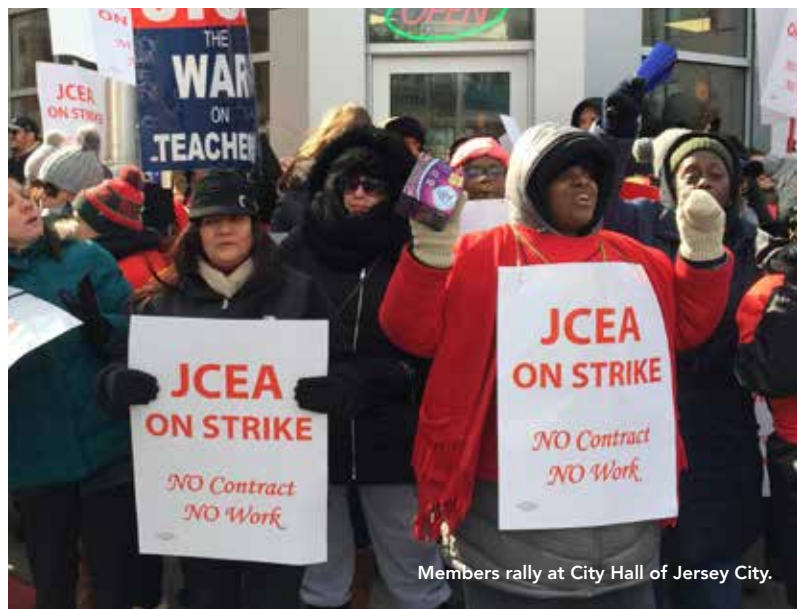
As of press time, details of the agreement had not yet been released, nor had a date for association and board ratification votes been scheduled. Visit [njea.org](http://njea.org) for the latest information and look for more in the May edition of the *NJEA Review*.



At JCEA's open house on Sunday, March 18, just hours prior to the tentative agreement, NJEA President Marie Blistan greets Jersey City clerk/driver Joseph Simpson.



Members rally at City Hall of Jersey City.



Members rally at City Hall of Jersey City.



The Cat in the Hat made a visit to Triangle Elementary School in Hillsborough. "Classroom Close-up NJ" was on the scene to capture video for a future episode.



## FEATURES



### 24 | MIGHTY FINGERS

New Jersey artist Kelly Sullivan uses art as a vehicle for empowerment, so that young people can know that their visions and thoughts matter, that they have the ability and right to express those thoughts and that they have the power to work toward those visions.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



### 29 | HUMANE EDUCATION

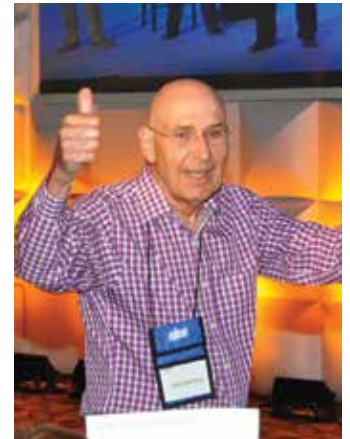
Did you ever notice how your students seem to light up when they talk about their pets? Children naturally love animals. Read about ways you can tap into this innate love of animals to enhance students' interest in any lesson.

BY JULIE BOLKIN O'CONNOR



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The annual conference offers a broad menu of workshops that equip members to become stronger advocates.

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**NJEA REPORT OF AUDIT 46-49**  
Sept. 1, 2016 - Aug. 31, 2017



### ON THE COVER:

A student from Franklin I. Williams Middle School #7 in Jersey City gets ready to collaborate on a FingerSmear project. See Page 24.

PHOTO BY  
KATHRYN COULIBALY



# VOLUME 91 NUMBER 09

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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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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*.



# What motivates you?

April is a good time to take a closer look at motivation—how to foster it in ourselves and in our students and colleagues—in order to finish the year strong.

In this issue, we look at a number of ways to motivate ourselves and others as employees, as learners, and as union members.

In “Motivating and Engaging Students Through Human Education,” we learn how to motivate children to learn more and to behave more compassionately toward animals and people through lesson plans that incorporate working with and learning about animals.

Motivating students to read more is a goal of most educators. Research shows that the more students read, the more likely they are to succeed academically. Every year, NJEA deploys the Cat in the Hat to districts across the state to help inspire a love of reading. Look for pictures of some of New Jersey's most avid readers in our “Read Across America” photo spread.

“Mighty Fingers” is a look at an innovative art project initiated by NJEA

at the 2017 Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference and conducted at five schools in February 2018. Students from diverse backgrounds across the state learned how art can be a key to motivating them, helping them to unlock their self-confidence and self-expression.

Finally, the annual Summer Leadership Conference is a great way to motivate members to take on greater responsibilities for their local associations by giving them the tools, information, resources, and confidence they need to be successful. Read about the workshops that will be offered this year and make a plan to contact your local president to ask about attending.

What motivates you is unique to you, but I know that every NJEA member across the state shares a common goal: ensuring that every child has access to an excellent public education. Thank you for the work you do to maintain and continue to improve public education. YOUR example motivates ME every day!

*Marie Blistan*



State, national, county and local association leadership gathered with representatives from state, county and local leaders in public school administration at the N.J. Public School Labor Management Collaboration Conference on March 6. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, New Brunswick Education Association (NBEA) Vice President LeShaun Arrington, Gov. Phil Murphy, NBEA Association Rep Cynthia Brown. Blistan, Murphy and NEA Vice President Becky Pringle were among the speakers and panelists at the conference.

## Officers Online

Marie Blistan  
Facebook

**Congratulations to JCEA President Ron Greco and the negotiations committee for their dedication and commitment to reach an agreement last night! MANY thanks to all of our JCEA members & NJEA members from around the state who stopped by yesterday. MANY thanks to our brother & sister public union members who stopped by the schools last week and over the weekend! Proud to be a part of our public unions standing up for all working families!**

NJEA President Marie Blistan congratulated JCEA on reaching an agreement with the board of education following a one-day strike. She thanked members and supporters who stopped at JCEA headquarters for an open house on Sunday, March 17. Blistan posted photos from the open house.

Sean M. Spiller  
Twitter

**@SpillerForNJEA: We all stand united with our Jersey City EA @NJEA members! They are taking a stand for Chapter 78 relief, for affordable health care & economic justice for their families and for all families in our communities.**

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller tweeted photos from the first day of the Jersey City Education Association strike. Spiller addressed JCEA members as they walked the picket line at their worksites and marched throughout the city.

Steve Beatty  
Facebook

NJEA Secretary Treasurer  
Steve Beatty

**Sending love and support from Chicago to our brothers and sisters on the line at JCEA! Solidarity forever!**

As JCEA went on strike, Beatty and approximately 100 NJEA members were concluding their representation of NJEA at the NEA Leadership Summit in Chicago. Beatty posted a video of the NJEA members still in Chicago sending their support to their union brothers and sisters in Jersey City.

# Know. Lead. Act.

## Delegate Assembly honors teacher of the year

New Jersey Teacher of the Year Amy Andersen was recognized by the NJEA Delegate Assembly at its March 10 meeting. As the NJEA liaison to the teacher of the year program, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller introduced Andersen to the delegates. He proudly announced that she is one of four finalists begin considered for national teacher of the year.

Andersen teaches American Sign Language (ASL) at Ocean City High School, a program she launched there in 2004 with 41 students. Within one year, the program grew to 138 students. The program now has six classes and three levels. Andersen has built a program so successful that there is a waiting list to get into her classes. As a result, the Ocean City community has a strong cadre of students and young adults able to communicate through ASL.

"Ocean City is now a welcoming place for the deaf because of Amy's work," Spiller said.

"Teaching is not simply an adult passing on knowledge to a class of students, it is the shared experience of learning," Andersen told the delegates. "Every day reinforces for me that compassion, empathy and character are not only at the heart of our humanity but absolutely essential to a successful classroom. For me, teaching is not just a profession, but a lifestyle, and how I choose to live every day and who I choose to be."

### Delegates elect NEA Directors, alternates

The NEA Board of Directors is responsible for setting general policies between annual NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) meetings. It

consists of one director from each state affiliate, at-large directors to meet representational guarantees, and representatives for students and retired members. Each state is entitled to an additional director for every 20,000 active and life members.

NJEA's representatives to the NEA Board of Directors are elected by the delegate assembly. Directors serve a three-year term. Director-alternates, who attend director meetings when a director is unable to attend, serve one-year terms.

Robert La Morte of Bergen County, Deanna Nicosia-Jones of Cumberland County and Marilyn Weeks Ryan of Middlesex County were elected directors. Richard D'Avanzo of Union County was elected to complete the unexpired term of Gary Melton Sr., who resigned to take a full-time position on NJEA staff.

Patricia Bland of Burlington County and Christopher Cannella of Essex County were elected as director alternates.

### Delegates consider committee recommendations

Delegates considered and approved recommendations from six committees: the Budget, Editorial, Minority Leadership and Recruitment, NEA Activities, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), and Working Conditions committees.

The recommendations included budget transfers, the institution of an awards program to honor excellence in local and county association communications, the renaming of the Ethnic-Minority Affairs and Leadership Image Award as the Judith M. Owens Spirit Award, rules regarding

reimbursement and lodging for the 2018 NEA RA, and updated policies for the SOGI and Working Conditions committees.

### Delegates consider new business items

Delegates considered three items of new business.

The first new business item, moved by Susan Clark of Gloucester County, recommended that the appropriate NJEA committees review and, if needed, recommend ways to strengthen NJEA policies to protect students, staff, and others from violence and unauthorized use of guns and other deadly weapons in order to ensure safe and secure school and community environments. Delegates approved the motion, which called for a report to the DA at its May 2018 meeting.

The second new business item, moved by Carrie Odgers of Passaic County, recommended that an amendment to the NJEA bylaws be forwarded to the NJEA Constitution Review Committee to suspend the dues formula so that dues would not increase above the level calculated for the 2017-18 fiscal year for the 2018-19 and 2019-20 fiscal years. The motion was approved. Accordingly, the Constitution Review Committee will meet to address the bylaw amendment, which will be published in the May *NJEA Review* and considered by the DA at its May 19, 2018 meeting.

The third new business item, also moved by Carrie Odgers of Passaic County, establishes a cap on the salary increase of the NJEA president, vice president and secretary-treasurer beginning in the 2018-19 fiscal year. Delegates approved the motion.

2018 New Jersey Teacher of the Year Amy Andersen was joined by family as officers congratulate her at the March DA meeting. From left: Andersen's mother, Ruth Brown; NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, son Jacob Andersen, Amy Andersen, son Jordan Severino, NJEA President Marie Blistan, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.



## Nominations now open for NEA's 2018 Social Justice Activist of the Year

The 2018 Social Justice of the Year award will honor exceptional efforts that demonstrate the ability to lead, organize and engage educators, parents, families, and the community to advocate on social and/or racial justice issues that impact the lives of students, fellow educators and the communities they serve.

Go to [educationvotes.nea.org/2018sja](http://educationvotes.nea.org/2018sja)



## Wayne EA promotes members and public schools with PRIDE

Throughout the 2017-18 school year, the Wayne Education Association (WEA) is proud to sponsor various programs and projects in the local community with the use of PRIDE funds.

This past fall, the teachers and support staff worked with the Wayne Alliance to sponsor assemblies at all three middle schools. The Wayne Alliance provides substance-abuse prevention education to families. The presenter, Marc Mero, a former WWE Wrestling Champion, spoke to the students about making smart choices, being kind, persevering and thinking positive. The children were enthralled and learned valuable lessons.

The WEA also works with the Wayne Police Athletic League and the Wayne Boys and Girls Club, sponsoring various youth sports teams at both organizations.

"Children just love wearing uniforms that are sponsored by their schools teachers and support staff," said Wayne Education Association Secretary Donna Reaver. "They know that we care about them."

Wayne's teachers and educational support professionals (ESP) have also sponsored and participated in the 5K Run at George Washington Middle School as well as the Color Run for the Wayne Valley High School Dance Team. This winter, they made a large donation to the Wayne Food Bank, providing food, toiletries, paper goods and reusable grocery totes for families with low incomes. This past December, WEA donated bikes and helmets to students whose families could not afford them at each of the nine elementary schools.

Looking ahead, the educators will sponsor the Wayne Alliance Charity Basketball Game.

"This is a fun event where community members will test their skills on the court against the famous Harlem Magic Masters," said WEA President Eda

Ferrante. "More importantly, it is an event that will bring the community and educators together."

This spring WEA will provide giveaways in support of the student's annual Culinary Competitions at both high schools. They will also be supporting the Wayne Hills' and Wayne Valley's Fashion Show/Tricky Tray, an event that raises money for Project Graduation. At the elementary schools, WEA members will be giving out WEA eco-friendly water bottles at each field day. The teachers and ESP will also be sponsoring the kindergarten graduation at the Wayne Boys & Girls Club.

To help promote National Car Care Month in April, the association is working with the Wayne Township High School Automotive Technology Program at both high schools to run its annual car clinic. This event is the WEA's premier PRIDE event. Hundreds of members from the community and schools attend.

"Our students love to demonstrate their skills and what they have learned over the year," said automotive instructor Steve Hopper. "The car show is a wonderful way to draw attention to the importance of the practical arts."

Finally, the association will once again offer scholarships to two deserving seniors. Members at all 14 schools donate \$5 to this effort.

"Our goal is to promote future educators and public servants who choose to make a career out of helping people," said Wayne Education Association First Vice President Dennis Carroll.

The WEA uses PRIDE funds and supplements those resources through member donations. Whether funded through PRIDE or member generosity, these events continue to bring positive publicity to the association at both the local and state levels.



Top: WEA sponsors and participates in a 5K Run at George Washington Middle School.

Bottom: Through the Wayne Alliance, Marc Mero, a former WWE Wrestling Champion, spoke to students about substance abuse. The Wayne Alliance partners with WEA.

## Selfie of the month

Preschoolers at the Early Childhood Center in Little Egg Harbor Township scored a visit from a seven-foot Cat in the Hat! Preschool Teacher and LEHTEA President Nora Maloney couldn't resist snapping a selfie with the famous feline.

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. 📸



to find out more about eligibility criteria, and the nomination and selection process. Finalists receive the opportunity to attend and be recognized at NEA's Conference on Racial and Social Justice, held this year in Minneapolis.

### Important dates

- Online applications due by: April 13, 2018
- Online voting: April 23-May 25, 2018
- NEA Conference on Racial and Justice, June 28-29, 2018 Minneapolis.



## 2018 summer professional learning institute

### Choose from one all-day workshop:

#### Fighting Fake News-Navigating Information in the Information Age

In the age of tweets and Instagram, there is no more important time in our lives than now to question news sources and the credibility of those sources. This session will allow members to explore numerous tools and resources that will help facilitate student inquiry of informational and argumentative texts. Teachers should come prepared with content material so that by the end of the session, they will have prepared lessons for the coming school year.

**Presenters:** Michelle Corona, Alfred Corona

#### Meaningful Authentic Assessment and Performance Tasks — Measuring What Matters Most

Standardized tests don't measure what truly matters. When we assess student learning we must design meaningful authentic assessment and performance tasks both to provide students with actionable feedback and to inform our instruction. Throughout this session we will explore a variety of sample performance assessments across multiple grade levels and content areas, and design performance-based assessments for use in participants' classrooms. It would be useful for participants to bring a sample unit test or summative assessment for analysis and potential redesign.

**Presenter:** Dr. Stefani Hite

## Inspired Teaching, Inspired Learning:

Cultivating Exploration,  
Inquiry, & Discovery in  
Our Classrooms

Wednesday  
**July 11, 2018**

Hyatt Regency

2 Albany Street · New Brunswick, NJ 08901

#### Mindfulness for Stressed Out Students and Teachers

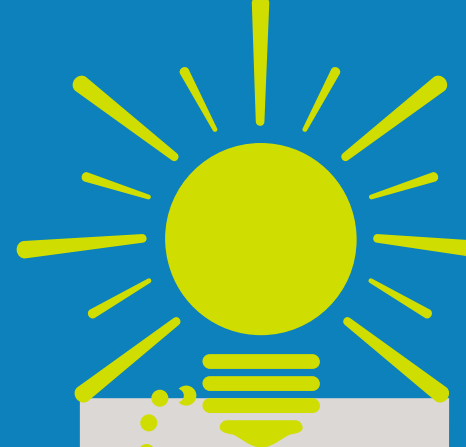
Learn brain-based strategies to help promote mindfulness among our students and staff. Formal and informal mindfulness will be discussed and practiced throughout the day. Apps, books, community groups, and websites will be identified so teachers may bring increased presence and wellness to their classroom in September.

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

#### Using Essential Questions & Feedback to Drive Inquiry and Discovery in the Classroom

Student-centered classrooms emphasize a clear focus on coherent unit design and effective feedback. Throughout this session, participants will explore how essential questions drive deep inquiry and continued exploration, while anchoring a unit to high-level goals. Participants will explore the qualities of well-crafted essential questions, with extensive models, and then apply their learning to units they teach throughout the year. Participants will build upon this understanding by discovering the true importance of various forms of feedback in an inquiry-based classroom. Participants are highly encouraged to bring unit designs on which they would like to work, revise and/or share with others for feedback. A laptop is not necessary unless you need it for notes or to reference instructional materials you will need.

**Presenter:** Diana Potts



**8:30 to 9:30 a.m. -**

Registration and breakfast

**9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. -**

Workshop (five hours of  
PD credit)

**Noon - 1 p.m. -**

Lunch/Member  
Networking

#### Cost:

**Early-bird special** (must  
register by June 1): **\$25**

#### After June 1: \$35

Registration fee includes  
program, breakfast and  
lunch. Participants will  
receive one PD certificate  
for five hours at the end of  
the program.

**Nonmember price: \$185**

**Registration deadline:**  
**June 27, 2018**

In order to receive a refund,  
cancellation must be made by  
the registration deadline, June  
27.

**Register online**

**ONLY\* at**

**[njea.org/spli2018](http://njea.org/spli2018)**

\*NJEA preservice, purchase  
order and non-NJEA member  
registrations are not available  
online and must be placed with  
the conference registrar, Janet  
Bush [jbush@njea.org](mailto:jbush@njea.org) or  
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# Cool Stuff

## Students can honor school heroes

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

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

Three winners will be selected. Each winning student, the school employee he or she writes about, and a total of eight of their family members and friends will be guests of NJEA and the Trenton Thunder at the NJEA Back-to-School game on Friday, Aug. 17, 2018. The Thunder will be squaring off against the New Hampshire Fisher Cats.

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

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

### Send entries to:

NJEA-Thunder Essay Contest

Attention: Dawn Hiltner

PO Box 1211

Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Submissions must be received by May 26, 2018.

## Alert your principal to the Elizabeth Rohatyn Prize

Here’s a chance for a school within 100 miles of New York City to win a \$25,000 award for something the school is already doing.

Teaching Matters will be awarding the eighth Elizabeth Rohatyn Prize to a principal representing a public school that advances opportunities for students by positioning teachers to lead, learn and thrive. The winning school will receive a one-time award of \$25,000 to advance, expand or replicate an initiative already underway. Funds may be applied to staffing, consultants, release or common planning time, software, hardware, or other resources specific to the initiative.

Submissions must demonstrate exemplary practices in increasing teacher effectiveness. Examples include but are not limited to teacher leadership (or distributed leadership) initiatives, collaborative Inquiry, structures that expand opportunities for professional learning; and the development of career pathways that help retain great teachers.

K-12 publicly funded schools within a 100-mile radius of New York City are eligible, and submissions should be made by principals. The application deadline is midnight May 11, 2018.

The five finalists will be showcased and the winner will be announced at the Elizabeth Rohatyn Prize Luncheon being held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 in New York City.

Send your principal to [teachingmatters.org/rohatyn](http://teachingmatters.org/rohatyn) to start an application.

## Stuttering Awareness Week is May 7-13

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

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

### Stuttering affects four times as many males as females.

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

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

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

## TeachRock offers free lesson plans

Stevie Van Zandt’s TeachRock project brings rich educational materials to teachers and students everywhere at no cost. The lesson plans and resources at TeachRock allow a one-of-a-kind, multimedia experience that helps young people connect the history of popular music to classroom work across the disciplines. From social studies and language arts to geography, media studies, science, general music, and more, TeachRock has engaging and meaningful material for every classroom.

Learn more about the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation’s TeachRock project and view all 120+ free lesson plans, at [teachrock.org](http://teachrock.org).



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# The Law and You

## NJEA scores key victories in fight to protect ESP members

by Steven R. Cohen, Esq.

NJEA has been a staunch advocate for the rights of its educational support professional (ESP) members for decades. One of the primary areas of focus has been ESP members' job security rights. Utilizing a three-pronged strategy of legislation, litigation and arbitration, NJEA has vastly improved ESP members' job protections.

Through its Government Relations and UniServ divisions, and its cadre of network attorneys, NJEA is constantly looking for ways to advance ESP members' rights. One such opportunity recently presented itself in the Pleasantville School District in Atlantic County.

The Pleasantville superintendent of schools recommended that an instructional aide and security guard represented by the Pleasantville Education Association be terminated. The Pleasantville Board of Education rejected the superintendent's recommendation. That should have been the end of the matter, and these two ESP members should have been returned to their jobs. Instead, a state monitor assigned to the Pleasantville School District by the New Jersey Department of Education overturned the board's decision and terminated the two PEA members. PEA filed grievances on their behalf, alleging that they were terminated without just cause. When the grievances were denied, PEA filed for binding arbitration.

At the insistence of the state monitor, the school board filed a petition with the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) to restrain arbitration of the two grievances. NJEA Network Attorney Steven R. Cohen represented PEA in the litigation before PERC.

Cohen argued that the Accountability Act, which created State monitors, restricted the monitor's authority because the act states that they are "subject to the education, labor, and employment laws and regulations, including the 'New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act,' . . . and collective bargaining agreements entered into by the school district."


PERC agreed with Cohen's argument and denied the board's request for restraint of the arbitration cases.

With the path cleared, PEA was able to take the firing of the instructional aide and security guard to arbitration. Presenting the case for the PEA, NJEA UniServ Representative Vincent Perna persuaded Arbitrator Susan Osborn that the two PEA members should not be terminated. Instead, Arbitrator Osborn imposed appropriate penalties, consistent with the law governing just cause.

### Know the rules of your employment

These cases underscore the importance of ESP members' familiarizing themselves with all board of education policies and work rules applicable to their jobs, as well as the provisions of the negotiated agreement.

ESP members should also familiarize themselves with any established practices in the workplace, commonly referred to as "past practices." This is critical, as the New Jersey Supreme Court has determined that past practices are to be considered a part of the negotiated agreement, even if the negotiated agreement does not contain a past practice clause. In addition, the New Jersey Supreme Court has determined that an arbitrator may read progressive discipline concepts into a negotiated agreement—whether or not such language is explicitly stated in the agreement—when considering whether there is just cause for disciplinary action. In other words, you should always seek out your union representative to ensure that your rights are protected any time you face potential discipline.

As unionized employees, ESP members have rights that nonunion employees do not have. However, your rights can only be protected and exercised by knowing what they are and vigorously pursuing them with the assistance of your local association and NJEA. 

*Steven R. Cohen is partner and principal shareholder of the lawfirm Selikoff and Cohen, P.A. in Mount Laurel. Cohen is an NJEA network attorney.*

**Worried about discipline?**  
**Your union is there for you!**

*ESP members facing disciplinary action should immediately request association representation to assist them in responding to district administrators.*

ESP members are entitled to association representation whenever they are summoned to meetings where: (1) they are going to be questioned—this is sometimes referred to as an "investigatory interview," and (2) there is a possibility that discipline may be imposed upon them.

**ESP members who are disciplined**—through the issuance of a letter of reprimand or imposition of a fine, suspension or termination—**should immediately notify their association president and grievance chair to ensure that a timely grievance is filed.** Every negotiated agreement contains timelines for the filing and advancement of a grievance, and there is often contract language which prohibits an untimely grievance from being advanced.

# NJEA Report

## Legislative Conference inspires action beyond Election Day

NJEA Government Relations Chair Tina Dare lauded attendees at the NJEA Walter J. O'Brien Legislative and Political Action Conference for knowing that legislative and political action doesn't conclude on Election Day.

"We all look forward to working with the governor," Dare said as she opened the conference. "But it's time to shift our focus from working for a candidate to working on enacting policies that help our students, our schools and our members. We need to be part of the change in the political climate here in New Jersey."

NJEA President Marie Blistan echoed Dare.

"Election Day wasn't the end, it was the beginning," Blistan said. "It's the start of a new legislative era in which we continue to expand the scope of our organizing to include our parents, our community members, and all stakeholders in our fight to pass strong, pro-public school legislation that will bring about the changes to our schools that our students deserve."

She spotlighted the issues that face NJEA members, their students and their families. She spoke out for students who become physically sick from the pressure of PARCC tests and who learn in classrooms that are too hot or too cold. She called attention to the unjust privatization of educational support professionals that leaves children without a consistent team of support staff in their lives. And she decried the impact of Chapter 78, which has caused the middle and working class staff working in schools to earn less each year to support their own families.

"Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. tells us that 'the moral arc of the universe bends towards justice,'" Blistan said. "But the moral arc to which he refers doesn't bend by itself, it bends because people bend it, because people will accept nothing less than

justice for all of our children. Justice is showing respect for the employees in our buildings who deliver their services to our children: from aides, to bus drivers, to cafeteria workers, to custodians, to child study team members, librarians, maintenance workers, nurses, security, tech staff, secretaries and teachers. Justice is restoring respect for the art and science of teaching the whole child."

### Menendez addresses conference

Sen. Robert Menendez, who was the keynote speaker for the conference, thanked NJEA for its advocacy on behalf of its members and on behalf of New Jersey's children.

"I know that there are those who are misguided who think of you as only a union that cares about its members, but I see your advocacy for the millions of children in our state to be able to fulfill their God-given potential. I salute NJEA and the work that it does every day," Menendez said. "I know you are passionate about your profession and committed to your students and the priorities that you fight for are backed up by lifetimes of experience in the classroom."

Menendez addressed the shooting that had taken place only a few days prior to the conference that left 14 students and three teachers dead at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. He expressed skepticism toward those who say nothing could be done to stop such murders.

"While it's true that no policy can root out evil in a person or in a society, but surely it would be a lot harder for a 19-year-old to use weapons of mass murder if we stopped selling weapons of mass murder," Menendez said. "It's time for members of Congress to reflect on their conscience and ask themselves, 'What if it was my child?'

Only then will we stop putting the profits of gun makers ahead of the lives of innocent people. My colleagues talk about mental illness, but just spent the better part of the year cutting legislation that covers mental illness."

Addressing recipients of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), Menendez said, "These are young children who came to this country in diapers. The only flag they know is the American flag; the only anthem they sing is the National Anthem. You don't hold these children responsible for decisions they never made."

Telling the story of his own parents' immigration to the United States from Cuba, he credited a great public education with his success here. He noted that his mother, who spoke very little English, insisted that he read his lessons to her every evening.

Describing the anti-public education policies of the Trump administration, Menendez said of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, "Secretary DeVos has never participated in our public school system—not as a student, not as a teacher, not as an administrator, not as a parent—and, so, not is the word for what she should be as Secretary of Education."

Menendez concluded by noting his support for early childhood education, school lunch programs and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), professional development for educators, smaller class sizes, federal support for student and academic enrichment grants, and public service loan forgiveness program.

"For generations, our public schools have been the bedrock of our American Dream," Menendez concluded. "I'm beyond proud to represent a state that knows the

value of public education. There's a reason that New Jersey's schools rank second in the nation, and that is because of all of you."

### Bipartisan panel addresses federal issues

NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty hosted a panel discussion with Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D) and Congressmen Donald Norcross (D) and Leonard Lance (R). The wide ranging discussion included questions gathered from conference attendees.

Spiller noted that with the exception of Rep. Thomas MacArthur, New Jersey's entire congressional delegation, both Democrats and Republicans, voted against the final version of President Donald Trump's tax reform bill.

"Our advocacy efforts resulted in improvements over the original version such as fixing a pension concern and preserving the educator tax deduction," Spiller said.

The panel discussion covered a broad range of federal issues, including gun safety legislation, the fate of public schools in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, college loan forgiveness, DACA, federal income deduction for state and local taxes, criminal justice reform, and housing.

### Members meet with state and federal legislators

In breakout sessions, NJEA members met with state and federal legislators in sessions that were focused on specific topics, including school funding, pensions and benefits, the impact of poverty, the future of unions, statewide high-stakes standardized tests, and the role of the federal government in education.



## Legislative Action Team excellence honored

Four county associations were recognized for exemplary Legislative Action Teams (LATs) at the 2018 Legislative and Political Action Conference. NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty noted that the ability to elect those who support public education to office is only one part of the process.

"We have learned firsthand that in order to change the patterns that we seem to be entrenched in, we must be willing to change the players," Beatty said. "We also have learned that as union members, we must engage in politics so that politicians engage with us on decisions regarding our profession, our students, our families and public education."

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

Beatty noted that in order to increase the number of members participating in the LAT program, it has been expanded to include associate LATs. This will allow all NJEA members who want to become involved in campaigns and politics to go to LAT meetings where they work, where they live, or both. To learn more about the program, visit [njea.org/LAT](http://njea.org/LAT).

Beatty called forward the four county associations that were recognized for their achievements this year.

- The Hudson County Education Association was recognized as the Most Improved Legislative Action Team in a county with more than 9,000 members.
- The Cape May County Education Association was recognized as the Most Improved Legislative Action Team in a county with fewer than 9,000 members.
- The Essex County Education Association was recognized for the Highest Level of Engagement in a county with more than 9,000 members.
- The Gloucester County Education Association was recognized for the Highest Level of Engagement in a county with fewer than 9,000 members.



NJEA officers hosted a bipartisan panel discussion at the NJEA Legislative Conference. From left: GR Committee Chair Tina Dare, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, Rep. Donald Norcross (D), Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D), NJEA President Marie Blistan, Rep. Leonard Lance (R) and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.



Sen. Robert Menendez delivered the keynote address.



Michael Grele of the Hudson County Area Vocational Technical Schools EA addresses legislators in a breakout session.

## NJEA honors member achievement at ESP Conference

Lenape District Education Association (LDEA) Secretary Lynda Miller was formally recognized as the 2018 NJEA Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the Year at the ESP Conference on Feb. 3. Sussex-Wantage Education Association Treasurer Nancy Richeda received the 2018 NJEA ESP Career Achievement Award and Gloucester County Education Association President Susan Clark earned the NJEA Friend of ESP Award.

The story that traces Miller's path to 2018 ESP of the Year was featured in the March *NJEA Review*. She was nominated by LDEA Vice President Andrea Carpenter.

"Sometimes our ESP staff can feel that not all members have a voice," Carpenter wrote. "Lynda Miller has always worked to serve as the voice. She reminds everyone of the value and rights of all ESP members."

The registrar for Lenape High School in Burlington County, Miller has enjoyed a 44-year career with the district. She was first employed there as a secretary there in 1973 after graduating from Shawnee High School, which is part of the Lenape district. Devoted to the staff, students, and community, Miller's affection for Lenape is well-known. In addition to her work responsibilities, Miller can be found at school activities and sporting events cheering her students on.

Miller was one of the founding organizers of the Lenape District Secretaries Education Association (LDSEA) and its first president.

"At the beginning of my career I discovered the importance to advocate for our profession," Miller said upon accepting the award. "When a group of us secretaries noticed that the teachers had a union but we did not, we quickly got to work organizing our association."

When LDSEA later merged with the Lenape District Education Association, Miller was determined to ensure that ESP members were well represented and had a strong voice. Currently holding the office of LDEA secretary, she is the longest serving member of the association's executive committee. She organizes members for training and political advocacy and

serves as a model of ESP involvement at LDEA Rep Council and Executive Committee meetings.

"We must continue to establish our ESP image as indispensable to our union," Miller said. "I try to mentor my fellow members and help them recognize their value as well as their rights. I believe that together we are the voice of one strong and united association."

As NJEA President Marie Blistan conferred the ESP of the Year Award on Miller, she praised Miller's dedication to her students and her unwavering advocacy.

"Lynda represents the empowerment of ESP union members," Blistan said. "She embodies the heart of our union."

### Gloucester County EA president wins Friend of ESP Award

Gloucester County Education Association President Susan Clark, a basic skills teacher in Mantua Township, was honored at the NJEA Friend of ESP at this year's ESP Conference. Nominated by Traci Davis, transportation professional and member of the Glassboro Education Association, Clark was lauded for the numerous ways in which she brought ESP members into leadership roles in the association.

Clark established a standing ESP Committee in GCEA, instituted the first ESP county overnight training sessions, created county ESP roundtables, and an annual ESP dinner to honor district-level ESPs of the Year. Clark works to ensure the GCEA budget includes funding for the ESP-at-Large to attend National Education Association ESP Conference and provides scholarships for ESP members to attend the NJEA ESP Conference.

"We talk about what we need as ESPs, and Susan is all too happy to listen," wrote Davis. "She truly understands the importance of ESPs in the successful daily life of a student."

Every letter of support for Clark's nomination noted her commitment to battling the privatization of ESP work.

"Ms. Clark was at nearly every privatization battle organizing her members, arguing with a school board,

NJEA leaders honor the 2018 ESP of the Year. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, ESP of the Year Lynda Miller, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, ESP Committee Chair Donna O'Malley and NJEA Assistant Executive Director Steve Swelsky.



GCEA President Susan Clark received the NJEA Friend of ESP award.



SWEA Treasurer Nancy Richeda, a paraprofessional at CE Lawrence School in Sussex, received the NJEA ESP Career Achievement Award.





supporting local leaders and advocating for our great public schools,” wrote Al Beaver, a former history teacher at Kingsway High School and former GCEA member who now serves as the interim UniServ regional director in NJEA’s Central Region.

“Gloucester County is a hive of activity as Sue encourages ESP members to become more involved with their local associations by offering a wide selection of workshops and trainings,” said NJEA Assistant Executive Director Steve Swetsky as he conferred the Friend of ESP award on Clark. “She works to make sure that all members feel included and receive the assistance they need to succeed within the association.”

Upon accepting the award, Clark credited the large team of ESP leaders in GCEA and in locals associations across Gloucester County, the NJEA ESP Committee, and the NJEA staff who support ESP members.

“All of these folks make it easy to advocate for educational support professionals,” Clark said. “They are right there beside and, most times, in front of me, as we work together.”

### Sussex-Wantage paraprofessional receives Career Achievement Award

Nancy Richeda, a paraprofessional at Clifton E. Lawrence School in Sussex and treasurer of the Sussex-Wantage Education Association, received the NJEA ESP Career Achievement Award at the ESP Conference. Richeda was first employed in her district as a paraprofessional 20 years ago.

In Richeda’s first year on the job, her local president approached her suggesting that she become an association representative. She agreed and has been an active association leader ever since. In addition to being the current SWEA treasurer, she has served chair of the negotiations team for seven years, following six years on the team. She is the current Membership Committee chair for the Sussex County Education Association and serves on the SCEA Executive Committee. A member of the NJEA Membership Committee, she is an NJEA Consultant who has also worked as an NJEA Summer Fellow.

“Nancy recognized very early on that

in order to effect change, she must be the change,” NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty said as he presented Richeda’s award. “She firmly believes in transparency in the union and is a seasoned veteran very willing to get newer and younger colleagues involved in their local association.”

Richeda was nominated SCEA Vice President Gillian Raye and received a letter supporting the nomination from SWEA member Jessica Musilli, the K-2 language and learning disabilities teacher with whom she works. In addition to praising Richeda’s association advocacy, Musilli recognized her work as an educator.

“In addition to providing support to me as a teacher, Nancy provides essential support to our students,” Musilli wrote. “She takes the time to connect with each student individually and to learn about their interests, motivators, strengths and challenges. Our students know that Mrs. Richeda believes in them and they, in turn, put their trust in her.”

That trust was underlined by a letter written to the NJEA ESP Committee by one student’s parents in support of Richeda’s nomination. The student, Faith, called Richeda “Kedda,” which is the last two syllables of Richeda’s name.

“The three years that Nancy and Faith shared demonstrated to me that Nancy doesn’t consider her position as just being a job,” Faith’s father wrote. “I see it more as her vocation.”

The father reported that Faith would do everything she could to delay going to school, except for those days that “Kedda” was waiting for her.

“On those days she would get out of the car and run, arms open wide, saying ‘Kedda’ as best she could,” the father wrote. “The love and trust they shared was obvious.”

Tragically, Faith passed away during her second-grade year. Richeda supported the family as Faith was fighting for her life and went on to help the family deal with the loss of their child. She remains involved in the family’s life.

“To me there is no better way to explain the impact our school team has on a child, and the equally powerful impact these children have on them,” Beatty said.

## 2018 County ESPs of the Year

In addition to the statewide NJEA ESP of the Year, each county association honors its members with a countywide ESP of the Year.

**Atlantic County:** **Christine D’Alessandro**, instructional aide, Brigantine Education Association

**Bergen County:** **Barbara Michels**, teacher assistant, Bergen County Special Services Education Association

**Burlington County:** **Lynda Miller**, registrar, Lenape District Education Association

**Camden County:** **Carmen Cooper**, clerk, Camden Education Association

**Cape May County:** **Joanne Ciccotelli**, bus driver, Dennis Township Education Association

**Cumberland County:** **Iris Gonzalez**, paraprofessional, Upper Deerfield Township Education Association

**Essex County:** **Keysha Knight**, information and support services employee, South Orange-Maplewood Education Association

**Gloucester County:** **Roberta Rissling**, paraprofessional, Township of Franklin Support Association

**Hudson County:** **Marquisha Reynolds**, paraprofessional, Jersey City Para-Professional Association

**Hunterdon County:** **Debra Risko**, paraprofessional, Holland Township Education Association

**Mercer County:** **Roselia Lake**, paraprofessional, Hopewell Valley Education Support Professionals Association

**Middlesex County:** **Marleen Lewandowski**, paraprofessional, Sayreville Education Association

**Monmouth County:** **Mary O’Keefe**, teacher assistant, Freehold Township Education Association

**Morris County:** **Angela Cordova**, paraprofessional, Randolph Education Association

**Ocean County:** **Nancy Jubert**, paraprofessional, Toms River Education Association.

**Passaic County:** **Charles Wilson**, instructional assistant, Paterson Education Association

**Salem County:** **Franklin Nelson**, custodian, Salem County Vo-Tech School Employee Association

**Somerset County:** **Virginia Feola**, secretary, North Plainfield Education Association

**Sussex County:** **Ann Warhol**, administrative assistant, Sparta Education Association

**Union County:** **Michael Manzella**, building maintenance worker, Clark Education Association

**Warren County:** **Joanne Chipaloski**, para-educator, Phillipsburg Education Association

## Bellville students win Nicky Fifth's Read Across America-NJ contest

Award-winning author Lisa Willever delivered the news in person

Most New Jerseyans think their state is terrific, but a group of seven boys in Kim Pagano's elementary special needs class took it to a new level: they wrote a winning essay, answering the question, "What makes New Jersey and its people so great?" and charmed the selection panel enough to take home the grand prize.

The boy's excitement about their home state shone through with lines such as, "Our state is cool because it's so small, you can visit different places in one day!" and "...[None of us] ate a tomato pie; we all want to try one!"

Bellville School #5 students were among hundreds throughout the state who participated in the first annual "Nicky Fifth's Read Across America- NJ" contest, sponsored by NJEA and funded by a grant from the National Education Association (NEA). For the contest, students read a book from the popular Nicky Fifth children's series and let it ignite their imaginations. The series, written by former educator and award-winning author Lisa Willever, centers on its main character, Nicky Fifth, and his friends as they set out on various adventures throughout New Jersey. Nicky and his friends learn about the state's history, landmarks, and all the things that make New Jersey wonderful.

"This essay contest allowed them to share their thoughts on Nicky Fifth, and how he viewed his

parents and our state," Pagano said. "It was cool to see how they could relate to Nicky and laugh along with him while becoming fascinated that all these places existed. They were so inspired, they moved ahead on their own to explore the different places, through computers and books."

Little did Pagano's students know, though, they were about to embark on their own real-life Nicky Fifth adventure. In an assembly hosted by NJEA, Willever addressed the entire fifth grade and talked about how New Jersey provides endless inspiration for her series. Willever then called Pagano and her class up to join her, when they all learned they will be sent this spring to a New Jersey landmark of their choice—with the news being greeted by cheers and raucous applause from their peers, Pagano's colleagues, and school administrators.

"I am always so proud of every New Jersey student, but this is really special," Willever declared. "How appropriate that in a state so diverse and with so many differences, we are honoring the accomplishments of students with learning differences. I know every student in New Jersey joins me in celebrating this outstanding achievement."

Willever was not the only one to feel that way.

"What a great honor for our students to meet Lisa Willever," said Belleville Schools Superintendent Dr. Richard Tomko. "I know our students

worked very hard on their submission, and it was great to see how excited Ms. Pagano's class was after Lisa announced that they had won the contest."

In addition to the trip, NJEA provided the school with a complete set of the 10-book *Nicky Fifth* series for its library, but Willever had one more surprise up her sleeve: each fifth-grade student received copies of three different books in the *Nicky Fifth* series, *Nicky Fifth Fit*, *How To Train Your Government*, and *Nicky Fifth Takes a Stand for Public Schools*.

"I'm so proud that Mrs. Pagano's class won the essay contest on what makes New Jersey and its people so great," said Alaina Chip, a special education teacher and vice president the Belleville Education Association. "I think our New Jersey public schools and Ms. Pagano's class are what makes New Jersey great, too!"

For Pagano, though, the win was more than just receiving the top prize and set of books; it was about her students—and others—realizing they can do anything they set their minds to.

"Students with learning disabilities and emotional behaviors are often underestimated about how smart they are and how perceptive they can be. It's wonderful to see them honored for being just who they are," she continued. "My students can change the world, and I believe in them."



Bellville School #5 fifth-graders won an assembly led by author Lisa Willever and a field trip to a New Jersey landmark of their choice.



In addition to winning a field trip, each student received three books from the *Nicky Fifth* series.



## Washington Township women's forum amplifies students' voices

Inside a packed classroom on the second floor of Washington Township High School in Gloucester County, more than 30 students and three staff members are engaged in a lively discussion on the impact of legislation on women's lives.

For more than 90 minutes, and long after the last bus of the day left the parking lot, the conversation ranged from health care issues such as the taxation of feminine hygiene products in some states, to the definitions of rape and consent and what obligation universities have to report sexual assault to local law enforcement, to the impact of mandatory arrests in domestic violence investigations, and much more.

Four years ago, two students approached Washington Township Education Association (WTEA) member and high school English teacher Donna Pancari with a request. They wanted to start a group where female students and staff would have a safe space to talk about issues that affected them, beginning with why "feminism" had seemingly become a bad word on social media.

The group, which meets in Pancari's classroom, discusses a different topic each month, facilitated by Pancari and the current co-leaders, Shreenithi Venkataraman and Olivia Haley, both juniors.

Other staff, including Adjua Lafleur, co-advisor of the African-American Cultural Club, often attend the meetings, but they make sure the students dominate the conversation.

While the group would like to branch out into community service activities, they have already achieved one major success: the student dress code.

"A year ago, the club members asked if they could look at the student dress code," Pancari recalled. "Issues with young men were not addressed the way issues with young women were, and the issues that were raised were much more about body type than a particular item of clothing. While students understand administrators have a difficult job,

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they worked hard to make it easier and fairer to enforce the dress code by breaking it down point by point and recommending changes."

The time and attention the group had already paid to the inequity in the code led to an invitation by administration to participate in a districtwide committee considering revisions.

"More than anything else, this real-world example provided the evidence needed to revamp the dress code," Pancari said. "Having administration listen to them and their concerns really made the students feel that if they did their homework and presented their evidence, their voices will be heard."

While Pancari was happy to volunteer her time to the club, WTEA felt that this should be a stipended position. WTEA President Gerry Taraschi and Vice President Shaun Giberson researched the stipended positions and successfully approached administration about funding the women's forum advisor.

This show of support from the union underscores the value of the women's forum, and the way it is helping to encourage students to speak out about the issues that matter to them.

"The perspective that I have on a lot of these issues has been informed by my students," Pancari said. "We're not just venting, we're actively engaged in conversations that are helping to make changes that benefit their lives."

Top: Washington Township High School teacher Donna Pancari facilitates a women's forum discussion.

Bottom: Students initiated the idea to hold discussions for young women at the high school.





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## Conference focuses on labor and management collaboration

The New Jersey Public School Labor Management Collaboration Conference drew leaders and members from NJEA, the American Federation of Teachers-New Jersey (AFT-NJ), the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA), and the New Jersey Association of School Administrators (NJASA), as well as the national parent organizations of these statewide organizations, including the National Education Association.

NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty attended.

"I'm optimistic about the work that we are doing here to better our profession and to improve our public schools," Blistan said. "But the bottom line is—and always has been and always will be—the effect this work has on our students."

### The effect of collaboration on students

Saul Rubinstein, a professor in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, coordinates and facilitates the New Jersey Public School Labor Management Collaborative. With John McCarthy of Cornell University, he has conducted research that reveals the positive impact of greater collaboration.

"We see a very clear relationship between what happens between the adults in the building—the collaboration among teachers and between teachers and administrators—and the impact on student learning," Rubinstein said.

Rubinstein reported that in districts with the highest levels of collaboration, 12.5 percent more students perform at or above English/language arts standards compared to districts with the lowest levels of collaboration. For mathematics, they measured an increase of 4.5 percent.

Rubinstein and McCarthy also found that

differences in teacher turnover between high-poverty and low poverty schools were erased when collaboration reached high levels.

### History of the collaborative

NJEA Assistant Executive Director Steve Swetsky traced the history of the labor-management initiative, noting that in 2013 an informal group of representatives from NJEA, AFT-NJ, NJSBA, NJPSA, NJASA and Rutgers University grew from an NJSBA task force on student achievement. Rubinstein made a presentation for that group.

"When they heard the data that connected labor-management relations and collaboration in schools to student achievement, it was an 'Aha!' moment," Swetsky said. "They started to consider whether collaborative practices could be supported at the state level."

As the group sought potential districts in which to put labor-management collaboration practices to the test, Swetsky stressed that such partnerships could not be forced—all parties must voluntarily choose to participate.

By 2015, eight districts were identified for the first cohort: Bergen County Special Services, Bordentown, Delran, Haledon, Manchester, Metuchen, Montgomery, and North Brunswick. These districts identified local teams and chose projects for collaboration. Through Rutgers, the statewide organizations offered training and semiannual gatherings for support. Clearview Regional, Lower Cape May Regional, Milltown, New Brunswick, Ocean City, Pompton Lakes, Teaneck Community Charter School, and Wanaque comprise a second cohort.

The conference continued with panel discussions from several school districts and local associations. NJEA members on the panels included Metuchen High School teacher Evan Robbins, Montgomery Township EA (MTEA) President Scott Mason, MTEA Vice Presidents

Karen Kevorkian and Jennifer Jones, Delran EA President Amy Yodis, and New Brunswick EA President Nancy Coppola.

"With this system, teachers and ESP realize they have a voice," Mason said. "The collective bargaining process has improved because of the transparency we have throughout the year."

"The superintendent calls me now to talk about things," Coppola noted. "I think it's going to be a good thing for our members and students. We know our members want this."

"The principal and I work together, attend conferences together, and focus on resolving any issues. When you reduce stress for teachers, it reduces stress for students," Jones said.

"It's a process and it takes a long time to build the relationship," Kevorkian said. "My principal and I made a promise that we would not let each other fail. If we succeed, our students succeed."

### Conference draws governor and NEA attention

The conference also drew the attention of Gov. Phil Murphy and NEA Vice President Becky Pringle who addressed the conference.

"Schools work best when educators, administrators and school boards all work together," Murphy said. "After all, each part of the school leadership and labor teams have the same objective: to elevate learning and ensure that every child leaves prepared for success in the world."

Pringle noted the importance of including all educators, including educational support professionals.

"We must build a system where all can succeed because they share the responsibility for each other's success," Pringle said. "This aspirational vision of shared responsibility to promote opportunity and equity for all our students must be broadly owned by teachers, support professionals, administrators, school boards, parents and community organizations. 📢"



From left: Assemblywoman Mila Jasey, Union Township EA President Ann Margaret Shannon, Hudson County EA President Frank Mazzone, NJEA President Marie Blistan, former State Board of Education President Mark Biedron, NEA Vice President Becky Pringle, Union Township EA Vice President Richard D'Avanzo, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.



# Empowering students through art

**Mighty Fingers Facing Change comes to five  
New Jersey public schools**





Emma C.  
Attales  
School,  
Absecon



Richard C. Crockett Middle  
School, Hamilton Twp.



Hillsborough  
Middle School



Franklin I. Williams  
Middle School #7,  
Jersey City

Kelly Sullivan, a New Jersey native and pioneer in the field of collaborative art, has used her talents to inspire imagination and action in girls around the world through her Mighty Fingers Facing Change Project (MFFC). Sponsored by NJEA, Sullivan recently brought this powerful production to five New Jersey schools.

“We use art as a vehicle for empowerment, so that young people can know that their visions and thoughts matter, that they have the ability and right to express those thoughts and that they have the power to work toward those visions,” Sullivan says. “There is also an emphasis on the understanding that a rigid mind in an ever-changing world is a recipe for despair, and that we need to open our imaginations and our hearts to form stronger communities.”

The MFFC project includes creating a “super-self-portrait” and participating in a collaborative 10-foot FingerSmear® painting that Sullivan brought to each location for all of the students to participate in. New Jersey is not the only place Sullivan has worked. She has produced MFFC in 18 locations around the world including Uganda, Haiti, India, Guatemala, Spain and others. She is headed for China this month.

“We inspire young people to become explorers, and pilot their own ships, knowing that the currents may change,” Sullivan says.

### Inspiring NJEA members

NJEA Organizational Development staff person Michael Saffran visited Sullivan’s studio in Lambertville by chance and was struck by the impact of her work.

“Originally, I wanted to work with Kelly to develop a program for our annual Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference (SLC),” Saffran says. “I thought her project would be a way to build unity and create something that NJEA would be proud to display prominently at NJEA headquarters.”

At the 2017 SLC, thousands of members finger painted an image that combined NJEA’s core values of unity, pride, excellence, the value of universal public education, and diversity. That FingerSmear® was featured on the cover of the October 2017 *NJEA Review* with now-Gov. Phil Murphy.

But at the same time, Saffran and Sullivan wanted to develop a program that brought Mighty Fingers Facing Change to as many students as possible. Working with NJEA Communications staffer Christy Kanaby, they developed guidelines and a budget to maximize the impact of the program.

“As educators, we know that when budgets are tight, art is one of the first things to be

cut,” Saffran says. “We worked with Kelly to develop a program that would work for our members, and we scraped together funding for five schools across the state to participate.”

At SLC, Sullivan presented three electives to members about the program and members were encouraged to apply to win a visit from Sullivan. In October, schools in Absecon, Jersey City, Hillsborough, Clinton, and Hamilton Township (Mercer County) were selected.

“Each of these schools had special considerations that made them very attractive to us,” Sullivan says. “For some, the program would be run only for girls who struggled to find their place in the school environment. For others, it would be for students who had recently immigrated to the United States or who had been identified by teachers and staff as likely to benefit from the art lesson as well as the lesson in self-expression.”

Beginning in early February, Sullivan, her assistant Becka Warfel, Saffran and other NJEA staff descended on the schools armed with acrylic paint, paper bags and bundles of Handi Wipes.

### Emma C. Attales School, Absecon

The first school was in Absecon, a community hit hard by the closing of five of neighboring Atlantic City’s 12 casinos in 2014. Absecon, home to many of the employees who lost their jobs as a result of those closings, has struggled economically and culturally since then. As English teacher Barbara Horner described it, “there are not many art resources available to students outside the school, so students are very dependent on us to bring these programs to them.”

As she would at each of the schools, Sullivan faced a quiet, uncertain group of 25 students at the beginning of her presentation. And, as she would see repeated at each school, by the end of the day, the students were laughing, engaged, and a little paint-splattered.

Sullivan would share her story about how art changed her life and how allowing oneself to be creative actually changes the brain. She encouraged the students to share what makes them unique.

Beginning with one side of a large brown paper bag, Sullivan guided the students through a visualization exercise that had them use markers to draw symbols and words that expressed themselves and their ideas. Student conversations ranged from discussing a chosen symbol that represented their character to sharing thoughts on the struggles they and their peers face in reaching their goals. They were asked about changes they would like to see in the world, and what kind of messages

they would like to deliver to the district's administration, the nation's leaders, or girls on the other side of the world.

The students also had an opportunity to participate in "Abundance," a FingerSmear® that has traveled around the world with Sullivan to all of the MFFC locations. In addition to the tactile experience of a FingerSmear, Sullivan also introduced the students to <http://paint.team>—an online, collaborative digital painting application developed by Sullivan and her partner Doug Moreland.

Following lunch, which was provided by the Absecon Education Association through an NJEA PRIDE in Public Education grant, the students got down to work with the paint, and the results were powerful. At the end of the day, each student stood in front of the room, presented his or her painting, and completed the sentence, "With my Mighty Fingers, I will..." Students shared their professional and personal goals and loudly applauded their classmates.

"I've received nothing but positive feedback from the students, their parents, and teachers," said Horner. "There is a noticeable change in each of the girls, a new-found confidence and happiness. They truly feel empowered."

### Franklin I. Williams Middle School #7, Jersey City

The students in Emily Litman's class are English language learners who have recently arrived in the United States from Spanish-speaking countries. As a result, Litman and her colleagues, co-teacher Isela Brenes, and assistants Maria Torres and Virginia Osorio, spent a busy day translating for Sullivan as she led the students through the program. But the end result was powerful for everyone involved.

"I am beyond grateful that I had this opportunity to share today with my students, and I honestly can say that this was really meaningful for them," Litman said. "Our students are not used to being heard or seen, and to have a day when that was celebrated and encouraged will do wonders for their self-esteem. As the students walked down to catch the buses, all the other students were coming up to them asking about their special project day. Our kids definitely were standing taller than they ever have."

The Jersey City Education Association provided a lunch of pulled pork, fried chicken, beans, rice, and fried plantains prepared by the mother of two students in the class. In addition, students proudly shared homemade desserts from their countries of origin.



"We use **art** as a vehicle for **empowerment**, so that young people can know that their visions and thoughts matter, that they have the ability and right to **express** those thoughts





and that they  
have the **power**  
to work toward  
those **visions.**"

Litman, like almost all of the other teachers, will host an event so that the students' families and the community can enjoy the art the students created.

In addition, students will be able to share their experience with *paint.team*. Sullivan has created a school-specific design for each of the participating schools that can be shared with the other students, enabling the original art students to become guides for their classmates.

### Hillsborough Middle School

Physical education teacher Regina Kay applied for the program because she wanted to show her students that despite coming from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds, they really shared many of the same values, interests, hopes and dreams.

"I felt that the Mighty Fingers project has the power to break down my students' insecurities and build their confidence," Kay said. "Hopefully, that will lead them to develop new friendships."

Kay had praise for the work Sullivan is doing to empower and encourage students.

"Kelly and her staff were amazing! They led the girls through a variety of activities that allowed for not only a chance for the girls to express themselves creatively, but also an opportunity to reflect on their lives and the impact they want to have on the world," Kay said.

### Clinton Public School

Clinton holds special meaning for Sullivan, who had her first art lesson at a local studio there.

"I was thrilled to see that Clinton was one of the applicants," Sullivan said. "It was very meaningful for me to bring this project back to where it all began for me."

The school selected all girls to participate and NJEA's Emmy-award winning show, "Classroom Close-up NJ," filmed the event and interviewed students and staff about the project. That episode will air May 20 and June 17 on NJTV. It will also be available online once it airs at [classroomcloseup.org](http://classroomcloseup.org).

"Weeks after the event, I am still getting such wonderful feedback from the students and parents who were able to participate," said math teacher Amy Brenner. "You've made a tremendous impact on the girls, and we are so grateful."

### Richard C. Crockett Middle School, Hamilton Twp.

At the final school, both boys and girls crowded around the art tables in Lora Durr's classroom. Hamilton is also a culturally and economically diverse community that borders Trenton.

"The students brought a variety of experiences and talents to the project and the resulting art work was a beautiful way to complete this phase of the project," Sullivan said.

Going forward, Sullivan is hoping to attend the parent and community nights at the schools to see the students proudly share their art work.

In addition, each school will share and complete its *paint.team* project.

"I believe profoundly in the power of art to change lives for the better," Sullivan said. "I'm so pleased that I got to work with Michael and NJEA to bring this message to so many students." 🌱

*For more information about Sullivan's work, go to [mightyfingersfacingchange.com](http://mightyfingersfacingchange.com).*

*Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to [njea.org](http://njea.org). She can be reached at [kcoulibaly@njea.org](mailto:kcoulibaly@njea.org).*

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# Humane Education:

## A Way to Motivate and Engage Students

By Julie Bolkin O'Connor, Ph.D.



As teachers, we understand the importance of engaging our students. Researchers agree that motivation to learn is one of the most important indicators of student success, regardless of age. An interested student will give the learning task extra attention, and is more likely to retain what he or she has learned. In short, an engaged student will learn more than a disengaged learner.

## What is humane education and why teach it?

Humane education is the teaching of curriculum related to animal well-being. Its purpose is to foster compassion in children's relationships with both animals and people. Because most children are naturally attracted to animals, humane education lessons have the ability to stimulate motivation to learn and engage in class activities.

Did you ever notice how your students seem to light up when they talk about their pets or if you show a picture of yours? Children naturally love animals. In a study conducted by the Humane Society of the United States, it was noted virtually all (99.3 percent) of children ages 3 to 13 desired to have pets. You can tap in to this innate love of animals to enhance students' interest in any lesson.

An improved student and teacher relationship has also been reported by many teachers who use humane education. Bonding over a shared interest in the well-being of animals is another benefit to including humane education in your lessons. You may be surprised as to which student feels a connection to you!

## How can you incorporate humane education?

Teachers can use humane education in any subject they teach and with children of any age. While some of the examples noted below target younger students, one could argue that humane education becomes more motivating the older students are, because the topics are more thought provoking. You need not feel that it is necessary to have a live animal in a classroom to motivate students. Rather, the mere inclusion of an animal-related topic increases student involvement.

Teachers may find that certain animals, such as wild species, interest one set of students more, while domestic animals draw greater interest from a different group of students. Generally, however, students are very interested when animals and animal welfare is part of the topic. It is important to note that humane education is not meant to preach, but rather to provide students with

information so they can make informed decisions regarding kindness to animals.

## Through the subjects

### Language arts

Language arts has multiple avenues through which to explore humane education. Educators can teach language arts through books that advocate for compassion toward animals such as *Charlotte's Web* and *Black Beauty*. Persuasive essays can be turned into letters students can send to politicians or directors of companies as ways to advocate for animals.

It is just as easy, and more engaging, to identify the parts of speech in sentences that focus on animals, rather than generic, uninteresting topics. For example, "Androcles pulled the thorn from the lion's paw" is more interesting than "The man pulled a thread from his sweater."

For a small fee, classroom subscriptions to a humane education magazine called *KIND News*, similar to the format of *Time for Kids* or the *Weekly Reader*, is available through Red Rover at [redrover.org/readers/kind-news-magazine](http://redrover.org/readers/kind-news-magazine). Students are eager to read the animal-related articles when the subscription comes every six to eight weeks.

### Mathematics

Math can be an easy fit for humane education. For example, a humane education math lesson teaches multiples and provides information on the epidemic of pet overpopulation. Annually, six to eight million animals end up in U.S. animal shelters. One unsprayed cat can lead to the births of 370,000 cats in just seven years!

The students start with one cat who has four kittens. They chart how in eight months, two of those female kittens are now responsible for the birth of four more kittens each. The lesson follows the population growth, multiplying along the way, for seven years. The math worksheet and the chart, are available for download at TeachKIND, which is listed in the sidebar, allow the children to be engaged and motivated by the math because it is within the context of learning about animals. The HEART resource guide listed in the sidebar has a math lesson on the cost of pet ownership.

Children are also left empowered, learning that there are actions humans can take to help companion animals; in this case, people can spay or neuter pets to prevent overpopulation.

### Social studies

Social studies presents an interesting con-

**Resources for your teaching**  
Some of the most exciting aspects to humane education are the free materials you can obtain for your classroom and the free standards-aligned lesson plans ready for you to print and teach. These are a few of the easy ways to infuse humane education into your teaching. However, if you just include animals in the topic, there are many more ways you can make your teaching more exciting for your students.

### TeachKIND

[peta.org/teachkind](http://peta.org/teachkind)

The humane education division at the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).

### Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART)

[teachheart.org](http://teachheart.org)

This website has an "Animal Focused Humane Education K-12 Teacher Resource Guide," developed in conjunction with the animal welfare organizations, ASPCA and IFAW.

### The Raptor Trust

[theraptortrust.org](http://theraptortrust.org)

The Raptor Trust is a wild bird rehabilitation center located in the Millington section of Long Hill Township in Morris County. It hosts field trips where students can learn about the birds of prey that rehabilitate in the facility.

### Lakota Wolf Preserve

[lakotawolf.com](http://lakotawolf.com)

Located in Columbia, New Jersey, the Lakota Wolf Preserve has educational Wolf Watch tours.



### **The Tenafly Nature Center**

[tenaflynaturecenter.org](http://tenaflynaturecenter.org)

The center is the steward of nearly 400 wooded acres for the purposes of conservation, education and recreation. Located in Bergen County, it hosts school groups.

### **Cape May Whale Watch and Research Center**

[capemaywhalewatch.com](http://capemaywhalewatch.com)

Students board an Opportunistic Research Vessel and have the opportunity to become “citizen scientists” while observing marine animals in their natural habitat.

### **Palmyra Cove**

[palmyracove.org](http://palmyracove.org)

Palmyra Cove Nature Park (PCNP) is a 250 acre urban oasis along a highly developed area on the Delaware River. Habitats included in PCNP are wetlands, woodlands, meadows, wild creek and river shoreline, and freshwater Tidal Cove. By protecting this habitat, PCNP preserves the ecological richness of the local environment.

### **The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries**

[sanctuaryfederation.org](http://sanctuaryfederation.org)

This organization provides accreditation and is a good place to start when looking for field trip ideas.

### **KIND News**

[redrover.org/readers/kind-news-magazine](http://redrover.org/readers/kind-news-magazine)

For a small fee, classroom subscriptions to this humane education magazine are available through Red Rover. Students are eager to read the animal-related articles when the subscription comes every six to eight weeks.

text in which to explore attitudes toward animals in different cultures. For example, did you know that the national animal of Australia is the kangaroo, and the national animal of Iraq is a kind of partridge? If teachers include animals, and explore the cultural norms surrounding them, educating youngsters about a new nation will be more engaging and motivating.

Animals can lead to deeper learning in geography. Did you know that Feb. 18 is World Whale Day? Founded in Hawaii in 1980, it honors humpback whales which swim off its coast? World Sea Turtle Day is June 16. Sea turtles are found in all oceans, except for the polar regions.

### **Science**

Teaching about the delicate balance in the environment presents one avenue of scientific focus. For example, destruction of habitat has affected black bears, foxes, and deer, and many other species. Humane education science lessons can explore the impacts of human decisions on nonhuman animals and their ecosystems, making the learning more relevant.

Biology is the study of life, a subject truly lending itself to teaching respect for all life. “Project Pigeon Watch,” through the Cornell Ornithology lab, is an international research project in which students can participate. Teachers can take their students on a neighborhood walk, observing pigeon flocks, acquiring data to send back to the lab. Information on this free and valuable humane education opportunity, exposing students to the study of biology, the scientific method, and respect for animals more broadly, is available at this website [celebrateurbanbirds.org](http://celebrateurbanbirds.org).

“Project Feeder Watch” is another opportunity for students to transform into real world data collectors for the Cornell lab as well.

Many biology classes include animal dissection in the curriculum, but New Jersey law permits students to choose not to participate in the activity. Computer-based alternatives provide teachers with the opportunity to help their students learn the content while not participating in dissection.

Chemistry can cover lessons on the cruelty-free alternatives to animal testing of the chemical elements in household products and makeup. Humane education can be the broader curricular umbrella your students need to motivate them to do well in a host of science-based learning opportunities including physics, earth sciences and other topics.

### **Special subjects**

Health and physical education teachers can infuse their lessons with information on non-meat alternative foods. A teacher can play “Steal the Tofu,” rather than “Steal the Bacon,” with his or her students in physical education class. Art and music teachers have many lessons they can present as well, which are available from TeachKIND and HEART, found in the sidebar.

### **Opportunities to connect to current events**

Whether it is Cecil the Lion, famously killed by a trophy hunter; Harambe, the zoo gorilla met with a tragic end; or a cow who escapes from the local slaughter house, animals are the focus of ever changing current events, and they have the power to engage our students to be more informed and educated citizens.

Increasingly, it is becoming recognized that wild animals performing tricks in captivity is considered anachronistic and cruel. Bergen County was the first location in New Jersey to ban travelling wild animal acts on its county property in 2016. This past year, when New York City was considering passing a ban on wild animal acts, some teachers used humane education lessons to work with their children to explore how performing animals feel.

The teachers’ lessons focused on critical reasoning, empathy, research skills and language arts. After children researched how lions or elephants behaved in the wild, they learned of the demands made in traveling shows. Through a shared writing lesson (pictured), teachers and students wrote supporting arguments as to why travelling wild animal acts have far from optimal conditions. Reasons included “Babies are taken away from their families” and “They are hurt when they are taught unnatural tricks.”

Students turned those reasons into their own persuasive letters and, with their parents’ permission, sent the letters to the council members in advance of the vote. According to their teachers, the children felt tremendous pride and accomplishment when the New York City Council voted to ban wild animal performances in 2017. The children were motivated and engaged in every part of the lesson and they also helped affect change for the animals.

## Improving student behavior

The universal affection for animals leads to societal concern when children are cruel to animals. Many adults who harm others started by perpetrating cruelty on animals when they were younger. Given this behavioral link, starting in 2016, acts of cruelty against animals are now counted in the FBI's criminal database.

Humane education increases pro-social behaviors because it encourages children to care for animals who are, by definition, vulnerable. Educators can use humane education to model positive and responsible behavior toward animals, possibly helping to curb some societal violence.

According to the Tufts Institute for Human-Animal Interaction, animals facilitate conversation and decrease anxiety. More schools are using these benefits when they arrange for dogs to visit children while they read. The increased reading fluency that is achieved after students participate in a "reading to dogs" program provides one example of the power animals have to impact student learning.

Lastly, if students are provided with the information they need to work together to solve problems affecting animals and the environment, they will feel empowered. An empowered student is a motivated student. Teachers of humane education help encourage student empowerment because many of the activities are designed to have children take ownership of their own learning.

## Benefits

Teachers who are interested in animals will find humane education personally rewarding. However, even those educators who are not "animal people" will do a disservice to their teaching if they do not purposefully include animal-themed lessons. Students are more motivated and engaged to learn the content when humane education is utilized. Also, humane education helps the world become a kinder and more compassionate place.

If you take advantage of free resources and explore the many lessons, you will unlock the benefits of this curriculum. Your motivated and engaged students will learn more effectively and enjoy your classroom more. 🐾

*Julie Bolkin O'Connor, Ph.D. is an ESL teacher and coordinator for the Cliffside Park Public School district. Additionally, Dr. O'Connor currently serves as the Vice President of The Humane Education Committee, Inc. For further inquiries about using humane education in your classroom, you may contact her at [HECommittee@hotmail.com](mailto:HECommittee@hotmail.com).*



Above: A humane education math lesson teaches multiples and provides information pet overpopulation. Annually, six to eight million animals end up in U.S. animal shelters. One unspayed cat can lead to the births of 370,000 cats in just seven years. (Chart courtesy of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)

Left: Students learn about protecting the ocean and its inhabitants as they engage in an activity to recycle plastic. (Photo courtesy of Everyday HUMANE.)



# WIN

## A DODGE JOURNEY

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AH330418

On March 2, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty visited Liberty Corner School in Bernards Township to read to students. The Cat in the Hat came along for the ride.

1



2



3



READ ACROSS



4



5



6



7



8



1. Lower Township  
Elementary

2. Lincoln School,  
Westfield

3. Gregory School,  
Trenton

4. Forest Avenue  
School, Verona

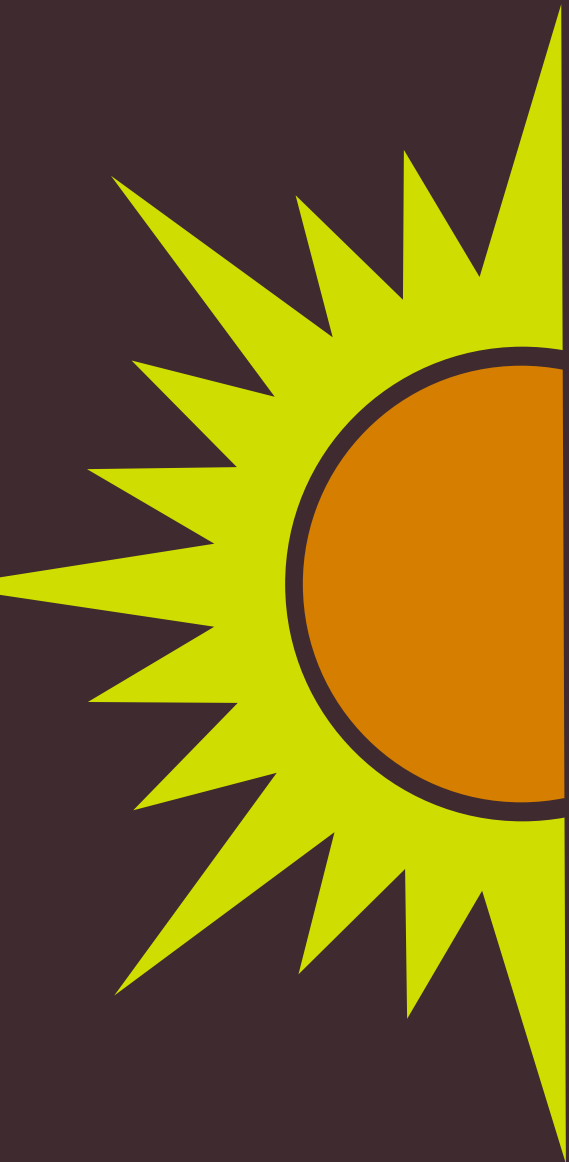
5. Riverton School,  
Burlington County

6. Burlington County  
Special Services

7. Thomas Jefferson  
Elementary School,  
Washington Township

8. Downing School,  
Runnemede 🇺🇸

AMERICA



## 2018 JACK BERTOLINO SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The 2018 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference will offer a broad menu of workshops that equip members to become stronger association advocates. Most workshops offer nine hours of training in a three-day period spread over six parts. A longer workshop providing 18 hours of training over four days is available for newer presidents.

There are three sets of three-day programs:

- Workshop I – Aug. 4-6 (Sat., Sun., Mon.)
- Workshop II – Aug. 6-8 (Mon., Tues., Wed.)
- Workshop III – Aug. 8 (Wed., Thurs., Fri.)

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

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

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

### How do I register?

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

Local and county association presidents will receive registration brochures with detailed information on the 2018 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference. You must contact your local president and consult that brochure to learn more about lodging, daily schedules, accommodations for members with special needs, and registration.

### Scholarships

Scholarships are available for first-time attendees. See your local and/or county president for more information.

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**ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY**

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## 1. Now That I'm President, What Do I Do? (offered all sessions)

**PART 2 : 9/28-29 – 1-½ Day Workshop**

**For: New presidents**

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

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

**Resident: \$458\***  
**Commuter: \$371**

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

## 2. Vital Skills for Experienced Presidents (offered 8/8-10)

**For: Experienced presidents**

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

So you survived your first term or two as president and you didn't quit in spite of organizational issues, pressures, paperwork and power plays? Good for you! Come learn how to create trust, inspire enthusiasm, and win over skeptics so

someone else will want to step up to serve the membership when you decide to step down.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 3. Basic Treasurer's Training (offered 8/4-6 and 8/6-8)

**For: Local treasurers**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 4. Advanced Treasurer's Training (offered 8/8-10)

Prerequisite: Treasurers who have completed Basic Treasurer's Training

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

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

**Resident: \$397**  
**Commuter: \$357**

## 5. Basic Grievance Processing (offered all sessions)

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

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

Participants need to bring copies of their collective bargaining agreements.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 6. Advanced Grievance Processing (offered all sessions)

Prerequisite: Basic Grievance Processing or experience in processing grievances

Learn the skills needed, and why it is necessary, for the local association to present grievances effectively at the board of education level. Case studies and role playing will be utilized in group activities in order

for participants to present a grievance to a board of education. Participants will be instructed in the following concepts prior to preparing their cases: past practice, clear vs. ambiguous contract language, just cause standards, management rights, maintenance of benefits, and duty of fair representation.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 7. Legal Issues Affecting School Employees (offered 8/4-6 and 8/6-8)

**For: All members**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 8. Advanced Legal Issues (offered 8/8-10)

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



## Employees

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 9. PERC Law (offered 8/4-6 and 8/6-8)

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

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

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

**For: Association representatives; open to all members**

Learn the fundamentals and develop skills to become an association advocate. This program concentrates on contract enforcement, basic

school law, member benefits, membership promotion, emerging instructional issues, legislative action, and your state and national association.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 11. Basic Collective Bargaining (offered all sessions)

**For: New and inexperienced negotiators**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 12. Advanced Collective Bargaining (offered 8/4-6 and 8/6-8)

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

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

tough, legislation affecting bargaining, and bargaining health benefits.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 13. Basic Salary Guides (offered 8/4-6)

**For: New local negotiators preparing for successful salary negotiations**

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

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 14. Advanced Salary Guides (offered 8/6-8)

**Prerequisite: Basic Salary Guides**

The workshop will give participants an understanding of how salary guides are constructed and calculated. Participants will construct a base-year cost-out and salary guides for three additional years

on an Excel spreadsheet. Knowledge of how a spreadsheet functions is essential. This training will expand on issues raised in Basic Salary Guides, as well as explore additional concerns and techniques.

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

**Resident: \$397**  
**Commuter: \$357**

## 15. Bargaining Health Benefits (offered 8/6-8)

**For: Negotiators and leaders with interest in benefits**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 16. Minority Leadership Training for Emerging & Experienced Leaders (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**

Recognizing that NJEA's influence on public education is in direct proportion to an engaged membership, the Minority





Leadership Training (MLT) Program prepares ethnic-minority members to be strong leaders, advocates, and full participants in their association. Participants will be introduced to the skills necessary to become an effective leader in their school, community and association.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 17. Economic Inequality—Understanding the Common Cause of Threats to Public Education (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**



Our union has always fought to protect public education, public school employees, and the students and communities we serve. At the root of many of these fights has been structural economic inequality—and it is only getting worse. Join an informative session on economic inequality and become part of a growing movement to combat the root causes of our struggles. You will leave this workshop with the knowledge and confidence to discuss economic inequality with co-workers, friends and family.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 18. Engaging All Members (offered 8/8-10)

**For: All members**

Learn why membership matters and discover ways

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 19. Using PRIDE as Effective Organizing Tool for Your Local (offered 8/8-10)

**For: All members**



PRIDE and FAST are widely used across the state to engage the community (PRIDE) and families (FAST) in the positive work of our members. This session will prepare local leaders, PRIDE and FAST chairs, and committee members to build strong and successful programs, building our union power and member engagement in the union.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 20. Managing Conflict Effectively (offered 8/6-8 and 8/8-10)

**For: All members**

This workshop is designed to increase personal and association effectiveness in dealing with conflict in a

positive fashion. Participants will learn a variety of techniques that enhance this process by developing new strategies in identifying and handling conflict. Discussion will focus on what causes conflict and how better communication can help prevent or resolve conflict. This workshop is hands-on and interactive.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 21. Educational Support Professionals (ESP): You Are Essential, You Matter! (offered 8/3-5)

**For: ESP members**



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

This workshop has a special schedule. Registration is at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, August 3. It concludes with lunch on Sunday, August 5.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 22. Effective Political Advocacy Through Your Legislative Action Team (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**

If you are a member of your local or county Legislative Action Team (LAT), then

this workshop is for you! Learn how to build a robust LAT by recruiting volunteers, communicating effectively, organizing for action, and building and maintaining relationships with elected public officials. This training will give you the skills to make your voice heard.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 23. Advanced Political Advocacy Training for Legislative Action Teams (offered 8/6-8)

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

Take political action in your local to the next level by learning best practices for developing relationships with policymakers and influencing their decisions. Hone your organizing skills for use in issue campaigns and in the 2018 election.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 24. Policy Wonks (offered 8/8-10)

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

Dive deeper into the weeds of education policy issues and learn the backstory and impetus on pending legislation. Listen to and challenge policymakers, legislative staff, and issue experts. Go back to your



local “in the know” and ready to advocate!

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 25. Social Media for Local Associations (offered 8/8-10)

**For: Local association social media editors**

Learn how to successfully manage your local’s social media platforms to activate your membership, engage your community, and maximize your organizing efforts.

This workshop is for advanced social media users.

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

**Resident: \$397**  
**Commuter: \$357**

## 26. Using Evaluation as an Organizing Tool (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**

Several years into TEACHNJ, evaluation continues to provide challenges for both individual members and local leaders. This session will provide an overview of the evaluation statute and associated regulations, but more importantly strategies for organizing your members around effective and transparent evaluation practices.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 27. Organizing for Participatory Leadership (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 28. Organizing for Participatory Leadership Advanced: Planning and Harvesting (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**



If you have some experience with World Cafe, Open Space, Circle

Practice, or other hosting practices but have wondered about how to plan the right practice for the right project, or what to do with the harvest after the conversation is over, this workshop is for you. This workshop will focus on learning to design the right hosting practice, developing questions to lead you to the conversation you want to have, and using the information you harvest to plan next actions.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 29. Leadership Development 101—

## A Beginner’s Guide for Association Leaders (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 30. Organizing Around Special Education Issues (offered 8/8-10)

**For: All members**

This workshop will include a brief review of hot topics in special education. Participants will explore strategies to influence special education practices in their districts through association member engagement. Approaches to community organizing will also be covered.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 31. Advocating for Trauma Informed Care in Our Schools (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**



In this workshop, participants will briefly overview the Adverse Childhood

Experiences Study. Learn the impacts of trauma on the brain and the implications that it has in the classroom. Discuss how Restorative

Practices should be used as trauma-sensitive practices and procedures. Explore the next steps your local can take to effectively respond to students exposed to trauma.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

## 32. Websites for Associations (offered 8/6-8)

**For: Association editors and webmasters**

Have you been thinking of starting a website for your association but don’t know where to start? Do you already have a website but want to take it to the next level? NJEA’s affiliate website service has an easy-to-use page builder solution with new themes and features to do just that. This workshop will provide the opportunity for hands on instruction on the Wordpress platform and other digital communications tools. Attendees will use a web-based content management system to create and manage their association website. Some technology skills recommended.

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

**Resident: \$397**  
**Commuter: \$357**

## 33. How to Be a Powerful Public Speaker (offered 8/4-6)

**For: All members**

Learn how to look and sound your best when presenting to a group. Participants review techniques for preparing and delivering a speech. Each





speaker will be videotaped for a self and group critique.

Enrollment limited to 18 participants (one per local).

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

### 34. The Business of Membership Chairs (offered 8/4-6 and 8/6-8)

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



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

Please bring your own device (laptop, tablet, or phone). Part of the class will be spent online going through MARS on the Web.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

### 35. Health Benefits and Pensions for Your Local (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**

Become your local's go-to person for all of your members' health benefits and pension questions. Learn the ins and outs of what you need to know

when assisting your members in understanding health plan options, minimizing out-of-pocket health care costs, premium sharing contributions, preparing for retirement, understanding their pensions and more.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

### 36. Money Matters: Now and Later (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**

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

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**

### 37. NJ Public School Labor-Management Collaborative (offered 8/6-8)

**For: All members**



NJEA local associations across the state are participating in the NJ Public

School Labor-Management Collaborative, which trains members to build capacity for collaborative work in their locals. Leaders in these locals report increased levels of member participation in association work and increased voice in the district decision-making processes. In this session, participants will hear from local association leaders and members involved in the Collaborative and engage in an interactive look at the potential benefits of building collaborative networks and relationships in their local associations.

**Resident: \$297**  
**Commuter: \$257**



**To the Executive Committee and members of NJEA**

We have audited the accompanying consolidated financial statements of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, and the related consolidated statements of activities and of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

**Management's responsibility for the financial statements**

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

**Auditor's responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these

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

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to NJEA's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of NJEA's internal control. Accordingly, we express

no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.

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

**Opinion**

In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the New Jersey Education Association as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

**Novak Francella, LLC**

Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania  
December 8, 2017

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

	2017	2016
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 11,400,017	\$ 13,939,084
<b>RECEIVABLES:</b>		
Membership dues	281,001	365,897
Due from National Education Association	1,094,745	946,325
Contributions receivable	7,000	7,000
Advances to employees	61,734	57,916
Accrued investment income	68,298	46,825
Total receivables	1,512,778	1,423,963
Investments - at fair value	129,988,072	119,529,004
Prepaid expenses and other assets	4,170,570	2,334,527
<b>FIXED ASSETS - AT COST:</b>		
Land and buildings	21,806,447	21,835,690
Computer equipment	5,394,169	6,961,559
Furniture, equipment and vehicles	4,675,898	4,326,957
	31,876,514	33,124,206
Less: accumulated depreciation	(18,475,067)	(19,101,447)
Net fixed assets	13,401,447	14,022,759
Total assets	\$160,472,884	\$151,249,337
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>LIABILITIES:</b>		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,710,029	\$ 4,587,894
Unremitted National Education Association dues	545,481	425,064
Due to VEBa	-	1,024
Accrued expenses	110,732	34,357
Other current liabilities	-	200,691
Deferred revenue	1,315,336	1,279,061
Current maturity of capital lease obligations	322,426	206,585
Current portion of long-term debt	115,029	447,924
Long-term debt	-	115,191
Long-term liabilities	1,216,584	1,011,143
Accrued vacation	6,029,890	6,075,451
Accrued postretirement benefit cost—other	145,079,737	151,419,317
Accrued pension cost	39,898,367	65,288,478
Total liabilities	198,343,611	230,891,489
<b>NET ASSETS:</b>		
Unrestricted - operating	(42,171,139)	(82,391,087)
Temporarily restricted	1,316,172	25,000
Permanently restricted	2,984,240	2,723,935
Total net assets	(37,870,727)	(79,642,152)
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 160,472,884	\$ 151,249,337

**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS**

	2017	2016
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Cash received from		
Members' dues and representation fee payers	\$ 114,147,874	\$ 110,460,2569
Members' Pride dues	11,308,187	11,000,039
National Education Association	6,635,439	5,204,106
Conventions, conferences and other sources	1,937,000	2,024,870
Investment income	2,551,677	4,264,604
Cash paid for personnel costs	(64,187,072)	(62,394,275)
Cash paid to suppliers, vendors and service providers	(70,646,540)	(65,788,783)
Interest paid	(117,002)	(125,077)
Grants paid	(114,325)	(97,914)
Net cash provided by operating activities	1,515,238	4,547,826
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payments for the purchase of fixed assets	(1,200,079)	(1,191,498)
Payments for the purchase of investments	(14,998,162)	(19,333,583)
Proceeds from the sale of fixed assets	361,190	-
Proceeds from the sale of investments	12,447,554	15,061,777
Net cash used for investing activities	(3,389,497)	(5,463,304)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Principal payments on capital leases	(229,122)	(190,957)
Principal payments on long-term debt	(448,163)	(430,228)
Permanently restricted investment income	12,477	19,911
Net cash used for financing activities	(664,808)	(601,274)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(2,539,067)	(1,516,752)
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Beginning of year	13,939,084	15,455,836
End of year	\$11,400,017	\$13,939,084
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL SCHEDULE OF NON-CASH FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Capital expenditures funded by capital lease borrowings	\$ 707,498	\$ -
<b>RECONCILIATION OF INCREASE IN NET ASSETS TO NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Increase in net assets	\$ 6,418,181	\$ 5,355,029
Adjustments to reconcile increase in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Depreciation and amortization	2,176,564	2,049,573
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	(190,859)	-
Net realized and unrealized (gains) losses on investments	(7,883,559)	(2,379,270)
Temporarily restricted investment income	(12,477)	(19,911)
FASB ASC 715 adjustment	35,353,244	(61,777,290)
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase) decrease in receivables	(88,815)	(723,919)
(Increase) decrease in prepaid expenses and other assets	(1,836,043)	329,826
Increase in accounts payable and accrued expenses	(32,577,690)	63,164,290
Increase (decrease) in unremitted dues and deferred revenue	156,692	(1,450,502)
Total adjustments	(4,902,943)	(807,203)
Net cash provided by operating activities	\$1,515,238	\$4,547,826



# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2017 AND 2016

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

## CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

	2017				2016			
	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
REVENUE								
Membership dues	\$112,831,696	\$ -	\$ -	\$112,831,696	\$109,255,219	\$ -	\$ -	\$109,255,219
Pride dues	11,308,187	-	-	11,308,187	11,000,039	-	-	11,000,039
National Education Assn. grants and reimbursements	6,663,442	-	-	6,663,442	7,771,170	-	-	7,771,170
Conferences	891,642	-	-	891,642	850,731	-	-	850,731
Convention	592,096	-	-	592,096	611,533	-	-	611,533
Investment income	10,275,714	-	186,012	10,461,726	6,634,530	-	20,128	6,654,658
Representation fees	995,804	-	-	995,804	994,432	-	-	994,432
Member benefits income	102,524	-	-	102,524	88,810	-	-	88,810
Publication income	262,257	-	-	262,257	313,493	-	-	313,493
Contributions	-	76,013	-	76,013	-	117,036	-	117,036
Disaster Relief Fund	2,000	-	-	2,000	4,000	1,000	-	5,000
Other income	15,311	-	-	15,311	38,459	-	-	38,459
Net assets transferred to other funds (released from restrictions)	(1,289,452)	1,215,159	74,293	-	(76,592)	(113,605)	190,197	-
Total revenue	142,651,221	1,291,172	260,305	144,202,698	137,485,824	4,431	210,325	137,700,580
EXPENSES								
PROGRAM SERVICES:								
Governance	6,883,852	-	-	6,883,852	6,449,655	-	-	6,449,655
Executive organizational development	8,614,833	-	-	8,614,833	7,997,838	-	-	7,997,838
Uniserv								
Regional offices	20,573,429	-	-	20,573,429	20,777,073	-	-	20,777,073
Field office	6,560,036	-	-	6,560,036	6,490,911	-	-	6,490,911
Legal services	14,080,757	-	-	14,080,757	12,490,203	-	-	12,490,203
Communications	5,857,479	-	-	5,857,479	5,757,462	-	-	5,757,462
Professional development	4,557,296	-	-	4,557,296	4,549,349	-	-	4,549,349
Research and economics	5,171,183	-	-	5,171,183	5,157,654	-	-	5,157,654
Government relations	3,906,337	-	-	3,906,337	3,910,140	-	-	3,910,140
Conventions	3,324,725	-	-	3,324,725	2,745,215	-	-	2,745,215
Organizational services	7,202,273	-	-	7,202,273	6,916,262	-	-	6,916,262
Garden State Forward	3,990,562	-	-	3,990,562	3,728,320	-	-	3,728,320
Pride	11,520,602	-	-	11,520,602	11,440,508	-	-	11,440,508
Frederick L. Hipp Foundation	114,009	-	-	114,009	106,034	-	-	106,034
NJEA Affiliates Risk Purchasing Group	228,498	-	-	228,498	211,509	-	-	211,509
Disaster Relief	14,390	-	-	14,390	19,390	-	-	19,390
Total program services	102,600,261	-	-	102,600,261	98,747,523	-	-	98,747,523
ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL:								
Executive office	4,353,602	-	-	4,353,602	4,682,274	-	-	4,682,274
Business division	11,792,070	-	-	11,792,070	12,018,679	-	-	12,018,679
Total administrative and general	16,145,672	-	-	16,145,672	16,700,953	-	-	16,700,953
Expenses before depreciation, postretirement benefit cost, and net (gain) loss on disposal of fixed assets	118,745,933	-	-	118,745,933	115,448,476	-	-	115,448,476
Depreciation and amortization	2,176,564	-	-	2,176,564	2,049,573	-	-	2,049,573
Gain on disposal of fixed assets	(190,859)	-	-	(190,859)	-	-	-	-
Postretirement benefit cost	17,052,879	-	-	17,052,879	14,847,502	-	-	14,847,502
Total expenses	137,784,517	-	-	137,784,517	132,345,551	-	-	132,345,551
Increase (decrease) in net assets	4,866,704	1,291,172	260,305	6,418,181	5,140,273	4,431	210,325	5,355,029
Net assets at beginning of year	(82,391,087)	25,000	2,723,935	(79,642,152)	(25,754,070)	20,569	2,513,610	(23,219,891)
FASB ASC 715 other comprehensive income	35,353,244	-	-	35,353,244	(61,777,290)	-	-	(61,777,290)
Net assets at end of year	\$(42,171,139)	\$1,316,172	\$2,984,240	\$(37,870,727)	\$(82,391,087)	\$25,000	\$2,723,935	\$(79,642,152)

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

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

**Method of Accounting** - The financial statements are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting.

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

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

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

**Membership Dues** - Membership dues are recognized as revenue based on the membership period covered by the individual member's dues. Allowance for uncollectible accounts is considered unnecessary and is not provided.

**Fixed Assets** - Fixed assets are stated at cost. Major additions are capitalized while replacements, maintenance, and repairs which do not improve or extend the lives of the respective assets are charged to expense on a current basis. Depreciation and amortization of fixed assets are computed using the straight-line method at rates calculated to allocate the cost of the applicable assets over their estimated useful lives, which are generally from two to fifteen years on furnishings, fixtures, vehicles, and equipment, and from ten to fifty years on buildings and improvements. Depreciation and amortization expense totaled \$2,176,564 for the year ended August 31, 2017 and \$2,049,573 for 2016.

**Deferred Revenue** - Deferred revenue consists of exhibit fees, NEA grants and reimbursements, membership dues, subscriptions, and advertising received in advance.

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

**Functional Allocation of Expenses** - The costs of providing the various programs and other activities have been summarized on a functional basis in the consolidated statements of activities.

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

NJEA records all applicable contributions and donations received from members, the general public, and NJEA affiliates for the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund (the Disaster Relief Fund) (formerly the Hurricane Sandy Back to School Fund) as temporarily restricted net assets of NJEA. These contribu-

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

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

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

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

**Reclassification** - Certain reclassifications have been made to prior year amounts to conform to the current year presentation.

## NOTE 2. RECEIVABLES

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

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

## NOTE 3. INVESTMENTS

The following summary presents the cost and fair value for each of the investment categories as of August 31, 2017 and 2016

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

Investment income for the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016 consisted of the following:

	2017	2016
<b>UNRESTRICTED:</b>		
Interest and dividends	\$ 3,012,716	\$ 4,663,483
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	7,702,549	2,372,298
Investment fees	(439,551)	(401,251)
	<u>\$ 10,275,714</u>	<u>\$ 6,634,530</u>
<b>TEMPORARILY AND PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED:</b>		
Interest and dividends	12,476	19,911
Realized and unrealized gain (loss) on investments	180,995	6,972
Investment fees	(7,459)	(6,787)
	<u>\$ 186,012</u>	<u>\$ 20,128</u>



#### NOTE 4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

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

##### Basin of Fair Value Measurement:

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

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

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

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

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

#### FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2017:

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$62,832,264	\$62,832,264	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	30,421,819	30,421,819	-	-
International equity mutual fund	19,537,185	19,537,185	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	7,667,672	7,667,672	-	-
Short-term investments	191,219	191,219	-	-
Mortgage-backed security	77,996	-	77,996	-
Real estate limited partnership	9,259,917	-	-	9,259,917
	<u>\$129,988,072</u>	<u>\$120,650,159</u>	<u>\$77,996</u>	<u>\$9,259,917</u>

#### LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2017:

##### REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

Beginning balance	\$10,257,030
Realized gains	983,762
Unrealized loss	(80,875)
Sales	(1,900,000)
Ending balance	<u>\$9,259,917</u>

#### FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016:

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

#### LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2016:

##### REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP

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

#### THE UNFUNDED COMMITMENTS AND REDEMPTION INFORMATION ARE AS FOLLOWS AT AUGUST 31, 2017:

	Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice period
REAL ESTATE LIMITED PARTNERSHIP				
SEI Core Property Fund	\$9,259,917	\$ -	Quarterly	65 days*

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

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

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

For the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016 there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2, or 3.

The SEI Core Property Fund is measured at fair value, without adjustment by NJEA, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

#### NOTE 5. FIXED ASSETS

The following is a summary of fixed assets by category as of August 31, 2017 and 2016:

Category:	2017	2016
Buildings		
180 West State Street	\$12,705,216	\$12,408,020
186-190 West State Street	5,103,787	5,103,787
Regional offices	<u>3,006,877</u>	<u>3,204,169</u>
Total buildings	20,815,880	20,715,976
Land	\$ 990,567	\$ 1,119,714
Computer equipment	5,394,169	6,961,559
Furniture, equipment, and vehicles	<u>4,675,898</u>	<u>4,326,957</u>
Total fixed assets	31,876,514	33,124,206
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(18,475,067)</u>	<u>(19,101,447)</u>
Net fixed assets	<u>\$13,401,447</u>	<u>\$14,022,759</u>

#### NOTE 6. OBLIGATIONS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

NJEA is obligated under certain leases accounted for as operating leases. For the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016, rent expense relating to these leases amounted to \$1,587,275 and \$1,572,566, respectively. As of August 31, 2017, the future minimum rental payments required under these non-cancelable operating leases are as follows:

Year Ending August 31,	
2018	\$ 1,130,560
2019	750,660
2020	576,810
2021	448,760
2022	259,610
Thereafter	<u>226,100</u>
Total	<u>\$3,392,500</u>

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

**NOTE 7. LONG-TERM LIABILITIES**

Long-term liabilities as of August 31, 2017 and 2016 consist of deferred compensation arrangements of one former NJEA president totaling \$309,194 and \$284,293, respectively, and obligations under capital leases totaling \$1,229,817 and \$933,435 as of August 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

At August 31, 2017, the fixed assets under capital leases had an original

cost of \$1,616,776 and accumulated amortization of \$529,005, of which \$187,246 was charged to expense during the year ended August 31, 2017.

The following is a schedule by years of future minimum lease payments required under these capital leases with the present value of the net minimum lease payments as of August 31, 2017

**Year Ending August 31,**

2018	\$428,637
2019	428,637
2020	383,632
2021	122,369
2022	105,846
Total minimum lease payments	1,469,121
Less: Amount representing interest	(239,304)
Present value of net minimum lease payments	<u>\$ 1,229,817</u>

**NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POSTRETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS**

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

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
Projected benefit obligation at August 31	\$419,679,093	\$430,178,710	\$217,577,913	\$216,177,014
Fair value of plan assets at August 31	<u>379,780,726</u>	<u>364,890,232</u>	<u>72,498,176</u>	<u>64,757,697</u>
Funded status	<u>(39,898,367)</u>	<u>(65,288,478)</u>	<u>(145,079,737)</u>	<u>(151,419,317)</u>
Accumulated benefit obligation at August 31	<u>\$374,777,327</u>	<u>\$382,601,970</u>	<u>\$217,577,913</u>	<u>\$216,177,014</u>
Accrued benefit cost recognized in the consolidated statement of financial position	<u>\$(39,898,367)</u>	<u>\$(65,288,478)</u>	<u>\$(145,079,737)</u>	<u>\$(151,419,317)</u>

Amounts recognized as deductions from net assets include:

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$(7,376,303)	\$(7,950,334)
Net loss	<u>117,035,425</u>	<u>134,342,233</u>	<u>76,637,539</u>	<u>95,258,006</u>
	<u>\$ 17,035,425</u>	<u>\$ 134,342,233</u>	<u>\$ 69,261,236</u>	<u>\$ 87,307,672</u>

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

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
Prior service (credit) cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$(574,031)	\$(574,031)
Net loss	7,301,998	8,927,113	5,626,231	7,276,928

Weighted average assumptions at August 31

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
Discount rate	3.73 %	3.59 %	3.73 %	3.59 %
Expected return on plan assets	7.50	7.50	8.00	8.00
Rate of compensation increase	6.58	6.58	6.58	6.58

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

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

Age	Traditional	PPO	HMO	Current Retirees with New Post-65 Rx Plan
	with Old Post-65 Rx Plan			
55	\$13,807	\$ 14,559	\$ 14,044	\$ N/A
60	16,708	17,629	16,998	N/A
65	10,726	10,726	10,726	\$8,658
70	11,592	11,592	11,592	9,313
75	12,309	12,309	12,309	9,855
80	12,857	12,857	12,857	10,268

The healthcare trend rate has a significant effect on the amounts reported. If the assumed rate increased by one percentage point, that would increase the liability as of August 31, 2017 by \$43,286,734.

	Pension Benefits		Other Benefits	
	2017	2016	2017	2016
Net benefit cost expensed (periodic)	\$6,916,697	\$7,209,337	\$17,084,499	\$13,700,470
Benefit cost FASB ASC 715 (other)	(17,306,808)	25,167,364	(18,046,436)	36,609,926
Employer contributions	15,000,000	15,000,000	5,377,643	4,207,822
Plan participant contributions	1,106,297	1,113,940	-	-
Benefits paid	(18,338,406)	(14,250,969)	(4,949,681)	(4,397,609)

**Changes Since the Prior Valuation**

The discount rate assumption for the postretirement benefit plan was changed from 3.59% as of August 31, 2016 to 3.73% as of August 31, 2017 to match the discount rate used for the Sponsor's pension plan.

The Pension Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2017 and 2016 is 7.5%. The Other Postretirement Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption for 2017 and 2016 is 8%. As defined in FASB ASC 715, this assumption represents the rate of return on plan assets reflecting the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested or to be invested to provide for the benefits included in the benefit obligation. The assumption has been determined by reflecting expectations regarding future rates of return for the investment portfolio, with consideration given to the distribution of investments by asset class and historical rates of return for each individual asset class.



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

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

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

NJEA is recognizing the liability for an Officers' Compensation Plan during the year ended August 31, 2017. By policy, if the State denies NJEA Officers' pension service credit in its Public Employees System, NJEA provides a non-qualified deferred compensation benefit that is actuarially determined to be equivalent to the amount of public pension benefit he or she would have received based on such service credit. Beginning in 2011, the State has limited service credit to five years. As of August 31, 2017, the projected benefit obligation liability is \$700,486.

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

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

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

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

**Basis of Fair Value Measurement:**

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

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

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

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

**FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT AT AUGUST 31, 2017**

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations	\$46,406,705	\$46,406,705	\$-	\$-
Common collective trust - opportunity hedge fund of funds	29,219,107	-	-	29,219,107
Common collective trust - real estate	32,104,800	-	-	32,104,800
Equity mutual funds	34,142,077	34,142,077	-	-
International equity funds	31,718,681	31,718,681	-	-
Fixed income mutual funds	192,120,053	192,120,053	-	-
Balanced mutual fund	11,427,643	11,427,643	-	-
	<u>\$377,139,066</u>	<u>\$315,815,159</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>\$61,323,907</u>

**LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2017**

	Beginning Balance	Realized Gains (losses)	Unrealized Gains (losses)	Purchases	Sales/ Repayments	Ending Balance
Common collective trust - opportunity hedge fund of funds	\$26,358,544	\$ -	\$2,860,563	\$ -	\$ -	\$29,219,107
Common collective trust - real estate	29,521,577	-	2,583,223	-	-	32,104,800
Total	<u>\$55,880,121</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$5,443,786</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$61,323,907</u>

**FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT AT AUGUST 31, 2016**

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

**LEVEL 3 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS - AUGUST 31, 2016**

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

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

The SEI Opportunity Collective Fund and SEI Core Property Collective Investment Fund are measured at fair value, without adjustment by the Plan, based on the net asset value (NAV) or NAV equivalent as of August 31, 2017.

In accordance with relevant accounting standards, the unfunded commitments and redemption frequency information and redemption notice periods are as follows at August 31, 2017:

	Fair Value	Unfunded Commitments	Redemption Frequency	Redemption Notice Period
Common collective trust - opportunity hedge fund of funds:				
SEI Opportunity Collective Fund	\$29,219,107	\$ -	Biannually	95 days *
Common collective trust - real estate:				
SEI Core Property Collective Investment Trust	32,104,800	-	Quarterly	65 days #
Total	<u>\$61,323,907</u>	<u>\$ -</u>		

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

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

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

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

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

**FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2017**

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$15,493,053	\$15,493,053	\$-	\$-
Equity mutual funds	43,689,844	43,689,844	-	-
International mutual funds				
Equity	9,385,935	9,385,935	-	-
Fixed income	3,594,520	3,594,520	-	-
Money market mutual fund	334,175	334,175	-	-
	<u>\$72,497,527</u>	<u>\$72,497,527</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

**FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS AT AUGUST 31, 2016**

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Fixed income mutual funds	\$15,390,933	\$15,390,933	\$ -	\$ -
Equity mutual funds	35,830,310	35,830,310	-	-
Equity	9,368,450	9,368,450	-	-
Fixed income	199,992	199,992	-	-
Money market mutual fund	3,967,810	3,967,810	-	-
	<u>\$60,927,025</u>	<u>\$64,757,495</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

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**NOTE 8. DISCLOSURES ABOUT PENSION AND OTHER POST-RETIREMENT BENEFIT PLANS (CONTINUED)**

The amount expected to be contributed to the plans for the year ended August 31, 2018 for pension benefits is \$16,000,000. Benefits expected to be paid during the ensuing five years and thereafter are approximately as follows:

	Pension Benefits	Other Benefits
2018	\$ 16,948,306	\$ 5,099,681
2019	17,852,378	5,854,784
2020	18,733,406	6,252,127
2021	19,570,014	6,737,789
2022	20,345,085	7,374,320
2023-2027	<u>110,429,706</u>	<u>43,404,178</u>
	<u>\$203,878,895</u>	<u>\$74,722,879</u>

**NOTE 9. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES**

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

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

For the period April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017, NJEA designated \$345,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. For the period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018, NJEA designated \$356,000 of unrestricted net assets for the NEEAF to satisfy the membership requirement of the NEEAF by-laws. As of August 31, 2017 and 2016, there were no guaranteed loans to members outstanding.

**NOTE 10. LITIGATION**

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

**NOTE 11. TAX STATUS**

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

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

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

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

**NOTE 12. CASH CONCENTRATIONS**

NJEA places its cash with institutions deemed to be creditworthy. Cash balances may, at times, exceed insured deposit limits. As of August 31, 2017 and 2016, NJEA had cash totaling \$12,826,139 and \$13,763,488, respectively, in excess of FDIC insured coverage. This included the cash maintained in overnight sweeps accounts which invest in money market mutual funds which are not insured by the FDIC.

**NOTE 13. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

NJEA has a common officer with the New Jersey Education Association Member Benefit Fund (the Member Benefit Fund). During the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016, the Member Benefit Fund donated \$2,000 and \$4,000, respectively, to the NJEA Disaster Relief Fund.

NJEA has common officers with the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning (the Center). During the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016, NJEA donated \$500,000 and \$1,000,000, respectively, to the Center for the purpose of providing professional learning experiences, resources, and research to educators.

**NOTE 14. LONG-TERM DEBT**

During the year ended August 31, 2013, NJEA obtained a note payable from Beneficial Bank totaling \$1,900,000. This note requires monthly payments of \$38,505. The note payable has a variable interest rate and final payment is due on November 1, 2017. As of August 31, 2017 and 2016, the balance of the note payable was \$115,029 and \$563,115, respectively.

Interest payments for the note payable totaled \$14,350 and \$31,876 for the years ended August 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

As of August 31, 2017, the future minimum payments of the long-term debt are as follows:

<b>Year Ending August 31,</b>	
2018	<u>\$115,029</u>
Less: current portion	<u>(115,029)</u>
Long-term portion	<u>\$ _____</u>

**NOTE 15. LONG-TERM CAPITAL ASSETS**

Management has elected to designate a portion of NJEA's investments and investment income for the purchasing of long term capital assets. As of August 31, 2017 and 2016, investments designated for this purpose totaled \$47,534,214 and \$45,373,585, respectively. Investment income earned on the designated investments totaled \$5,613,548 and \$3,417,610 for the years ending August 31, 2017 and 2016, respectively.

**NOTE 16. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES**

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

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

**NOTE 17. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

NJEA has evaluated subsequent events through December 8, 2017, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and they have been evaluated in accordance with relevant accounting standards. 📅



# Workers' Memorial Day: A Time for Action

By Debra Coyle McFadden

You wake up in the morning and get ready to go to work. You check Facebook and Twitter one last time, say good-bye to your family, and walk out the door. You drive to work like you have a thousand times before and then enter your worksite. The difference on this day is you don't have the opportunity to go home at the end of the day because you die on the job.

Nationally, 5,190 workers never got to greet their loved ones at the end of the day with a hug and kiss in 2016. That same year, 101 workers in New Jersey were killed on the job, including 14 public employees according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Workers' Memorial Day is an annual day to honor those who lost their lives on the job, suffered a workplace injury or contracted an occupational illness. Workplace violence is a growing and serious threat for school staff as we were all reminded of again this past Valentine's Day when a gunman killed 17 people, including three teachers at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida.

## Hazards in New Jersey schools

Hazards in New Jersey schools affect large numbers of people and communities. New Jersey has 1.37 million students and 197,970 staff in 2,516 school buildings in 590 school districts. The state and school districts don't provide enough money to routinely maintain all these schools or build new ones when needed repairs are left undone. This is especially true in the 31 poorest districts in New Jersey, which depend on the Schools Development Authority funding for capital improvements and emergent repair projects.

Schools are up to four times more densely occupied than many offices, putting heavy demands on ventilation, mechanical, electrical, structural, and plumbing systems and on maintenance and cleaning staff. School hazards include disrepair, poor ventilation, unregulated temperatures, mold and moisture, toxic materials, dust, dirt, germs, pests and

pesticides, poor lighting, construction and renovation-related hazards, and environmental hazards from nearby factories, contaminated sites, and bus and truck exhaust. And this list is likely to get longer as extreme weather events and record-breaking temperatures erode or overburden schools.

Unhealthy schools can trigger asthma attacks, allergies, headaches, fatigue, nausea, rashes, and chronic illnesses, more medication use by children and staff, learning and behavioral difficulties, and lower achievement. According to the Healthy Schools Network, 60 percent of children suffer school-related health and learning problems. Asthma is the leading reason why children are absent from school, and asthma is the leading work-related disease of teachers and custodians. The rise in temperature caused by climate change exacerbates lung- and heart-related illnesses, making the unregulated temperatures and poor ventilation an even greater hazard.

"We have conditions in some of our public schools that are intolerable, ranging from extreme temperature variations to crumbling roofs, broken windows and indoor air quality that is very poor," noted Marie Blistan, president of NJEA at the 2015 Workers' Memorial Day March.

As we struggle with these school facility health and safety issues, including the rash of tragic school shootings around the country, Workers' Memorial Day is an important way to honor all staff and students whose lives have been lost or forever altered. It is a time to reflect, mourn and organize.

## Spend Earth Day honoring workers

On Sunday, April 22, Earth Day, the New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC), New Labor and more than twenty endorsing organizations, including NJEA, are holding a Workers' Memorial Day rally and march in New Brunswick. NJEA President Marie Blistan

is slated to speak. The event begins with a rally at 1 p.m. in Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple, followed by a march through the streets of New Brunswick.

This event will be a call for action to make our workplaces safer. It will also highlight the connection between climate change and worker health, and how the state can take action to combat climate change.

New Jersey's climate is already changing—the five warmest years on record have occurred since 1998 and nine of the 15 hottest summers have occurred since 1999. According to a 2017 New Jersey Climate and Health Profile Report produced by Rutgers University, within 50 years the number of days exceeding 90 degrees F will increase dramatically, with an additional 30-40 days in high elevation areas and 60-70 days in lower elevations, including the southern part of the state. Our schools already struggle with extreme temperatures, and this increase in extreme heat could potentially lead to more school closings as overburdened school heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems are further strained.

Climate change will also lead to more extreme and more severe weather events such as hurricanes, tornadoes and floods exacerbating, in some cases, already stressed facility conditions. After Superstorm Sandy, roughly half of all public schools in New Jersey were closed and didn't re-open until two weeks after the storm. Twelve schools remained closed for an extended period of time necessitating the relocation of staff and students.

This Workers' Memorial Day, we will rally and march to demand healthier and safer workplaces, including action on climate so that we can help prevent future weather disasters. 🇺🇸

*Debra Coyle McFadden is the assistant director of the New Jersey Work Environment Council and vice president of the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health.*

# Workers' Memorial Day is a time to reflect, mourn and organize.

**What local associations can do:**

1. Attend the April 22 Workers' Memorial Day Rally and March in New Brunswick.
2. Review NJEA Health and Safety Facts: Violence in Schools – Guideline for Local Leaders
3. Establish a districtwide health and safety team with regular meetings to proactively address issues.
4. Sign Jersey Renew's petition at [jerseyrenews.org/petition](http://jerseyrenews.org/petition) supporting state policy solutions for fighting climate change including to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to advance clean energy, and to secure good jobs and protections for workers and communities.

## Workers' Memorial Day

**Sunday, April 22**

Rally and march  
begin at 1 p.m.

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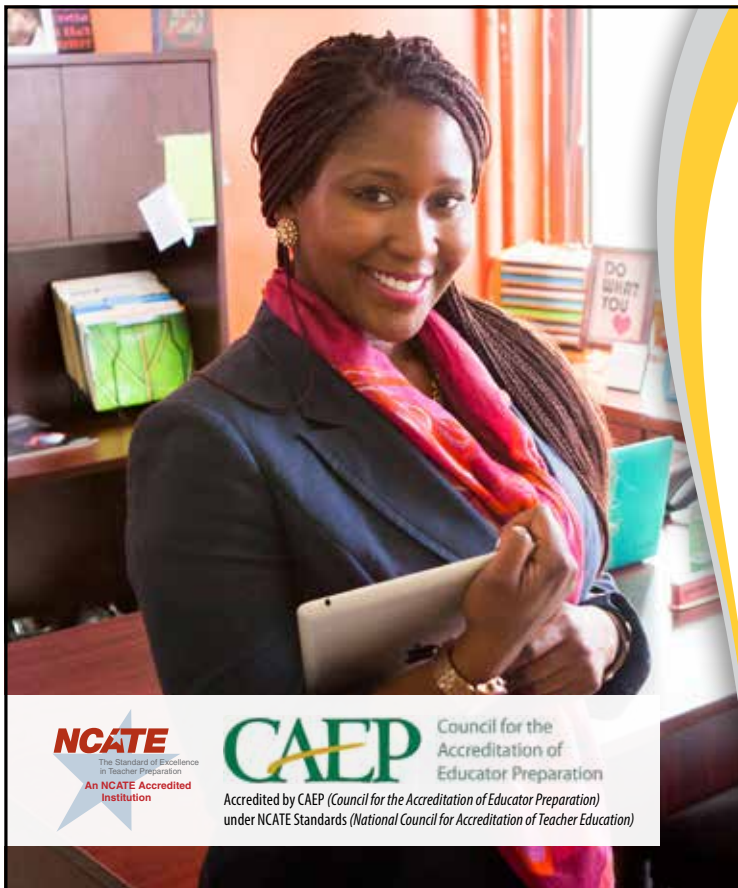
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# A CLOSER LOOK

## monthly highlights

This spring, "Classroom Close-up NJ" will highlight NJEA members from Cape May, Vineland, Fort Lee, Randolph, Clayton, Linden, Pennsauken and many more. You can watch inspiring stories about programs for gifted and talented, special education, STEM, STEAM and STREAM, college preparation, early education and social justice issues. Tune into NJTV every Sunday, and if you miss the show, go to [classroomcloseup.org](http://classroomcloseup.org) where you can watch, share and download every story. On April 1 and 8, NJTV is conducting its membership drive and the 7:30 p.m. airtimes will be pre-empted. Make sure you tune in to the earlier times at 7:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m.

## watch

### APRIL 1

Students in Andrea Davis' self-contained special education class at Middle Township Elementary School 1 in Cape May were distracted by parents lining up to pick up their children at the end of the school day. Accepting this as an unavoidable distraction, Davis and her colleagues turned it into a learning opportunity. Every Friday the students sell lemonade to the parents as they line up. The stand helps build communication skills and teaches them about running a business.

### APRIL 8

Rita Williams teaches her second graders at Dr. Gerald H. Woehr Elementary School in Plumsted Township about the Holocaust through art. Williams portrays Friedl Dicker-Brandeis who filled her suitcase with art projects to give children at the Terezin camp in the Czech Republic light and hope while in a place of horrible darkness. What's in your suitcase?

### APRIL 22

Meet Ocean City High School American Sign Language teacher Amy Andersen, this year's New Jersey Teacher of the Year. Amy invites two-year-old Cole to work with her sign language students to help them better understand the deaf community. Amy advocated for Cole to receive a paraprofessional to work with him at day care where he was isolated from all communications.

### 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.



APRIL 1



APRIL 8



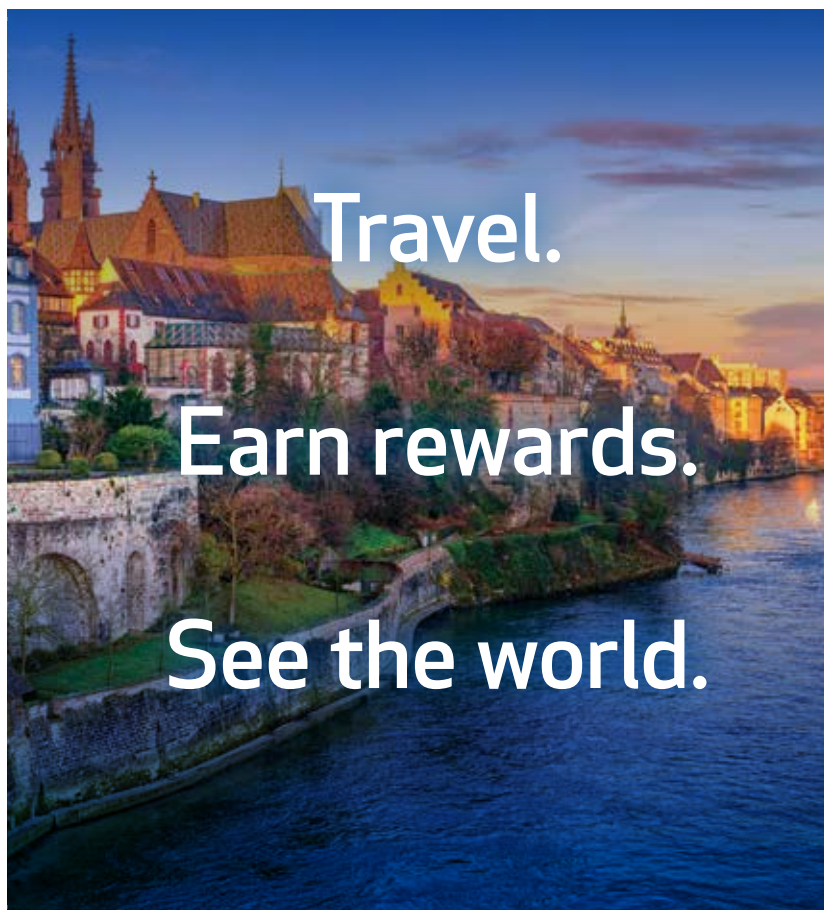
APRIL 22



[classroomcloseup.org](http://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.

APRIL 2018 53



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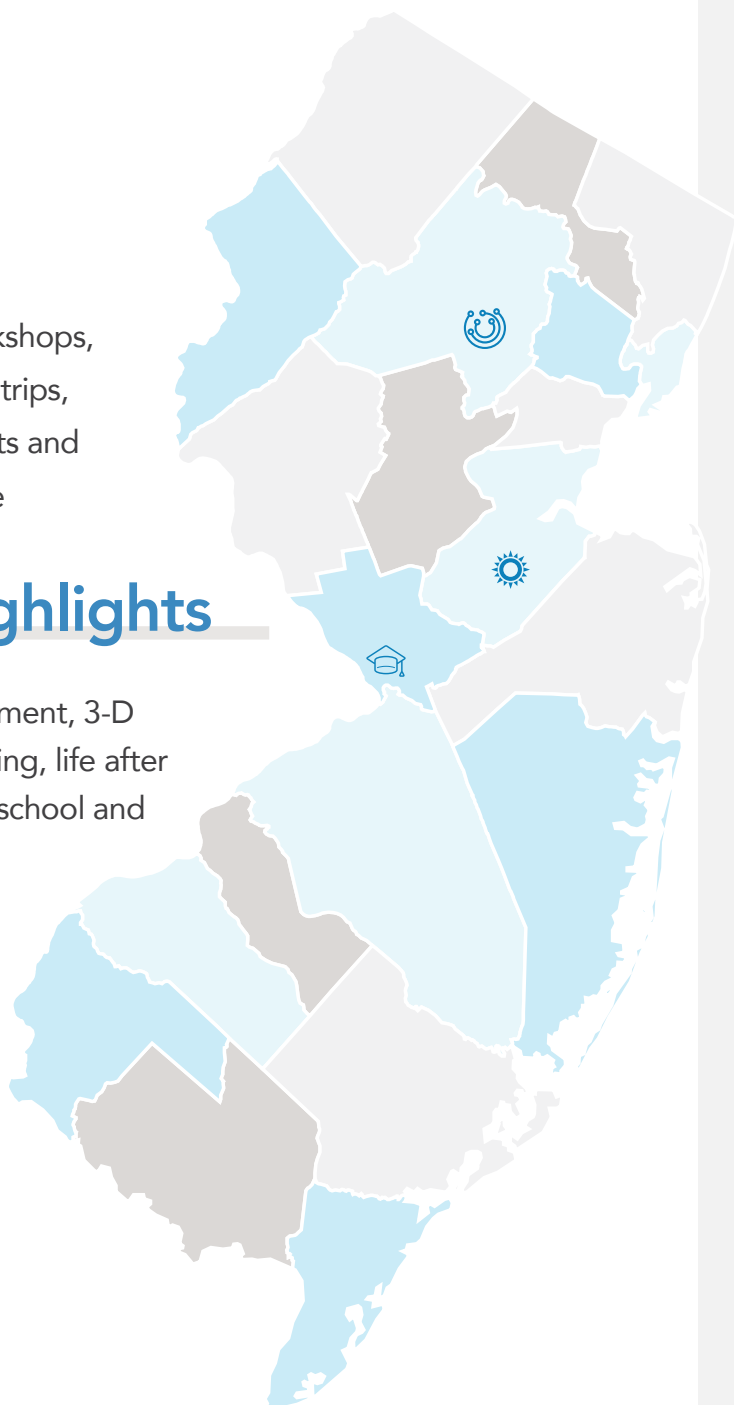
These experiences have been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on [NJEA.org](http://NJEA.org). Providers seeking endorsement should call NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.

# SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY:

Workshops,  
field trips,  
grants and  
more

## highlights

Argument, 3-D  
learning, life after  
high school and  
more



## showcase

### Teaching Argument in a Digital Age: A Series of Workshops for Educators

Drew University invites educators of Grades 3-12 for a pair of experiential workshops centered on teaching argument in a digital age.

In the age of instant updates, fake news, and mile-long comment pages, it can be hard to navigate what makes a good argument. Join #DrewTEACH for a pair of evening workshops in which participants will have the opportunity to be learners and makers. Our presenters are practicing teachers who have engaged in classroom inquiry, trained as teacher leaders, and presented teaching demonstrations in a variety of settings. All have completed training with the Digital Literacies Collaborative.

You may attend either or both workshops.

- April 27 – Loud Silence and Organized Chaos: Using digital discussion as a technique to promote the critical thinking and communication skills required for effective argumentative writing.
- May 10 – Teaching Argument with the Technology in Your Pocket: A lack of technology doesn't mean that students need to miss out on honing their digital literacy skills.

Held at Drew University, the workshops cost \$75 each. Contact Lauren King at [drewteach@drew.edu](mailto:drewteach@drew.edu) or 973-408-3760 for more information. You may also visit [www.drewteach.org](http://www.drewteach.org).

### NJSTA 2018 Summer Institute

#### 3-D Learning in Today's Science Classroom: Lessons that Develop Skills and Create Connections

The New Jersey Science Teacher Association's (NJSTA) 14th annual Maitland P. Simmons Memorial Award Summer Institute will be held June 25-29 on the Busch campus of Rutgers University. Middle school science teachers are encouraged to apply.

The five-day institute will investigate implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards and explore what three-dimensional learning means. Twenty-four educators will explore science lesson planning from a new perspective including opportunities for skill development, making connections to real world phenomena, and the implementation of educational technology.

Throughout the dynamic sessions, teachers will be offered opportunities to collaborate and enrich their ideas. The productive goal is to transform learning experiences into lessons. Educators will uncover new and innovative ways to craft student centered experiences that prepare all students for the future.

Teachers who are accepted for the institute must become NJSTA members in order to participate. A \$100 reservation fee is required, but will be refunded upon completion of the institute.

Contact Cheryl Zanone at 973-714-5771 or [njstasimmons@gmail.com](mailto:njstasimmons@gmail.com) for more information. Visit [njsta.org/simmons-institutes.html](http://njsta.org/simmons-institutes.html) to register. The registration deadline is May 31, 2018.

[Note: The February edition of the *NJEA Review* listed an incorrect month for the NJSTA Summer Institute. It is scheduled for June 25-29.]



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

### Life After High School-Transition Begins by Age 14

Educators of all grades are invited to the Learning Disabilities Association of New Jersey (LDANJ) Conference on June 3 at The College of New Jersey in Ewing.

With 32 sessions to choose from, the conference will offer a variety of workshops addressing the needs of students with learning disabilities and attention issues and/or related disorders for the transition to life after high school. Topics will include the difference between high school and college/work, student rights, internships, understanding executive function, transition IEPs, learning the soft skills, resilience, and more. Additionally, there will be time provided to visit the Vendor Expo to provide additional information and resources.

The cost is \$25 for students, \$50 for members, and \$75 for nonmembers. Breakfast and lunch are included. The registration deadline is May 31, 2018.

For more information, email [info@ldanj.org](mailto:info@ldanj.org) or call 732-991-9107. Visit [www.ldanj.org](http://www.ldanj.org) for conference and registration information. To register online, visit [www.ldanj603.eventbrite.com](http://www.ldanj603.eventbrite.com).

# More to learn across the state

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

Judy Freeman's 34th Annual Winners! Workshop: A Closer Look At The Year's Best Books For Children, Grades PreK-6 is an interactive, book-packed wow of a day with lively, concise, honest evaluations of 100 new and exemplary children's books—a wide ranging treasure trove of picture books, easy readers, fiction, nonfiction, biographies, and poetry books of 2017—chosen by well-known children's literature consultant, Judy Freeman, major professional journals, and awards committees as the year's "best."

Find all the details and registration at [www.JudyReadsBooks.com](http://www.JudyReadsBooks.com), and share the site with your colleagues and friends. It's a day to laugh, connect, share, and celebrate the latest literature titles and trends with leading teachers, public and school librarians, reading specialists, art teachers, and other children's book hounds. You can read Judy's latest news and fun at "Judy Freeman's Workshops, LLC" on Facebook.

#### Choose from three dates and venues:

Days run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

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

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

Go to [www.JudyReadsBooks.com](http://www.JudyReadsBooks.com) for details and a registration form.

### South Brunswick Technology and Learning Conference

Now in its fourth year, the South Brunswick Summer Technology & Learning Conference (TLC), was inspired by educators passionate about sharing and learning innovative ways for teaching students how to search, think deeply, invent and self-

direct their own learning. The two-day conference is designed to bring educators together for an inspiring day of sparking new ideas, conversation and collaboration. Taking place on June 26-27, Day 1 kicks off with a keynote address by Rich Czyz, author of *The Four O'Clock Faculty*. Participants can choose from over 50 breakout sessions, including 30 to 90 minute workshops, chat rooms, playrooms, a student expo and more. For more details and to register, visit [sbsummertech.weebly.com](http://sbsummertech.weebly.com).

### Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul Teacher Appreciation Tour

Tour includes TeachRock curriculum workshops

Little Steven and the Disciples of Soul have unveiled plans for a landmark live tour that will benefit TeachRock, the Rock and Roll Forever's national initiative to bring music curriculum into schools across the country. On this first of its kind tour, the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation will be presenting the TeachRock curriculum through professional development workshops for teachers that will take place at every stop of the 2018-19 tour.

Local educators who sign up for the free professional development sessions before each concert will receive a complimentary ticket to that evening's show.

#### The 2018 tour includes these New Jersey shows:

- April 29 – State Theatre in New Brunswick
- May 5 – Mayo PAC in Morristown

To find out more and sign up for a TeachRock workshop, visit [teachrock.org/tour](http://teachrock.org/tour). Tickets are limited for each show, so sign up today. The website also lists additional shows in New York City; Albany, New York; and Ridgefield, Connecticut.

### 2018 Trans Youth Forum slated for April 21

GLSEN Central New Jersey, HiTOPS, and Garden State Equality will present a daylong conference focused on the concerns of transgender and gender-expansive students on April 21, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at New Brunswick High School, 1000 Somerset St in New Brunswick.

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Students, parents, educators, and supporters are invited to attend. The conference theme “United We Fight, Together We Rise: Empowerment Through Community” sets the stage for the program of workshop sessions for middle and high school students. There will also be activities for elementary-age students with parents and an educator symposium.

The educator symposium will include sessions presented by educators experienced in LGBTQ inclusive teaching and counseling, a mental health professional with broad experience addressing issues of transgender youth clients, a panel of transgender and gender-expansive students and their parents, and a review of legal requirements in New Jersey for school districts as presented in the 2017 law that will bring about directives from the New Jersey Department of Education regarding transgender students.

This program addresses concerns of teachers, counselors, and administrators. All youth-serving professionals and interested persons are invited to attend these sessions. A certificate of attendance will be provided for participants. Further information about the educator symposium can be addressed to GLSEN Central New Jersey at [centralnj@chapters.glsen.org](mailto:centralnj@chapters.glsen.org) with the subject Trans Youth Forum.

Registrations are made by visiting the Trans Youth Forum website at [www.njtyf.org](http://www.njtyf.org). Fees for registration are \$20 for youth and \$50 for adults. No youth is turned away for lack of ability to pay. All attendees should register, but note the item on the form that allows students to request a full scholarship or reduced fee. Registration forms for vendors, advertisers, and volunteers for this event are also available on the website.

## Math workshops offered at Rutgers

The Association of Mathematics Teachers of New Jersey (AMTNJ), with the cooperation of the Rutgers Department of Mathematics and the Center for Discrete Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science (DIMACS), is offering math workshops for elementary, middle and high school teachers. The workshops are held on Rutgers’ Busch Campus and run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Following are workshops offered in April and May. Workshops in March can be reviewed at the indicated websites.

### High school workshops

- Apr 3: Building Bridges in Secondary Mathematics Classes - Creating an Environment to Facilitate the “Mathematical Practices” in the Standards, Grades 9-12
- Apr 10: Geometry Today, Grades 8-12
- Apr 12: Formative Assessment, Productive Struggle, and Student Discourse, Grades 6-12
- Apr 18: Developing Mathematical Habits of the Mind: Thinking the Math as well as Doing the Math, Grades 9-12
- Apr 20: A Survey of Vertex-Edge Graphs, Grades 6-12
- Apr 27: Simple Hands-on Activities for Sixth through Ninth Grade Math Students, Grades 6-9
- May 1: Simple Hands-on Activities for Tenth through Twelfth Grade Math Students, Grades 10-12
- May 4: Precalculus and Astronomy: A Match Made in the Heavens! Grades 10-12
- May 8: Physics for Math Teachers, Grades 9-12

Registration and information: [dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-9-12-workshops](http://dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-9-12-workshops)

### Middle school workshops

- Apr 10: Geometry Today, Grades 8-12
- Apr 12: Formative Assessment, Productive Struggle, and Student Discourse, Grades 6-12
- Apr 20: A Survey of Vertex-Edge Graphs, Grades 6-12
- Apr 24: Visualizing Fractions! Grades 4-8
- Apr 27: Simple Hands-on Activities for Sixth through Ninth Grade Math Students, Grades 6-9

Registration and information: [dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-6-8-workshops](http://dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-6-8-workshops)

### Elementary school workshops

- Apr 9: Mastering Math Facts and “Perfecting” Place Value: Improving the Teaching of Foundational Skills, Grades 1-3
- Apr 13: Shift Your Problem Solving Paradigm, Grades 3-5
- Apr 24: Visualizing Fractions! Grades 4-8

Registration and information: [dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-K-5-workshops](http://dimacs.rutgers.edu/grades-K-5-workshops)

## NJTESOL/NJBE Spring Conference: Cross-Curricular Conversations for ELLs

PreK-12 teachers are invited to attend “Cross-Curricular Conversations for ELL” (English language learners) on May 30, May

31, and June 1 at the Hyatt Hotel in New Brunswick. We have special strands for advocacy, STEM, and biliteracy. There will be plenty of workshops for teachers to attend that will address teaching strategies, parent involvement, special education, technology, advocacy and classroom management. All workshops will have a focus on ESL (English as a Second Language) or bilingual education.

You may register at [njtesol-njbe.org/basic2-4](http://njtesol-njbe.org/basic2-4).

The cost to attend depends on the number of days you would like to attend and NJTESOL/NJBE membership.

Please contact Caia Schlessinger at [cschlessinger@njtesol-njbe.org](mailto:cschlessinger@njtesol-njbe.org).

## Free special event and lecture series at Camden County College

At its Blackwood campus, the Camden County College Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility will offer a free book special events and a series of lectures.

### Book discussion

- April 5 – Letters to a Young Muslim: Book Discussion

### Free lecture series: Terror in the Twenty-First Century – Al Qaeda, Isis and Their Affiliates

- April 11 – Inside the Caliphate: What ISIS Wants and How It Finally Can Be Stopped
- April 25 – Al Qaeda

### Art in the Evening

- April 5 – Thomas Moran

### Addictions awareness series

- April 18 – Professional Ethics
- May 16 – Neuroplasticity

### Intro to Child Abuse and Bullying Prevention

- April 3 – CAP’s Empowerment Theory: Keeping Your Children Safe, Strong and Free
- April 19 – No Means NO – Consent and Other Boundaries for Teens
- April 24 – Preventing Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)
- May 1 – Empowering Students in a Cyber-World
- May 8 – Trafficking Teens and Children in New Jersey

Visit [www.camdencc.edu/civiccenter](http://www.camdencc.edu/civiccenter) or call (856) 227-7200, ext. 4333 for further details. 📞

# NJREA

Past, present and future

## Around the counties

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

### Enrollment in Medicare

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

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

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

Members currently receiving Social Security retirement benefits will be automatically enrolled in both Medicare Part A and Part B. They do not need to contact anyone. They will receive a package in the mail three months before their 65th birthday with the new Medicare card.

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

In order to continue post-retirement medical benefits without interruption, when a Medicare-eligible member or dependent receives his/her Medicare card, he or she must send a copy of the card showing proof of enrollment in Parts A and B to the Division of Pensions and Benefits. If this is not done before they are eligible for Medicare, their health benefits could be temporarily terminated. However, retirees enrolled in SEHBP should not sign up for alternate supplemental Medicare coverage. Enrollment in another plan would result in the loss of SEHBP coverage.

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

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

Join **BERGEN COUNTY REA** for its next meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 8 at Seasons in Washington Township. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Rina Goldman at 201-660-8200.

**BURLINGTON COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 10 at Marco's at the Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. An NJEA Member Benefits fair will be held. The cost is \$10. To attend, call Doriann Swern at 856-722-8952.

**CAMDEN COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming breakfast workshop on Wednesday, April 25 at the CCCEA office in Voorhees. For additional information see article in CCCEA newsletter. To attend, call Jeanne Kiefner at 856-428-0372.

**CCREA** will hold its next spring meeting/luncheon on Monday, May 7 at Palace Caterers in Blackwood. An NJEA representative will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Barbara Haase at 856-627-3391.

Join **CAPE MAY COUNTY REA** for its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 9 at the Avalon Links Restaurant in Swainton. Local legislators have been invited and county REA officer elections will take place. The cost is \$10. To attend, call Diane Church at 609-884-7800.

**ESSEX COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its annual spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 16 at the Hanover Manor in East Hanover. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Beverly Johnson-Showers at 862-955-4133.



PHOTO AT LEFT: NJREA members and Suncoast NEA-Retired members celebrate Read Across America on March 2. Along with 10 members of the Suncoast NEA-Retired, they read and distributed "goody" bags, which included a new book for K-3 students from the Sarasota Boys and Girls Club. Seated from left: Jane Paulishek and Joan Maison. Standing: Yvonne Noelle, Georgeanna Lewis and Frank Walsh participated at the North Sarasota Library on March 2.



**GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Thursday, May 10 at Nicolosi Catering in Woodbury. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Candy Zachowski at 856-228-6854.

**HUDSON COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 2 at La Reggia Restaurant in Secaucus. NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty will be the guest speaker, and election of HCREA officers will take place. The cost is \$36 for members and \$41 for nonmembers. To attend, call Arlene Brown at 732-493-0662.

**HCREA** will also hold its annual cocktail party on Friday, June 8 at LaReggia Restaurant in Secaucus. To reserve, call Jackie Tuzzio at 201-348-0862.

**HUNTERDON COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, April 24 at the Mountain View Chalet in Asbury. Member Benefits will be the topic of discussion. To attend, call Doreen Bleck at 908-399-4737.

**MERCER COUNTY REA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. NJEA representatives will be discussing current issues affecting retirees. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Pat Durastanti at 609-737-7992.

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, June 7 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. The annual MCREA scholarship will be awarded and MCREA officers will be installed. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

**MONMOUTH COUNTY REA's** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 10 at Branches in West Long Branch. An NJEA Member Benefits fair will be held.

**MCREA** will also hold its next meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, June 5 at Spring Lake Manor in Spring Lake. New MCREA officers will be installed and a philanthropic award will be presented. The cost for each event is \$30. To attend either, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

**MORRIS COUNTY REA** will hold its scholarship fundraiser on Friday, April 20 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Marianne Dispenziere at 862-684-3818.

**MCREA's** spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The cost for this event is \$30 for members and \$35 for nonmembers. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

**OCEAN COUNTY REA** invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 10 at Jack Baker's Lobster Shanty in Point Pleasant. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

Join **SALEM COUNTY REA** for its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 16 at St. John's Episcopal Church in Salem. Representatives from various senior organizations will be present. The cost is \$16. To attend, call Peggy Kavanaugh at 856-935-0075.

**SOMERSET COUNTY REA's** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 2 at the Elks Club in Bridgewater. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-359-2870.

**UNION COUNTY REA** invites you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 15 at The Westwood in Garwood. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Donna Mertz-Burkhardt at 908-686-2390.

**WARREN COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, June 6 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995. For more information, visit [www.wcrea-njea.org](http://www.wcrea-njea.org).

The next meeting/luncheon of the **NJRE-CENTRAL FLORIDA** is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18 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. 📍

## Summer Workshops in Orton Gillingham Instruction



**Registration is now open for:**

**Classroom Educator  
Associate Level Part 1  
Monday, July 9 - Friday, July 13  
8:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**Associate Level 2  
Monday, July 23 - Friday, July 27  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm**

**Certified Level Part 1  
Monday, Aug 6 - Sat, Aug. 11  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm**

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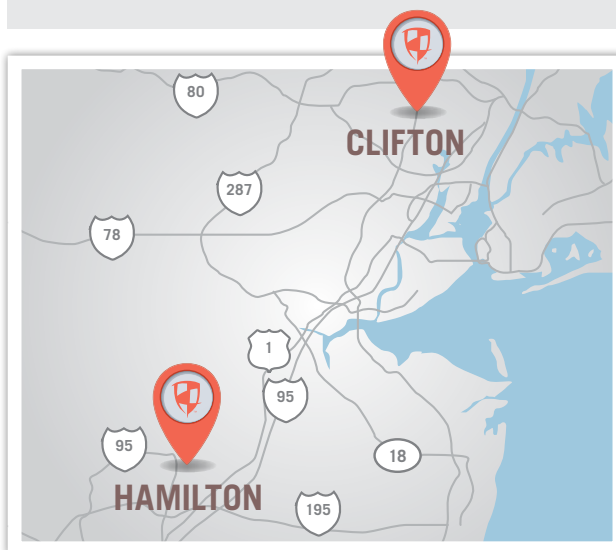
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– Pearl Guerzon, M.D., Paladina Health's Clifton doctor



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If you need to print a new card with all of the phone numbers, simply follow these steps:

1. Log onto [memberbenefits.njea.org](http://memberbenefits.njea.org). Your PIN is the six-digit alphanumeric code on your NJEA card or your email address as reported by you in our membership system. Your password is the last four digits of your Social Security number unless you changed it.

2. On the Member Benefits page you will find

links to hundreds of offers for savings. There is a link to Buyer's Edge, Inc as you scroll down the page. Click it.

3. On the Buyer's Edge, Inc. page, you will see a drop-down menu called "How to Shop Buyer's Edge." Select "Print Benefit Phone #s." A full page of instructions and phone numbers followed by a new wallet card can be printed.

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- Home Security – 888-995-2661

- Kitchens and Bath – 800-327-3599
- Pet Insurance – 877-738-7874
- Real Estate – 800-232-6766
- Solar Electricity – 800-558-1920
- Travel – 800-634-8538

There are more categories of Buyer's Edge, Inc. savings. Check online for the full list.

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

## April Web Giveaway

One winner will receive:

A **BOSE Sound Link Color Bluetooth Speaker II** (choice of Aquatic Blue, Coral Red or Black) from Buyer's Edge, Inc.\*\*

## Recent winner:

**Joan Wright** of the Middlesex Co. Ret. EA won \$150 credit toward income tax return preparation from H&R Block\* and \$100 Visa gift card from the NEA Retirement Program. Joan is a repeat winner, demonstrating that good things can happen by visiting [njea.org/memberbenefits](http://njea.org/memberbenefits) regularly.

Be sure to **register online** each month for the web giveaway!

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

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# Speak out!

## If the armed forces have gun control, so can we

By Gary Mazurek, Linden Education Association

I am a father to a beautiful daughter who attends a public middle school. Every day, 100 young learners come to my classroom with the belief that they will not only feel safe and secure, but mature and grow. With the tragedy in Florida, I resolved to remind everyone #NEVERAGAIN.

Every school day, I take daily walks during my lunch for 17 minutes, which gives me time to reflect, write and speak to our elected representatives. I tag it #WALKSEVENTEEN, which I post on social media after I complete each walk. With the dizzying effects of social media and the 24-hour news cycle, with so many opining, some wildly, like a need to “bring back the wooden spoon,” others deliriously, like the proposal to “arm teachers,” I resolved to be relentless.

During several walks, I completed the following, which I published on Facebook and submitted as an opinion-editorial to the *Star-Ledger*. To what extent I am preaching to the choir, I know not, but I felt a need to share at the NJEA Delegate Assembly, and here in our *NJEA Review*:

If the armed forces have gun control, so can we.

I was a U.S. Army Infantryman. After 12 weeks of intense, daily training—in the Georgian heat at Fort Benning—I was assigned an M16A2. When stationed in Berlin, on days in which we performed combat exercises, we waited at the vault in our barracks. The barracks had a door like the ones you find at banks that opened to a steel cage door. Behind it, our rifles were stored, padlocked on shelves, protected by foot-thick concrete and an alarm system.

We would sign out our weapons, and head for training either in the field, where blank ammunition waited, or, if we trained with live rounds, at a range that was heavily supervised. The ammunition remained on the firing line. In both circumstances, when we finished, our chambers were inspected, and magazines cleared. If we were caught with either type of munition, we should expect court martial.

In 1994, President Bill Clinton, the commander in chief, the leader of the armed forces, visited Berlin. The Secret Service removed the bolts out of every single rifle.

**Combat weapons belong only on the fields of combat.**

Amry veteran and teacher Gary Mazurek discusses gun control with NJEA Delegate Assembly members on March 10.



**Laws govern even the most highly trained, disciplined, and trusted people to shoulder weapons.**

**Why? Because anything else is toxic lunacy.**

Soldiers, like civilians, lose loved ones, endure divorce, dislike colleagues, and suffer traumatic, life-altering events. In the Army, as in any profession, any institution, any society, our ranks had the disaffected and alienated, alcoholics and drug addicts, domestic abusers and law-breakers. But, the military is enlightened, whereas we, in “civil” society, are not: combat weapons belong only on the fields of combat.

So, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, prohibitions—or in short—laws govern even the most highly trained, disciplined, and trusted people to shoulder weapons. Why? Because anything else is toxic lunacy.

Today in Florida, a 19-year-old can buy a Smith & Wesson M&P 15 .223 and unlimited combat ammunition as easily as he buys a Nutter Butter, a Big Gulp, and a Slim Jim at a 7-11 or a Piggly Wiggly, then extinguish 17 lives. A professional gambler can amass an arsenal larger than what lay behind our barracks’ vault door, and maim and murder hundreds of concert goers in minutes. A pedestrian can buy a Sig Sauer and a Glock at a gun bodega,

then slaughter over 50 people. A man, who cracked his stepson’s skull, and received a dishonorable discharge cleared a federal background check and rained terror in a church. A “radicalized” couple bought two handguns, and “borrowed” two killing machines from a friend, then massacred colleagues. A man depraved and deranged, but sober enough to grab his mother’s unsecured killing machine, which she trained him to use, put bullets in her, then drove to his former grammar school and butchered 6 and 7 year old school children. And on, and on, and on...

All counterarguments, especially the whimpers of “Laws would not have stopped...” which is essentially a call for lawlessness and anarchy—at least concerning the realm of weapons production, distribution, and consumption is concerned—are ever more confusing and bewildering, deliberately in my opinion, for a disenchanting citizenry. 🇺🇸

*Gary Mazurek addressed the NJEA Delegate Assembly on March 10, delivering the statement above. He is a member of the Linden Education Association and a history teacher at Linden High School. He can be reached at mister.mazurek@gmail.com.*

# Staff News



NJEA welcomed **EDWARD LESSER** as a temporary UniServ field representative in the Region 20 office in Jersey City on Feb. 1. Lesser has been an NJEA UniServ consultant since February 2014, first working in the Region 27 in Wayne, followed by the Region 21 office in Livingston. Lesser was a

teacher in Paterson Public Schools for 31 years, where he taught science—principally A.P. Chemistry and Dual Enrollment Chemistry. During that time, he was also an adjunct professor at Passaic County Community College for 20 years. In addition, Lesser taught Marine Biology at the University of Bogota in Cartagena, Columbia. Prior to teaching in South America, he was a Peace Corps volunteer who worked with subsistence fishermen in the Colombian maritime.

Lesser holds bachelor's and master's degree in environmental science earned from Rutgers and the University of Connecticut respectively. He lives in Boonton with his wife, Rita.



NJEA welcomed **MICHAEL ROLLINS** as a field representative in the Organizational Development unit of the NJEA Executive Office on Feb. 20. Rollins has worked in public education for over 22 years as an attendance officer for the East Orange Board of Education. In that role he served as liaison to the community of East Orange.

Rollins has also worked closely with the Essex County Democrats.

Rollins has been NJEA Organizational Development consultant since December 2015. In this role, he participated in the NJEA Summer Fellows program, helped members and leaders through privatization fights, and worked on the development and implementation of new health and safety programs. Rollins was the president of the East Orange Resource Professionals Association for the past five years and also served as Essex County 2nd Vice President. He lives in Orange with his wife, Lawana.



NJEA welcomed **TED TYMPANICK** who joined full-time NJEA staff as a UniServ field representative in the Region 15 office in Cranford on March 16. Tympanick has been a social studies teacher at Piscataway High School since 2003. For nearly six years, he has served as president of the Piscataway Township

Education Association. Since 2015, Tympanick has been a part-time UniServ consultant assigned to the Region 11/12 office in Edison. He attended the John V. Warms Union School Program in 2014. Tympanick holds a bachelor's degree in history and education from Kean University.

He lives in South Amboy with his wife, Courtney, and their son, Luke.



NJEA welcomed **JAIME VALENTE** as a field representative in the Organizational Development unit of the NJEA Executive Office on Feb. 20. Valente also served as an NJEA Organizational Development consultant since December 2015. Valente has over 12 years of teaching experience in public education.

He has been employed as the director of performing arts at the Teaneck Community Charter School since September 2009. Prior to that, he worked as an educator in the Penns Grove and Monroe Township (Gloucester) in New Jersey and Newark in Delaware. He served as president of the Teaneck Community Charter Education Association and chair of the NJEA Public Charter School Members Work Group.

From Rowan University, Valente holds a bachelor's degree in music education and a master's degree in teacher leadership. He resides in Hackensack with his wife, Brittney Hamilton. 🏠





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## 4/2

Monday

Balloting for  
NJEA elections  
begins

## 4/13-14

Fri. & Sat.

Higher Education  
Conference

## 4/16

Monday

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NJEA elections  
ends

## 4/18

Monday

NJEA  
Executive  
Committee  
Meeting

## 4/21

Saturday

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## 4/24

Tuesday

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Operating  
Committee

## 4/27-28

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Leadership and  
Recruitment  
Conference

## 5/5

Saturday

Communications  
Tools  
Workshop

## 5/18

Friday

Executive  
Committee  
Meeting

## 5/19

Saturday

Delegate  
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Meeting

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## deadlines

### 4/13

Minority Leadership  
and Recruitment  
Conference

**Event Dates: May 5-6**

### 4/16

Communications  
Tools Workshop

**Event Date: May 5**



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# Murphy's budget address a breath of fresh air

When Gov. Phil Murphy approached the Speaker's podium in the Statehouse General Assembly chamber to deliver his first budget on March 13, one thing was certain: public employees in general, and NJEA members in particular, would not have to brace themselves for an anti-public education, anti-public worker tirade. For the first time in eight years, we have a governor who routinely praises the work of teachers, educational support professionals and all public employees.

Murphy did not use this speech to pit one group of New Jersey residents against another. Instead he spoke with optimism about what makes New Jersey a great place to live, work and raise a family, identifying our schools in the mix.

"We must once again promote our talented residents, our infrastructure, our schools, our location and our diversity—everything that makes New Jersey a world-class place for business," the governor said as he questioned over-reliance on tax incentives alone to attract corporate investment to the state.

When addressing funding for the state's pension systems, the governor talked about "our responsibility to our public employees," noting that, "For too long, our public workers have been blamed for every problem under the sun." Gone was the rhetoric attacking NJEA members and other public workers for seeking nothing more than the pensions they had earned and to which they had contributed throughout their careers.

Finally, near the end of his budget address, he again tipped his hat to public education at all levels: "I am as optimistic as ever about our economic future. New Jersey is blessed with tremendous economic advantages—among the most educated workforces in the world, a location 49 other states would gladly trade-in for, and *top-tier public schools, colleges and universities*, just to name a few."


But kind words were not all the governor had to offer. Murphy's words were backed up by sound fiscal policy proposals. His proposed budget is a responsible plan that invests in the state's future and the working families who make our state strong. The spending

plan laid out by Murphy takes a large step toward meeting the state's current obligations while preparing to keep its promises for the future.

The proposed budget allocates \$3.2 billion for pension funding, a move that will help to restore the state's credit rating and restore confidence in the state's commitment to meeting its obligations and its ability to do so. It begins a four-year phase-in to full funding of the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA). It provides an additional \$283 million in K-12 school aid in this budget and ensures that no district gets less aid than last year, while providing 94 percent of districts with more aid than the current year's budget.

Murphy's budget allocates \$57 million more to expand Pre-K, the largest increase in a decade. In keeping with another of his campaign promises, the proposed budget includes significant increases for higher education, including \$50 million for tuition-free community college for families earning less than \$45,000 per year. It also increases the Tuition Aid Grant by \$7.5 million and the Educational

Opportunity Fund by \$1.5 million.

Of course the governor's budget proposal is only the first step in a negotiation process with the Legislature that will likely take us through June before a final budget is signed into law. But it is a refreshing change to begin with a budget proposal that recognizes the importance of the role public schools, and the people who work in them, play in making New Jersey the great state that it is. 

"We must once again **promote** our talented residents, our infrastructure, our **schools**, our location and our **diversity**—everything that makes **New Jersey** a world-class place for business."

"I am as **optimistic** as ever about our economic future. New Jersey is blessed with tremendous economic advantages—among the most educated workforces in the world, a location 49 other states would gladly trade-in for, and **top-tier public schools, colleges and universities**, just to name a few."

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