

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW

MARCH
2019

njea.org



an education and advocacy resource

EAST
BRUNSWICK
EA BEAR'S
DEN

WHEN
CONFERENCES
TURN SOUR

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CELEBRATE
A CENTURY
OF WOMEN'S
SUFFRAGE

THERAPY
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ABOVE: Deionne and Tiffanie Thrbak, a Bridgeton Education Association member and special education teacher, prepare to attend the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration. The event came at the conclusion of the NJEA Equity Alliance Weekend. For more, see Page 18.

BELOW: The Ocean County Retired Educators Association has a meeting of its Communications Committee on Jan. 8. The committee discussed improvements to the OCREA newsletter, *The Wavelet*. NJEA staff members Tara Buck and Diane Barry assisted them.



NJEA members from throughout the state gathered at NJEA headquarters on Feb. 6 to discuss strategies in the ongoing campaign to pass legislation that provides relief from Chapter 78 and job justice for educational support professionals. See Page 20 for more on the campaign.

LEFT: NJEA's first cohort of ACE Interface presenters received intensive training over three days in February. The program will enable those trained to educate the greater NJEA membership on the content of the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study and its implications for educating students who experience trauma. NJEA Professional Development staff, NJEA Professional Development Consultants, and NJEA Priority Schools Consultants participated.



Students in Katherine Irwin's class at Emma C. Attales Middle School in Absecon read with a therapy dog named Hope. Two Greater Swiss mountain dogs are making a difference in the school climate in Absecon's public schools. Read more about this program starting on Page 29.

FEATURES



25 | THE BEAR'S DEN

The East Brunswick Education Association saw a growing need among students for clothes to wear to school. Members responded by opening a thrift shop in the basement of the EBEA office where families in need can find good quality clothing for school and for play.

BY PATRICK RUMAKER



29 | GOING TO THE DOGS

The use of therapy dogs has had a positive academic and social impact on students and staff in Absecon Public Schools. Read how Skye and Hope have become a vital part of the school community and the variety of supports that make the program possible.

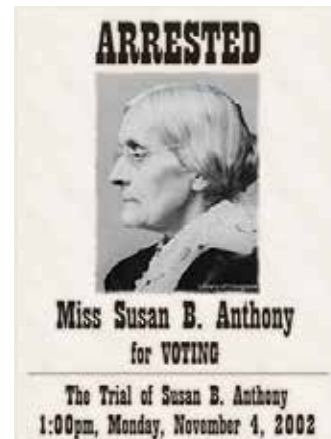
BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



32 | WHEN CONFERENCES TURN SOUR

We've all been there. What started as a friendly discussion with a parent about a student has suddenly turned sour. The parent is livid, and your stomach is in knots. Gather some tips here to prepare for such conferences.

BY MELISSA ANTINOFF



34 | WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE ANNIVERSARY

On Feb. 9, 1920, New Jersey ratified the 19th amendment. On Aug. 18, 1920, the 19th amendment was ratified by the required three-fourths of U.S. states. Learn how to prepare for the 100th anniversary of Women's Suffrage in the U.S.

BY HANK BITTEN

COLUMNS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 7

Building our momentum

THE ADVOCATE 8

Know. Lead. Act.

THE BULLETIN BOARD 12

Cool stuff to check out

THE LAW AND YOU 15

Rice notices

THE NJEA REPORT 18

Education in the news

HEALTH AND SAFETY 38

Check for mercury

CLASSROOM CLOSE-UP NJ 41

Highlights of NJEA's Emmy-award winning show

SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY 42

Workshops, field trips, grants, and more

STAFF NEWS 45

Hires and promotions

RETIRED MEMBERS 46

News and events

PRESERVICE MEMBERS 49

Involve, inform, inspire

SPEAK OUT 50

CTE students

MEMBER BENEFITS 51

Get your money's worth

COMING UP 53

What's next at NJEA

FINAL EXAM 54

What you're doing works



ON THE COVER:

School Librarian Rachael Wescoat and a student with Skye, a therapy dog who helps students in Absecon Schools. Starting on Page 29, learn more about how Skye and Hope inspire happier and more confident learners.

PHOTO BY

KATHRYN COULIBALY

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Editorial Director Steven Baker
Editor Patrick Rumaker
Associate Editor Kathryn Coulibaly
Art Director Jennifer C. Marsh
Graphic Designer Tara M. Buck
Advertising Liz Murphy

EDITORIAL & PUBLISHING OFFICES

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Email: NJEAreview@NJEA.org

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Annual membership dues are: Active professional: \$928 (full time); \$464 (part time) \$464 (on leave). Active supportive \$451 (full time) \$225.50 (part time) \$225.50 (on leave). Retired: \$85; \$1,000 (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*.



MAINTAINING OUR SUCCESSSES, BUILDING OUR MOMENTUM

NJEA members juggle so many responsibilities personally and professionally that it is easy to become overwhelmed and over-stressed. This makes it even more important that we recognize our successes and continue to build our momentum toward a future that ensures every public school employee has the economic and professional freedom to provide an excellent education for the children in our care.

NJEA members have been tirelessly fighting for job justice for educators, including Ch. 78 relief and vital job security measures for educational support professionals (ESPs), and that effort has been paying off. More legislators have signed on as co-sponsors to the bills that address these needs, and we are eager to see the bills heard in committee. We must continue to advocate for these bills, and we will be holding more lobby days to ensure that our voices are heard in the Statehouse.

Successful programs inspire others, and Absecon Public Schools, in cooperation with the Absecon Education Association, has a fantastic one. The staff and students in Absecon are proudly going to the dogs, Hope and Skye. The Greater Swiss mountain dogs work as therapy dogs with students in the district, and staff is eager to share their overwhelmingly positive experience with educators across the state.

When challenging economic times hit, people need to know they have somewhere to turn, and our members are always among the first to step up. The East Brunswick Education Association is a strong advocate for its members, the students they serve, and the East Brunswick community at large.

In this issue, we look at their efforts to provide free clothing for families in need year-round.

In our jobs, we are no stranger to conflict and how to manage it effectively. In "When Conferences Turn Sour," Burlington County Teacher of the Year Melissa Antinoff offers guidance on responding when a conference with a parent takes a sour turn. She offers tips for making your parent-teacher conferences successful before they even begin.

Finally, the *NJEA Review* takes a closer look at the upcoming 100th anniversary of American women's right to vote. On Aug. 18, 2020, the nation will mark the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment, guaranteeing the right to vote to American women. Hank Bitten, the executive director of the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies (NJCSS), writes about the long road to that achievement and the plans that NJCSS and other organizations are making to celebrate that journey.

Looking back over the 2018-19 school year, we can see how far we have already come, and how far we have yet to go. It's a good opportunity to reflect on your personal and professional achievements and give yourself a much-needed pat on the back. And, if you can, recognize the good work that your colleagues are doing. Together, we will finish this year strong and advance our goals and priorities from the schoolhouse to the Statehouse.

In unity,

Marie Blistan



NJEA President Marie Blistan (top, center) visited members of the Washington Township Schools Support Staff Personnel Association (WTSSSPA) and the Washington Township Education Association (WTEA) with Gloucester County Education Association President Sue Clark and NJEA UniServ field rep Rena Kallio. Blistan is a WTEA member. Clockwise from top center: Blistan, Kallio, Clark, WTSSSPA member Maria Mazzuca, WTEA member Denise Heinbaugh, and WTSSSPA member Diana Budd.

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: TERRIFIC NJEA ESP conference weekend where our members met, learned, and planned to keep our public schools strong! Thank you to ESP Committee Chair Donna O'Malley, her committee, staff contacts Bob Antonelli and Kim Lipcsey for all of the hard work that goes into providing this high-quality union-led experience! Congratulations to all of our NJEA County ESPs of the Year!!

On Feb. 6, NJEA President Marie Blistan posted photos from the annual NJEA Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Conference. The three-day conference provides workshops for the association's ESP members and honors the NJEA ESP of the Year and County ESPs of the Year.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerForNJEA: Roselle EA members out to #FixTheUnfairness!

On Feb. 6, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller joined members of the Roselle Education Association for a Walk-In Wednesday. He posted photos from his morning there. Every Wednesday, NJEA members across the state are wearing red and gathering outside their buildings at the start of the school day. They walk in together to demonstrate solidarity in their support of legislation that provides job justice for educational support professionals and relief from exorbitant health care premium contributions. Many members are posting photos from the events to social media with the hashtag #FixTheUnfairness.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Great time these past few days in D.C. at NEA HQ for lobbying, training, and a gala! Hard work put in by your NEA Board of Directors, and time well spent with brothers and sisters from around the nation doing the good work!! And an incredibly moving presentation from Keron Blair, Executive Director of the Alliance to Reclaim our Schools. #RedForEd

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty posted photos from Washington, D.C., where he, along with NJEA President Marie Blistan and NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, attended the NEA Board of Directors meeting, lobbied members of Congress for pro-public education legislation, and enjoyed the NEA Foundation Awards Gala.

KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

YOUR TURN | READERS RESPOND

To the editor:

Thank you for the closing page reflection in the January 2019 issue "The singular 'They': We've Come a Long Way."

The language is constantly evolving as I say to the education staff members for whom I have offered workshops about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues in schools.

I would only augment your second to last paragraph with one addition to the uses of "they." When a person identifies their gender as nonbinary (neither male nor female), it would be appropriate to respect their request to refer to them with the pronouns they, them, theirs or to follow their lead on any other pronouns that they request that you use.

Thank you for continuing to educate us on the beauty of diversity in our classrooms, among our colleagues, and in our society.

Carol Watchler | NJREA, Middlesex County

Board member, Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice

carolwatchler@comcast.net

ANNUAL ELECTION FOR NJEA REPRESENTATIVES SLATED FOR APRIL

NJEA will hold its annual elections in April for NJEA county (and other unit) representatives. This year, approximately one-third of the Executive Committee and approximately one-half of the Delegate Assembly and Delegate Assembly Alternates will be elected.

Balloting is conducted with the assistance of an outside vendor. A ballot and a postage-paid return envelope are sent to each member who has not opted to vote online. The ballot will come via first class mail at the address currently on file. A paper ballot will be used. Complete instructions for voting will be contained in the ballot mailing. To be counted, voted ballots must be mailed to the address specified in the ballot mailing. Ballots sent to any other address will not be counted.

If there are any unanticipated changes in procedure, this information will be published in the April *NJEA Review*, publishing schedules permitting.

Elections will be held between April 1 and noon of April 15. To be counted, ballots must be received at the address indicated in the ballot mailing no later than noon on April 15.

For complete elections rules and procedures, visit njea.org/njeaelections.

SELFIE OF THE MONTH

Carolyn Schultz, NJEA Priority Schools consultant, and Gretta Bohren, President of the Buena Regional Support Staff Association, lobbied legislators on Jan. 17 for great public schools and job justice for school employees.

Participating in a local, county or state meeting or other association activity? Staffing a PRIDE event? Send your selfies to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to identify where the picture was taken and the members who appear in the photo.



ZAKIYA SMITH ELLIS TO KEYNOTE HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE

STANDING TOGETHER

The NJEA Higher Education Conference will be held on April 12-13 at the Princeton Marriott at Forrestal. The conference begins with registration at 1 p.m. on Friday followed by workshops and dinner. After dinner, the keynote speaker is New Jersey Secretary of Higher Education **ZAKIYA SMITH ELLIS**. On Saturday, the conference continues with more workshop sessions and concludes with lunch.



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- Social Media for Organizing Members
- New Jersey Workplace Democracy Act and Pay Equity Act
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- XYZs of Retirement (PERS)

REGISTRATION

Higher education members will soon receive a registration form in the postal mail, or to register now, send your payment and name, address, cell/work/home phone numbers, and local association to:

NJEA HIGHER ED CONFERENCE

c/o Beneficial Bank
PO Box 13661
Philadelphia, PA 19101-3661

Registration is required by March 23.

The cost to attend is \$98-resident (per person, double occupancy); \$148-resident (per person, single occupancy); or \$68 (commuter). The conference fee includes accommodations, meals and materials. For additional information or if you have a disability-related need which may require assistance to facilitate your participation in the conference, contact the NJEA UniServ Region 29/Higher Education office at 609-689-9580 or kperry@njea.org.

NJEA SEEKS DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD NOMINATIONS

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

Nominations are now being sought for the 2019 NJEA Ruthann Sheer Award for Distinguished Service to Education. The award is named in memory of an educator from Hackensack who was its 1994 recipient. The award was first presented in 1934.

The award is designed to call public attention to those who greatly serve New Jersey public schools and children. Such service to education may take any form that in the opinion of the Distinguished Service Award Committee most merits the recognition this award involves.

Any New Jersey resident or organization, including educators, may be nominated. Excluded are NJEA officers during their terms in office.

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

You may nominate the individual or group online at njea.org/serviceaward.

You may also submit nominations by mail to:

NJEA

Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service Award
PO Box 1211
Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Please include the nominee's name, address, phone number and email address along with a narrative explaining why the nominee should win the award.

Whether online or by postal mail, nominations must be received no later than June 17, 2019. The NJEA Executive Committee selects award recipients based on recommendations from the Distinguished Service Award Committee.

ONLINE VOTING AN OPTION FOR NJEA ELECTIONS

The NJEA Elections Committee encourages members to request an electronic ballot for the 2019 NJEA elections. To do so, go to njea.org/NJEAelections. Sign in using your PIN (found on your NJEA membership card) or the email address at which you receive email from NJEA. Your password is the last four digits of your Social Security number, unless you've changed it.

Look for "Request an electronic ballot."

Balloting opens on March 30 and concludes at noon on April 15. You will again need your PIN/email address and password to vote. Even if you do not formally make the request to vote online, you may vote online nonetheless; the first ballot that NJEA receives (paper or electronic) is the one that will count.

All ballots will be encoded to ensure both member privacy and ballot security, while protecting the principle of one-person, one-vote.



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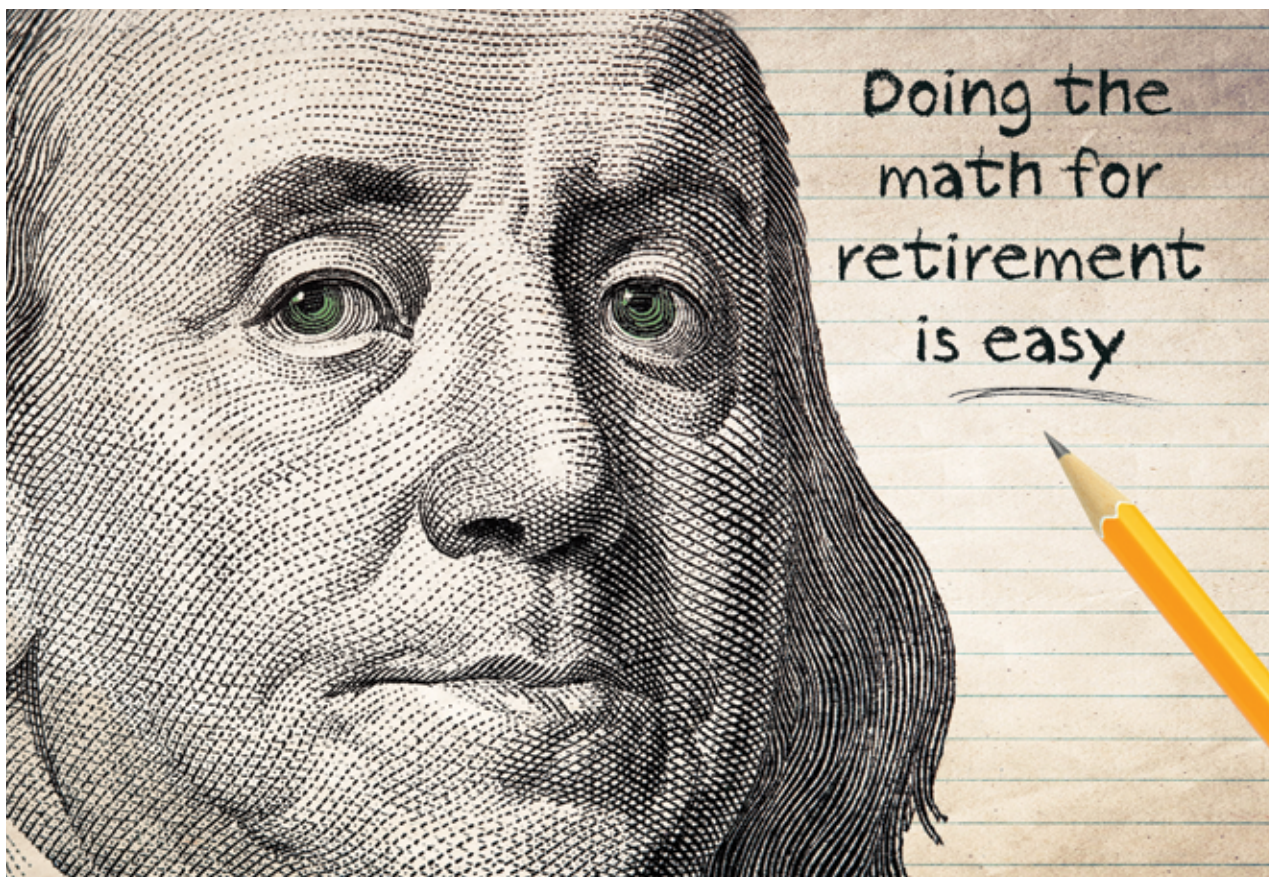


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COOL STUFF

DARE TO DREAM IN 2019 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences, sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education, highlight strategies and information to prepare high school students with disabilities for college and career readiness. Conferences occur on various dates from March 15 through May 22, at various locations around the state.

Each conference features keynote presentations from accomplished students and young adults with disabilities who have demonstrated exemplary self-advocacy and leadership skills. The conference program also includes a variety of concurrent workshop sessions that provide conference attendees opportunities to gain insight into the transition from school to adult life process. The conference gives students the opportunity to participate in workshops led by their peers on topics such as self-discovery, student self-advocacy, learning styles, developing career paths and understanding rights and responsibilities in college. Dare to Dream has long been a positive and empowering experience for thousands of New Jersey's students.

There is no charge for the conference. A continental breakfast, lunch, and conference materials will be provided to all participants.

Visit homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/specialed for more information and to apply to register.

Call Bob Haugh at (609) 376-3736 or email robert.haugh@doe.nj.gov if you have any questions.

NJHOF ACCEPTING ARETE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS FOR CLASS OF 2019

The New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHOF) invites Garden State high school students who will graduate in 2019 to apply for its Arete Scholarship.

Recipients of the Arete Scholarship are youth who demonstrate a sense of Jersey pride and willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty. Honoring those who embody exemplary qualities such as moral character, a commitment to their community, and academic engagement, the \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded to a deserving male and female student, who will be recognized at the NJHOF's annual induction ceremony.

Arete is a concept identified by Plato, Socrates and Aristotle that encompasses virtue and excellence in the face of adversity. With that in mind, the NJHOF seeks applicants who strive to pursue their passions and go on to realize their dreams, regardless of the challenges they may experience on the path to greatness.

For high school seniors who wish to pursue the Arete Scholarship, the application asks students to answer questions about overcoming hardships, what Arete means to them, activities, community service, and more. The application can be found at njhalloffame.org/arete.

The application deadline is March 17.

SCHEDULE A VISIT FROM THE MOBILE FOOD LAB

The Mobile Food Lab is a fun, multisensory educational experience on wheels. Activities led by science, art and cooking educators teach students in Grades K through 8 where food comes from, how it nourishes and affects us, and how it shapes our world.

To be eligible to receive a visit, two classes per day must be reserved. The maximum class size is 30 students (60 students per day). The fee is \$20 per student with a minimum charge of \$800 for the day. The fee covers all food lab activities. The program is two hours for each class, with the day beginning at 9:30 a.m. and concluding at 2:30 p.m. The Mobile Food Lab may only visit up to 50 miles from its home in Lyndhurst, enabling it to reach Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, and Union counties as well as parts of Monmouth and Mercer counties.

The Mobile Food Lab is funded by grants from the New Jersey Department of Health, the Special Child Health and Autism Registry, and the Horizon Foundation. The Mobile Food Lab is an initiative helping to create jobs for adults with autism.

You can book a Mobile Food Lab visit to your school, or take a field trip to its home base, the Meadowlands Environment Center in Lyndhurst. Visit mobilefoodlab.org for more information and to book a visit.

SEND US PHOTOS FROM YOUR RAA CELEBRATION

The *NJEA Review* will print selected photos from Read Across America celebrations around the state. To have one of your photos considered for publication, choose your favorite two or three photos from your event and send them to ProudMoments@njea.org. In the email, provide a brief caption for each photo you send.

If children are identifiable in the photos, a media release must be on file with the district or you may use the release form found at njea.org/raa. You must log in with your NJEA PIN number to access the page that includes the photo release form.

You may keep the signed release forms on file at your school and simply indicate that you have secured them when you send email your photos to NJEA. From all of the photos submitted prior to March 9, five to 10 will be selected for publication in the April *NJEA Review*.

All eligible photos, regardless of whether they are selected for publication in the *NJEA Review*, will be part of an online gallery at njea.org/raa. Some photos may also be shared on NJEA's social media platforms.

ESSAY CONTEST WILL BRING A HOT AIR BALLOON TO WINNER'S SCHOOL

The QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning and PNC Bank invite New Jersey students in Grades 2 through 12 to take part in the 16th annual PNC Bank "American Patriot Essay Contest" by writing a short essay on the topic "What the American Flag Means to Me."

The Grand Prize winner will receive the opportunity to take two rides in a hot air balloon. The first is a tethered ride in a gigantic, 75-foot-tall hot air balloon in front of their classmates at their school in June. The second will be a ride in one of the 100 hot air balloons at this year's 37th annual QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning in Association with PNC Bank July 26-28 at Solberg Airport in Readington.

The special VIP Grand Prize package includes a hot air balloon ride for two, four Blue Sky Club VIP tickets, and the opportunity to meet one of this year's concert headliners, which in the past have included Disney teen sensations such as the Jonas Brothers and Demi Lovato.

This year's winning student's immediate classmates will each receive one complimentary general admission ticket to the festival. Second and third-place prizes consisting of festival admission and merchandise will be also awarded. The winning student's teacher and school principal will each receive two Blue Sky Club VIP tickets.

All teachers in the state who submit groups of 15 essays or more on behalf of their students will receive two free general admission tickets to the festival regardless of whether one of their students submits the winning essay.

The increasing popularity of learning about one's ancestry played a major role with last year's Grand Prize winner. Peter Clear, a fifth-grade student from John Hill School in Boonton, wrote about being a descendant of William Brewster who came to Plymouth, Massachusetts on the Mayflower.

The essays must be 100 words or less. They will be judged by a panel of representatives from PNC Bank and the balloon festival. Winning essays will be selected based on creativity, poignancy and clarity with consideration given to the grade level of the contestant. Contestants are not required to be U.S. citizens.

Entries should be mailed to Essay Judges, QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning, 363 Route 46 West, Suite 200, Fairfield, NJ, 07004, or emailed to pncessay@balloonfestival.com. Entries should include the student's name, home or school address, home or school telephone number, grade, age, school name and the name of their teacher. The deadline to enter is May 1, 2019.

Additional information may be found at balloon-festival.com/pncessay. 🍷



Brenda Brathwaite '05, '07, '11 is an eighth grade teacher at Pennsylvania Avenue School in Atlantic City and a student in the Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership Program.

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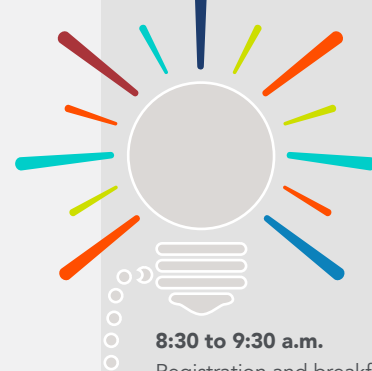


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8:30 to 9:30 a.m.
Registration and breakfast

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 3): **\$29**
\$19 for NJEA Preservice

After June 3:
\$39 for NJEA Members
\$19 for NJEA Preservice
Nonmember price: \$120

Registration deadline:
June 28, 2019

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

Register online ONLY* at
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 or 609-599-4561 ext. 2349.

To receive a refund, cancellation must be made by the registration deadline, June 28, 2019.

For more information, or if you have a special physical, communication, dietary, or disability-related need that may require assistance or accommodations to permit or facilitate your attendance/participation in the conference, please contact Janet Bush at 609-599-2349, ext. 2349.

This conference will provide five hours of professional learning credit. Choose one of these five-hour, interactive professional learning program sessions:

Students Taking Action Together: Fostering Youth Engagement, Civility and Academic Success via Social-Emotional Learning

The latest in Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) practice will be presented, with applications for social studies, language arts, visual and performing arts, classroom management, student empowerment, and preparation for social action. A statewide pilot project, Students Taking Action Together (STAT): The Civility Project, will be a focus. Participants will engage in simulated STAT lessons and will have access to instructional materials for middle and high school at the end of the workshop.

Presenter: Dr. Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.

Edtech Ecosystems for Learning: Cultivating Sustainable and Collaborative, Technology Infused Learning Communities

Participants will learn how to increase engagement and classroom community with collaborative edtech tools, including free tools such as the Google Suite, Padlet, Actively Learn, Formative, Quizziz, Empatico, and Edmodo. Participants will also explore formative and summative assessment techniques and examine the design of online educational environments.

Session Requirements:

- Laptop or Chromebook with Chrome Browser (while most edtech tools can be used on a tablet or smartphone, it is recommended that participants bring a laptop/Chromebook for full experience)
- Google account (personal and/or school to access Google Suite and Google Sign On)

Presenter: Kate Baker

Building Classroom Culture: Practical Guide for Teachers

How can we create a climate and culture that is welcoming and makes students feel continuously invested in their classroom environment throughout the year? This session will share ideas and methods that create a culture of learning to welcome students to the classroom—whether it be in an all-day elementary classroom or a schedule-based secondary experience. Participants will:

- Understand the importance of developing a strong classroom culture
- Explore methods, approaches, and activities that build culture
- Plan for introducing strategies to their context

Presenter: Gary Hite

Teachers Take Charge: Professional Collaboration that Works

Why do so many professional development sessions have zero impact on teaching and learning? Many times, it is because they are imposed by outsiders and hold little relevance to what teachers really need. A better approach involves teachers, honors their experiences, and relates immediately to adult learning needs. We will explore how teachers can take charge of their learning, from small group collaboration protocols to large-scale structures that can be used across an entire district. Participants will:

- Understand the different approaches suitable for adult learners
- Explore options for designing and facilitating teacher-led collaborative learning
- Design professional collaboration experiences for colleagues

Presenter: Dr. Stefani Hite

The Law and You

WHAT IS A RICE NOTICE, AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME?

BY RICHARD FRIEDMAN,
ESQ., AND MARISSA
MCALEER, ESQ.

Over the course of their careers, nearly all school board employees have at least once received what is known as a Rice notice. It's not uncommon to hear local association presidents and other union leaders ask, "Have they been 'riced'?" upon learning that one or more of their members will have their employment status discussed by the school board in a closed executive session.

However, if you are not an association leader or staff member, you might be uncertain as to what a Rice notice is and how it affects your employment. The purpose of this article is to shed light on your rights under Rice.

These rights take their name from a union leader and NJEA member named Regina Rice. In 1977, while Rice was president of the Union County Regional High School Teachers Association, the Union County Regional High School Board of Education voted to terminate 17 of her members because of budget cuts. The school board, however, had failed to notify

these members that it would be taking such an action.

With NJEA's support, Rice and her local association achieved a victory that affects every public employee in New Jersey, including employees of boards of education.

THE SUNSHINE LAW

The Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), also known as the "Sunshine Law," protects the public's right "to be present at all meetings of public bodies, and to witness in full detail all phases of the deliberation, policy formulation, and decision making." Put another way, OPMA provides that meetings of public bodies, including school boards, should be open to the public. However, there is an exception baked into the statute, which provides:

A public body may exclude the public only from that portion of a meeting at which the public body discusses any: matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance of, promotion, or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all the individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that the matter or matters be

discussed at a public meeting.
[N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(8)]

OPMA provides that even though meetings of school boards must be held in public, when the board discusses the employment of specific employees the meeting is conducted in a closed session unless the individual employee, or employees, whose rights could be negatively affected, requests in writing that the matter be discussed in a public meeting.

But how can employees make a written request for a public meeting if they are not aware that their employment is going to be discussed?

RICE REQUIRES EMPLOYEE NOTIFICATION

This is where the Rice notice comes into play. The Appellate Division of the Superior Court of New Jersey decided in *Rice v. Union County Regional High School Board of Education* that a school board must inform employees that their employment status will be discussed during a school board's closed session. The board must also inform them in that notice of their right to compel the board to discuss their employment status in public. The decision states:

The plain implication of the personnel exception to the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act is that if all employees whose rights could be adversely affected decide to request a

public hearing, they can only exercise that statutory right and request a public hearing if they have reasonable advance notice so as to enable them to (1) make a decision on whether they desire a public discussion and (2) prepare and present an appropriate request in writing.
[155 N.J. Super. 64 (App. Div. 1977)]

Recently, the Supreme Court provided an update on the law surrounding Rice notices. In *Kean Federation of Teachers v. Morell*, the court held that there was no obligation to send Rice notices to affected faculty members where a public university's board of trustees determined from the start to conduct its discussion about faculty reappointments in public session.

In sum, while employment matters are generally conducted in a closed session, public employees must be given a Rice notice that advises of their right to request that the discussion be held in public session. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the public body's decisions made about the employee during the closed session to be invalidated. However, Rice notices are not required if the public employer chooses to conduct the meeting in public session from the outset, or if there is no discussion of individual employees during closed session. 🏠

Richard Friedman and Marissa McAleer are NJEA network attorneys at the Zazzali, Fagella, Nowak, Kleinbaum and Friedman law firm, which practices in the areas of labor and employment, creditor's rights and bankruptcy, trial and appellate litigation, public sector law, employee benefits law, general litigation, and election law.

WITH NJEA'S SUPPORT, RICE AND HER LOCAL ASSOCIATION ACHIEVED A VICTORY THAT AFFECTS EVERY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE IN NEW JERSEY, INCLUDING EMPLOYEES OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION.



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NJEA REPORT

EQUITY ALLIANCE WEEKEND BUILDS COLLABORATION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

Five committees that play key roles in NJEA's efforts to create a more just and equitable climate in public education—and in our union—collaborated to create the NJEA Equity Alliance Weekend: The Human Rights Committee, the Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee, the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee, the Urban Education Committee, and the Women in Education Committee. The conference was held over the weekend of Jan. 11.

"Throughout the course of this weekend, we are going to celebrate the role that diverse and differing voices bring to our union," NJEA President Marie Blistan announced in her opening remarks. "As union members, it's our duty to elevate the voices of all people—especially those who have been marginalized by our society—embrace our collective struggle for progress and harness our unified power."

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller built upon Blistan's remarks, noting, "Different voices make us stronger and different perspectives bring out the best in each and every

one of us, but we must do more than simply listen. We need to learn how to examine our own assumptions through other people's eyes."

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty discussed the impact of diverse perspectives on the work NJEA members do in public schools.

"We are working together to stand up to fight for our students every day, whether they were born in this country or are seeking asylum on our shores, whether they come to school well-fed or whether we are their only safe haven," Beatty said. "We are working together, right now, to demand that our workforce reflects the communities we serve."

A TRUE ALLIANCE

Dr. John Gray, assistant dean of education, was the keynote speaker on Friday evening. He congratulated the committees on working together but he wondered aloud why they hadn't collaborated as one sooner.

"What took you so long?" he asked. "What is it that makes us do great and important work on that island called isolation? What is it about the



Dalia Mogahed, the director of research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, delivered a riveting keynote address during the NJEA Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Celebration.

human dynamic that prevents collaboration such as this for the greater good?"

Gray focused on the word "alliance" in the conference name.

A true alliance does not mean you have to think like me, look like me, act like me, believe like me, or function like me," Gray said. "A true alliance looks at the goals of the greater good and allows for the contribution of others. Do not let any perceived ideological differences prevent us from coming together for the greater good."

Throughout the weekend, general sessions and breakout sessions were themed to draw participants from various perspectives. Most of the themes were verbs: love, focus, teach, resist, inspire, lead, and change. Another session was themed "power."

FEAR AND IGNORANCE THREATEN DEMOCRACY

The weekend concluded with the annual NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration. At the celebration, five members were honored for their work to bring about social justice. Dalia Mogahed, the

director of research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, delivered the celebration's keynote address.

A chemical engineer who began her career at Procter & Gamble, Mogahed later became the executive director for the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. She is now a published author and a frequent expert commentator. She co-authored the book *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think*.

Mogahed's wide-ranging address, which included a bracing re-telling of her experience on Sept. 11, 2001, as a Muslim American woman who wears a hijab, focused on the impact fear and mistrust have on freedom.

"Fear threatens the foundation of our democracy, and ignorance fuels fear," Mogahed said. "That means, as educators, you are all on the front lines every day teaching our future leaders how to think critically, how to choose independent reason over conformity, and how to distinguish between facts and fake news."

FEAR THREATENS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR DEMOCRACY, AND IGNORANCE FUELS FEAR. THAT MEANS, AS EDUCATORS, YOU ARE ALL ON THE FRONT LINES EVERY DAY TEACHING OUR FUTURE LEADERS HOW TO THINK CRITICALLY, HOW TO CHOOSE INDEPENDENT REASON OVER CONFORMITY, AND HOW TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN FACTS AND FAKE NEWS. – DALIA MOGAHED

NJEA MEMBERS HONORED FOR COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

AT THE NJEA DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS CELEBRATION, FIVE NJEA MEMBERS WERE RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR WORK IN CIVIL RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE.



ABOVE: Jacqui Greadington (l) with NJEA HRC Committee Chair Kimberly Scott.



BELOW: Dr. Joyce Barnes-Johnson (r) with NJEA HRC Committee Chair Kimberly Scott.

JACQUI GREADINGTON DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. LEGACY AWARD NJEA HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Jacqui Greadington has been the president of the East Orange Education Association president for nearly 25 years. She has represented NJEA as a statewide anti-voucher spokesperson, chair of the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee, chair of the School/Classroom Climate Committee, member of the NJEA Executive Committee, NJEA Property and Personnel Committee, the Delegate Assembly, and the Government Relations Committee. On the national level, she served as an NEA Director and Chair of the NEA Black Caucus, using these platforms to help frame the national discussion on the role of educators in eliminating the achievement gap, the school-to-prison pipeline, and improving outcomes for students of color.

DR. JOY BARNES-JOHNSON DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. AWARD NJEA HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Joy Barnes-Johnson is an educator at Princeton High School, where she teaches earth science, chemistry, and STEM in the 21st Century. Barnes-Johnson graduated from Johnson C. Smith

University, a historically black university in North Carolina, and completed her doctorate at Temple University in Philadelphia, where she focused on equitable science teaching, emphasizing strategies to engage a diversity of students. She believes in challenging students' belief systems about social justice to help them understand that ability alone does not determine who they are.

PADRAIG "PAT" HURLEY EQUALITY CHAMPION AWARD RECIPIENT NJEA SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY COMMITTEE

Pat Hurley is a health and physical education at Columbia High School in Maplewood. Hurley has helped many students and staff become comfortable with their "whole selves" through his leadership and in the way he carries himself in his transgender identity. Hurley shares resources to make classrooms, schools, offices, buses and other spaces safer for all students and staff. Hurley has helped schools develop programs that enhance the education of LGBTIQ+ students and teach students to refrain from bullying and stereotyping. Hurley played a role in developing school policies that are gender inclusive, such as the dress code.

REGINA ANDREWS- COLLETTE JUDITH OWENS SPIRIT AWARD RECIPIENT

A NJREA member, Regina Andrews-Collette was a school social worker for 25 years and president of the Bellmawr Education Association. She has served on numerous association committees. As a participant in the 2009 NEA Minority Leadership Cadre, Andrews-Collette helped create a similar cadre in New Jersey. Her efforts for local families in need led to a clothing drive so successful that two renovated rooms in Bell Oaks School were converted into the Parent Learning Center. There, a Village Shoppe exists to provide clothing. Workshops, English language learner classes and Family Support Center activities are also held. The Village Shoppe was featured on "Classroom Close-up NJ" in 2013.

CRISTINA CUTRONE ELIZABETH ALLEN AWARD NJEA WOMEN IN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Cristina Cutrone is the president and cofounder of WE DO (Women Empowered Democratic Organization) of Bergen County, a councilwoman in Fair Lawn, an inspiring high school social studies teacher, and the dynamic vice president of the Tenafly Education Association. In her AP US government course, Cutrone encourages students to be engaged in the political process. She modeled that as a keynote speaker at Bergen County's March For Our Lives on March 24, 2018, and in her dedication to serving her community. Cutrone has committed herself to empowering future generations to be civic minded and to passionately and steadfastly embrace and protect their rights and responsibilities as Americans.



LEFT: Pat Hurley (l) with NJEA SOGI Committee Chair Tom Tamburello.

RIGHT: Regina Andrews-Collette (r) with NJEA MLR Committee Chair Charisse Parker.



LEFT: Christina Cutrone (l) with NJEA WIE Chair Deborah Wilson.

NJEA MEMBERS CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR JOB JUSTICE, GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MEMBERS URGED TO ATTEND LOBBY DAYS

NJEA has been vigorously advocating for relief from the crushing economic burden imposed by Ch. 78 and job justice for educational support professionals (ESP). Members have been making their voices heard in a series of lobby days in Trenton, in meetings with legislators and through a series of “Walk-in Wednesdays” held by local associations to personify the very real economic impact of legislators’ decision to penalize public school employees for the state’s failure to live up to its obligations.

“NJEA members have worked hard to build and maintain one of the best systems of public education in the nation,” said NJEA President Marie Blistan. “We continue to be vigilant to ensure that our schools stay strong. But they can only be strong if the educators doing the work are treated with dignity and respect.”

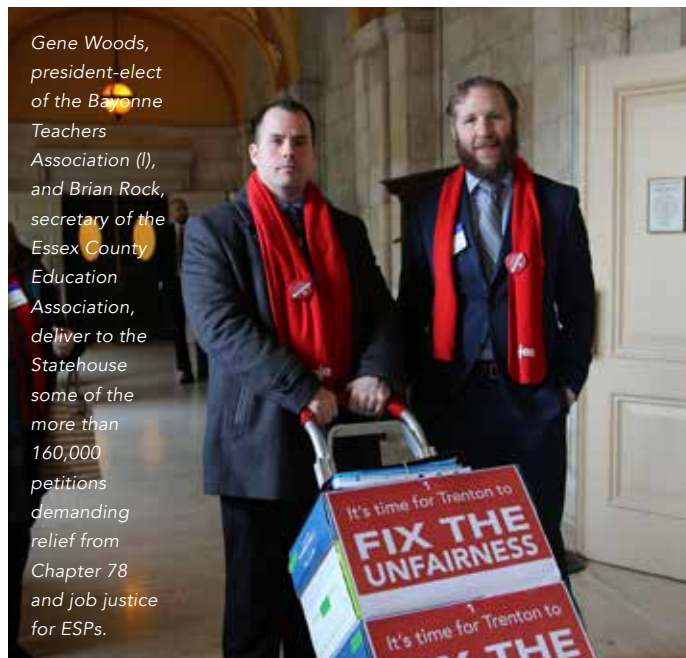
Passed in 2011, Ch. 78 imposed harsh health care premium sharing requirements on public employees along with increased pension contributions. The law also required higher

pension contributions from the state, but the previous administration reneged on that part of the law and later fought in court to ignore the state’s funding obligations.

“The devastating impact of Ch. 78 on the educators of this state cannot be overstated,” said NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller. “School employees have contributed to their health care and pensions for decades, but since the passage of Ch. 78 in 2011, out-of-control health care costs have driven people out of the profession or forced them to take multiple extra jobs. We need a fair cap on health care costs for our members, so they can focus on what they do best: educating our students, who are the future of this state.”

JUSTICE FOR ESP

In 2013, NJEA successfully advocated for bills that would provide due-process rights for ESPs and protections against subcontracting. Both bills were passed with bipartisan support in the Legislature. Then-Gov. Chris Christie vetoed both bills in July 2013. With a new



governor, NJEA is carrying on the fight for fairness for these essential employees.

“Our students deserve highly qualified, committed, and focused educators in their schools,” said NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty. “And our educational support professionals are an essential part of what makes our schools successful. But for too long, they have not been treated with the fairness they deserve.”

NJEA members are calling on legislators to support S-296 and A-3185/A-3395, which would prohibit employers from subcontracting ESP jobs during an existing collective bargaining agreement. In addition, members are calling for lawmakers to support S-3089/A-3664, which would ensure just-cause arbitration for ESP members.

“This is about doing the right thing for the hard-working professionals who keep our schools safe, clean, and focused on learning,” Beatty concluded.

LOBBYING FOR JUSTICE AND GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On Jan. 17, hundreds of members met at NJEA’s headquarters. On their way to the Statehouse, they rallied outside and shared their stories about the necessity of job justice for educators.

Chanting “Great public schools for every student!” and “Job justice for every school employee!” they marched into the Statehouse and to the governor’s office to deliver 116,000 petitions signed by educators across the state to legislators and to Gov. Phil Murphy. The petitions called for fair treatment for ESPs and relief from the crushing health care contributions. Throughout his campaign for governor, Murphy had been vocal in his support for economic justice for educators and increased respect and protections for ESPs.

Bethanne Augsbach, a third-grade teacher and president of the Monroe Township Education Association, called on legislators

BETHANNE AUGSBACH, A THIRD-GRADE TEACHER AND PRESIDENT OF THE MONROE TOWNSHIP EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, CALLED ON LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT S-2606/A-4352, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE CH. 78 RELIEF TO EDUCATORS BY TYING PUBLIC EMPLOYEES’ PREMIUM SHARE FOR HEALTH BENEFITS TO A PERCENTAGE OF SALARY INSTEAD OF A PERCENTAGE OF PREMIUM COST.



NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller joined members of the Jersey City Education Association as they gathered for a Walk-in Wednesday wearing red to demonstrate support for S-2606/A-4352, S-296-A-3185/A-3395, and S-3089/A-3664.

to support S-2606/A-4352, which would provide Ch. 78 relief to educators by tying public employees' premium share for health benefits to a percentage of salary instead of a percentage of premium cost.

"I'm here today because we deserve better," said Augsbach. "We deserved to be treated with respect, and that means our paychecks don't go backwards. We give everything to our profession, and we deserve to be treated with the same respect that we have for our students. It is not right that an educator in this state should have to choose between paying the mortgage and paying for chemotherapy. Or for school employees to have to rely on food banks to make ends meet. Legislators need to know that these are the consequences of their votes. We are here to hold them accountable and demand that they make it right."

Middlesex County Education Association President Lois Yukna, a Woodbridge Township school attendance officer, called for greater respect for the work ESPs do and a recognition that schools are safer when dedicated, caring professionals who work directly for the district provide the essential

services on which schools rely.

"It's time we stop allowing board of educations to balance their budgets on the backs of educational support professionals," Yukna said. "We are not a budget line for boards to slash. We educate children, and we deserve the respect that our contracts offer. We deserve to do our jobs without the threat of privatization. We're fighting for job security because our students deserve the consistency and security that we provide."

Union Township Education Association Vice President James Frazier, a school security guard, spoke on the necessity of due process rights for ESPs.

"ESPs are the most consistent faces in the lives of our students every single day," Frazier said. "Just like our teacher counterparts, our employment should not depend on the whims of a school board or administration. ESPs make our schools stronger, we make our communities stronger, and we make this state stronger!"

LEGISLATORS FEEL THE HEAT

In a statement on Feb. 4, Senate President Steve Sweeney said that he refuses to hold a hearing on S-2606, the Ch.

78 bill, and will not allow senators to vote on it. The bill is sponsored by state Sens. Joe Cryan (D-Union) and Patrick Diegnan (D-Middlesex). Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg is a co-sponsor. As of press time, 24 Democrats and three Republicans sponsor the Assembly version of the bill.

NJEA is continuing its advocacy of the bill. As more members make their voices heard, it becomes increasingly difficult for Sen. Sweeney to block real reform that benefits middle class families.

JOIN THE FIGHT!

NJEA members are urged to join their colleagues at Lobby Days in Trenton on Monday, March 4, 11, 18, and 25, and on Thursday, March 7 and 14.

To attend, email Iris Star at istar@njea.org. The Lobby Days begin with registration, breakfast and a briefing at 8:30 a.m. at NJEA Headquarters. Members will be escorted across the street to the Statehouse at 9 a.m. The day will conclude with lunch and a debriefing session at noon.

NJEA MEMBERS ARE CALLING ON LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT S-296-A-3185/A-3395, WHICH WOULD PROHIBIT EMPLOYERS FROM SUBCONTRACTING ESP JOBS DURING AN EXISTING COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, AND S-3089/A-3664, WHICH WOULD ENSURE JUST-CAUSE ARBITRATION FOR ESP MEMBERS.



Members of the Passaic County Education Association rallied at the Willowbrook Mall in Wayne.

NJEA TESTIFIES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER DIVERSITY

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller testified before the Senate Education and Senate Higher Education committees on Feb. 7 the importance of teacher diversity.

Acting on national and state statistics revealing a lack of diversity among teachers, NJEA has initiated supports, adopted policy, and studied the outline, actions, and goals of the Diverse and Learner-Ready Teacher Initiative instituted by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), which is designed to increase teacher diversity by 2025.

National studies identify New Jersey as lacking diversity in its educational workforce. The percentage of educators of color in New Jersey remains stagnant. Teacher diversity percentages increasingly lag behind the per-

centages of students of color in our public schools.

NJEA TAKES ACTIVE ROLE TO INCREASE EDUCATOR DIVERSITY

NJEA has attended work sessions with the CCSO in conjunction with the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), and various institutions of higher education in an effort to increase racial diversity in the teacher workforce so that it is representative of all K-12 students in our state.

Through the NJEA Minority Leadership and Recruitment Committee, the association encourages members of color to become actively involved in all levels of union work. It also identifies and recommends ways to attract people of color to school employee



NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller testifying before the Senate Education and Senate Higher Education committees on Feb. 7 on the importance of teacher diversity.

professions and develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

In 2015, the NJEA Delegate Assembly adopted a resolution affirming its commitment to a diverse educator workforce. Bills supported by NJEA to establish a pilot program in the NJDOE to recruit minority men to teach in targeted schools through the alternate route program are moving through the Legislature. On Dec. 6, S-703 was referred to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. A-3141, an identical bill, was reported out of the Assembly Education Committee, with amendments, on the same day.

While NJEA supports the legislation, it maintains that it must be expanded to comprehensively address the need for staff diversity in all of New Jersey's public schools. According to a 2017 analysis by the Civil Rights Project at UCLA, New Jersey is already America's sixth most segregated state for black students and the seventh most segregated for Latino students. All of New Jersey's schools need a diverse teaching staff, not just urban districts.

The website version of this story includes a link to Spiller's testimony. Visit njea.org.

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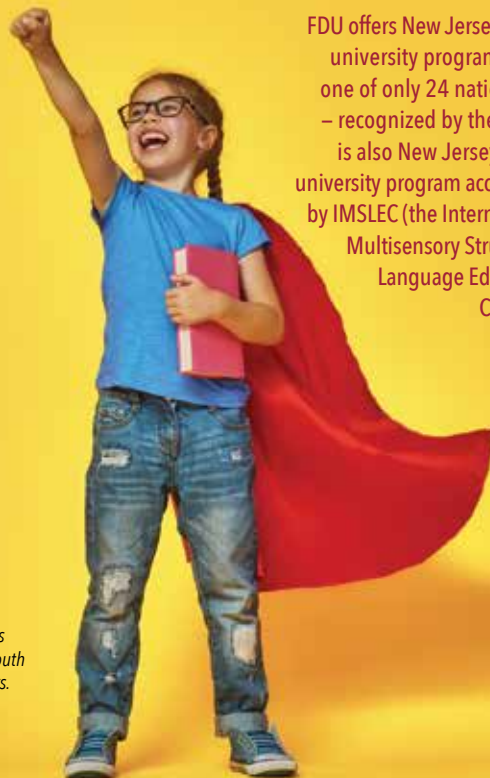
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NJEA FUNDS 47 SUSTAINABILITY GRANTS

At an awards ceremony held on Feb. 4, Sustainable Jersey for Schools announced the 47 New Jersey schools and school districts selected to receive Sustainable Jersey for Schools grants funded by NJEA. Eleven \$10,000 grants and 36 \$2,000 grants were distributed to fund a variety of projects including vertical aeroponic tower gardens, student green team capacity building, outdoor classrooms, innovative recycling efforts and more.

NJEA is proud to head into its fifth year partnering with Sustainable Jersey on the Sustainable Jersey for Schools initiative—also known as SJ4S. With this contribution NJEA has provided a total of one million dollars thus far to support a sustainable future for children across the state through SJ4S.

“Every day in the news we hear more and more about the importance of recycling and creating eco-friendly products, as well as the value of using sustainable resources,” said NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller. “Our job as educators is to prepare the next generation with the skills, information, and resources to

become engaged citizens and leaders in our efforts to save and protect our planet. NJEA is honored to continue to work with Sustainable Jersey on this important program that directs resources into our schools.” In addition to the grant funding, NJEA supports Sustainable Jersey for Schools as a program underwriter.

“Our state’s students and teachers continue to inspire me with their passion for sustainability and commitment to New Jersey’s future,” said Sustainable Jersey Executive Director Randall Solomon. “We are proud to support their efforts with grant money to help realize their vision.”

Proposals were judged by an independent Blue-Ribbon Selection Committee. The Sustainable Jersey for Schools grants are intended to help school districts and schools make progress toward a sustainable future in general, and specifically toward Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification.

For a complete list of grant-receiving schools, visit njea.org/sj4s. 📄

THE NUMBERS

4,320

Number of additional 3- and 4-year-old children who will be able to attend high-quality, state-funded pre-K programs next fall thanks to two rounds of Preschool Education Expansion Aid (PEEA) totaling over \$47 million, championed by Gov. Phil Murphy.

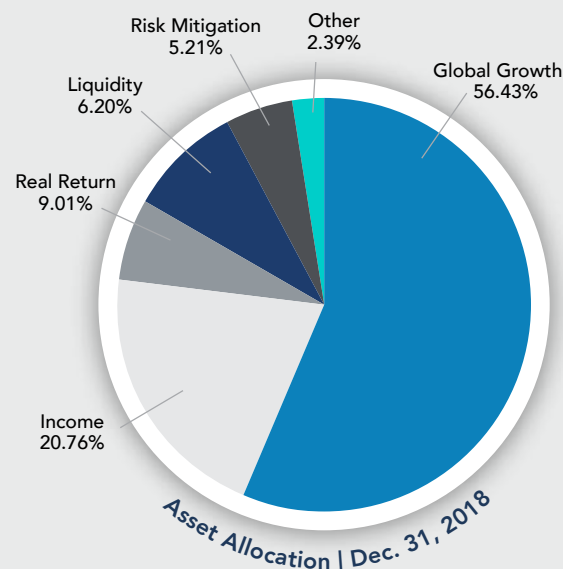
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PENSION UPDATE

TOTAL PENSION FUND: \$72.1 BILLION

The totals below reflect market values as of December 31, 2018, and for comparison, September 30, 2018. The figures, which are rounded, may not reflect the current market values of some alternative investments through the period noted, because of lags in reporting under industry standards.

	Dec 31, 2018		Sept 30, 2018	
	Market Value (\$ billions)	Asset Allocation	Market Value (\$ billions)	Asset Allocation
Global Growth	\$40.69	56.43%	\$45.82	57.69%
Income	\$14.97	20.76%	\$15.22	19.16%
Real Return	\$6.50	9.01%	\$6.69	8.43%
Liquidity	\$4.47	6.20%	\$6.22	7.83%
Risk Mitigation/Capital Preservation	\$3.75	5.21%	\$3.78	4.76%
Other	\$1.73	2.39%	\$1.70	2.14%
Total	\$72.11	100%	\$79.43	100%



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

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East Brunswick EA Bear's Den clothes families in dignity

BY PATRICK RUMAKER

On a cold Saturday morning in February, the first thing that catches your eye when you step into the basement of the East Brunswick Education Association (EBEA) office is a prom dress. The EBEA Bear Necessities Clothing Den, which takes its name from the district mascot, is preparing for prom season. Across the room, you see a few racks of coats.

"This room was never supposed to be used," EBEA President Dana Zimbicki says as she points you to a door to another room. "We just needed more space."

Now you enter what looks like the clothing section of a trendy thrift shop. Several aisles of good quality shirts, jackets and complete outfits hang on racks, organized by size. Tables are filled with neatly folded and sorted pants, sweatshirts and sweaters. Shoes to match the prom dresses are displayed on a tall shelf against a wall. Bear Den guests—East Brunswick residents struggling to afford clothing for their children—are shopping for school and play clothes, trying everything on in one of two spacious dressing rooms.

On spacious shelves behind a curtain, spring and summer outfits are stored in bins for the

spring and summer season. Everything, the shirts, the pants, the dresses, the socks, the coats, the shoes, the undergarments and the prom dresses are all free.

"It's truly a community effort," Zimbicki says.

Zimbicki notes that the owner of Broehl's Landscaping, John Broehl, is heading up the collection of prom and semiformal dresses. He gets the word out through his business and in his role as a deacon at St. Bartholomew's Roman Catholic Church. An EBEA member did the electrical work to install the lighting and much of the infrastructure of the Bear's Den was donated: the carpeting, the racks, the storage bins, and even the paint on the walls.

Area businesses, community organizations and charities have a hand, or paw, in the success of the Bear's Den, including VFW Post #133, Lowes, Home Depot, Carpets and More, Swift Electrical Supply, Alpha Delta Kappa, Pi Kappa Phi-Rutgers, the Middlesex County Retirees' Education Association (MCREA), the East Brunswick Youth Council, the student councils at Robert Frost and Central Elementary schools, the East Brunswick High School staff, Flooring Installation Systems, Inc., All-American Improvements, Eighteen Lumber, Sherwin-Williams, and the Family and Friends of Jill Price. Each of these groups have donated either their time, their talent,



Top photo: EBEA President Dana Zimbicki and EBEA member JoAnn Peterson sort clothing in The Bear's Den, a thrift shop for families in need, created by EBEA and developed by Peterson.

Bottom photo: Middlesex County REA member Gwen Botwinick and EBEA member Lise Noppenberger are among the many NJEA members who volunteer their time in the Bear's Den.

Patrick Rumaker is the editor of the NJEA Review. He can be reached at prumaker@njea.org.

Bear Den guests—East Brunswick residents struggling to afford clothing for their children—are shopping for school and play clothes, trying everything on in one of two spacious dressing rooms.

their treasure or all three to the Bear's Den.

An NJEA PRIDE in Public Education grant funded the clothing racks, shopping baskets and storage bins. The logos of EBEA and NJEA PRIDE adorn the walls.

EBEA members and members of MCREA volunteer their time staffing the Bear's Den and donate much of the clothing.

The East Brunswick Education Foundation (EBEF) recently provided funding to purchase a washer and dryer. EBEA partnered with EBEF. Through the foundation's 501(c)(3) status, the Bear's Den can accept donations, which are tax deductible.

EBEA also partners with Aldersgate United Methodist Church-Crisis Room, which runs a pantry and collects clothing for children and adults. Donated clothing that is damaged or otherwise not suitable for students finds its way to the church, which can sell the clothing by the pound to purchase food for its pantry.

"Oh, that looks cute!" Zimbicki suddenly exclaims as a six-year-old guest tries on a pink winter jacket with her mother's assistance. With the air of a sales clerk, Zimbicki steps away to enthusiastically show her guests a similar jacket in a different color.

As Zimbicki and other EBEA and MCREA volunteers manage the Bear's Den, it's easy to forget that they are school employees and union leaders, not retailers.

GETTING STARTED

At an EBEA Representative Council two years ago, EBEA members discussed the growing need among their students for

clothes to wear to school. Beyond the issue of needing warm clothing for the winter, not having appropriate clothing for school contributed to chronic absenteeism among some students.

JoAnn Peterson, a second-grade teacher at Lawrence Brook Elementary School, quickly volunteered to head up a project to meet the need, saying, "That's right up my alley!" With that, The Bear Necessities Clothing Den was born.

Peterson had previously volunteered in Point Pleasant, sorting clothing donations in the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. She took what she had learned from that experience to create the Bear's Den. Peterson started with donations from EBEA members, who she said provided most of the clothes. Later, Peterson sought donations through other venues, such as the EBEA Facebook page and community partnerships.

The Bear's Den opened its doors to the public on April 14, 2018. It is officially open the second Saturday morning and fourth Thursday afternoon of each month.

It's also unofficially open as needed during EBEA office hours. Zimbicki explained that the East Brunswick school security officers bring homeless families who are sheltered within the township to the Bear's Den so that their children have one less thing to worry about as they enter the district's schools.

"Our main goal is helping the kids," Peterson says.

Peterson explains that the school district's Student Services Department distributes a flier to

families who may need what the Bear's Den has to offer. The flier, under EBEA letterhead reads, "The East Brunswick Education Association would like to invite you to shop at our EBEA Bear Necessities Clothing Den. This invite is intended only for those who need a little extra help in obtaining clothing and other essential items for their school-aged children."

The flier provides details to clarify who is eligible to shop at the Bear's Den, its hours, and what is available in the store.

Peterson notes that some families in need are not comfortable shopping at The Bear's Den. Volunteers find a way to help them.

"We had a couple of children not coming to school because they didn't have shoes," Peterson says. "We have volunteers who will quietly get the students what they need."

RETIREE GENEROSITY

Peterson singled out MCREA members for their support of the Bear's Den.

"They're very generous," she says. "They donate all kinds of clothing—underwear and socks—and they stop in to see what we need."

MCREA member Gwen Botwinick, a special education teacher who retired from East Brunswick in June 2018, is one of the volunteers at the Bear's Den. She spends much of her time sorting through clothing donations, separating out those items she knows that students are not likely to wear. She's sensitive to the feelings of the students who will be wearing

the outfits in hallways of school, knowing that feeling confident among one's peers has an impact on self-confidence and academic achievement.

"I want all kids to feel comfortable being in school," Botwinick says, noting that poverty is not restricted to any one area of the community. "We have guests from all over East Brunswick—not from any one school."

Clothing that doesn't make the cut is not wasted. It finds its way to Aldersgate Church, where it may be more suitable for older adults.

A SUCCESS

Beyond serving families in need, Peterson noted that the Bear's Den has helped meet instructional needs. Students at the East Brunswick campus of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School provide dry cleaning services, and special needs students in the district work with the clothing as part of life skills training.

Peterson, Zimbicki, Botwinick, and other volunteers beam with pride when talking about The Bear's Den and they marvel at its success.

"When this started, I wondered if we could pull it off," Botwinick says. "We were really surprised by the number of people who come here."

Local associations looking to replicate EBEA's Bear Necessities Clothing Den are welcome to email Zimbicki at ebea575@hotmail.com. 📧

As Zimbicki and other EBEA and MCREA volunteers manage the Bear's Den, it's easy to forget that they are school employees and union leaders, not retailers.

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ABSECON SCHOOLS HAPPILY GO TO



Students in Katherine Irwin's class read with a therapy dog named Hope. Irwin is at upper right, seated. Jessica Torricollo, a guidance counselor, is seated on the floor against the closet.

the dogs

THERAPY DOGS SKYE AND HOPE INSPIRE HAPPIER, MORE CONFIDENT LEARNERS

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

As the first bell of the day rings in Absecon's public schools, therapy dogs Skye, 4, and Hope, 2, get to work.

Padding down the hall with a certified handler, one of the 14 staff members who have already undergone intense training, Skye heads to the library for the S.M.I.L.E. program, or Silent Mentors in Literacy Education. He will listen to small groups of first-grade students as they read aloud to him to boost their confidence. Meanwhile, Hope is on her way to sit in on a counseling session with students. After that, she'll visit a self-contained classroom and listen to stories the students have written about her and her brother Skye's exploits.

Since October, Skye and Hope, Greater

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

Swiss mountain dogs who belong to Absecon Superintendent of Schools Dr. Dan Dooley, have been visiting the school twice a week to work with students. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, the dogs have a packed schedule of activities, carefully coordinated by Alaina McCormick-Baner, administrative assistant to the superintendent. Their schedules are color-coded and broken up into 15-minute segments. The activity, name of the handler, number of students participating and assignment location are organized so that everyone is clear about what the dogs are doing.

This is Dr. Dooley's—and the dogs—first year with the district, but they all previously worked in Commercial Twp., Cumberland County.

A RESEARCH-BASED PROGRAM

When he began researching the use of therapy dogs, Dr. Dooley did extensive research on which dogs would be the most effective for his purposes. Working dogs, such as Greater Swiss mountain

dogs, were shown to be hard-working, patient, and adept at reading emotions.

Dr. Dooley also worked with FURever as Friends, a nonprofit based in Gloucester, Salem and Cumberland counties, that brings certified therapy dogs to schools, nursing homes, libraries and more. They also assist with therapy dog certification. Staff who are certified therapy dog handlers proudly wear blue FURever as Friends sweatshirts on days they work with dogs to help identify them.

"In Commercial Township, we built up to having the dogs in the school four or five days a week," Dr. Dooley said. "We saw an immediate impact on the school environment. Students were more confident in the classroom, just by having them there. We saw an improvement in behavior issues. We knew that we were on to something positive."

After joining Absecon School District, Dr. Dooley introduced the therapy dog program

WE SAW AN IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT. STUDENTS WERE MORE CONFIDENT IN THE CLASSROOM, JUST BY HAVING THEM THERE. WE SAW AN IMPROVEMENT IN BEHAVIOR ISSUES. WE KNEW THAT WE WERE ONTO SOMETHING POSITIVE.



Hope is a Greater Swiss mountain dog.

cautiously. He wanted to ensure that all of the stakeholders were part of the discussion and were supportive. In October, the Absecon Board of Education approved the program, and the dogs began visiting the two schools that make up the district: H.A. Marsh Elementary School and Emma C. Attales Middle School.

"We introduced the program in October with four certified staff members," Dr. Dooley said. "By early December, ten more staff members were certified over two days at a training in Logan Township through the FURever as Friends organization. Having such widespread and enthusiastic staff support really enabled each of us to juggle our regular responsibilities, while ensuring that the dogs are being used in the most efficient and effective way."

A POSITIVE IMPACT ON STUDENTS

Jessica Torcicollo is the middle school guidance counselor at Absecon's Emma C. Attales School. She saw firsthand the positive impact the dogs had on students' emotional health in Commercial Township and was confident that Absecon's students would benefit.

"I have seen a student with his head on the desk, having a meltdown," Torcicollo said. "He wouldn't respond to anyone. But after ten minutes with Skye, he had a smile and was ready to go back to class."

She uses the dogs for one-on-one counseling, small group work, for meltdowns, and as an incentive for good behavior.

One concern was how Muslim students would respond. Some Muslims have a faith-based objection to interacting with dogs. Dr. Dooley made sure to communicate with parents about the dogs and to emphasize that no child would have any contact with the dogs without parental permission.

"We want to be very respectful of students and their comfort around the dogs," Dr. Dooley said. "So far, more than 300 students have submitted parental approval to engage with the dogs."

Middle school special education teacher Stephanie Swift believes the dogs also improve the relationships among staff and students.

"The children get a kick out of seeing administrators, teachers and staff engage with the dogs," Swift said. "They see us getting on the floor with the dogs and interacting with Hope and Skye, sometimes in silly ways. That helped us build a bond with our students, especially earlier in the school year."

Swift also believes that the dogs pick up on "silent sufferers," students who present as doing well, but who are really struggling internally.

"Dr. Dooley brought the dogs in during testing," Swift recalled. "Students were trying to soothe themselves but the dogs really helped them get past their test-taking anxiety."

Joe Giardina, the principal at Marsh Elementary School, has seen how the dogs help the students deal with anxiety. Absecon is the last mainland town before Atlantic City, and since the closing of several casinos launched the region into an economic crisis, some students have been struggling with changing economic situations and family dynamics.

"For a variety of reasons, we have observed more challenging behavior across the board," Giardina said. "Hope and Skye are really helpful with addressing students' behavior before it rises to a level that mandates greater intervention."

STAFF ENTHUSIASM

It's not just the students who benefit from the therapy dogs. Staff has been enthusiastic, as well.

Middle School Principal Kevin Burns, echoing President Harry Truman's famous quote, joked,

"After 20 years in education, I finally found a friend."

Absecon Education Association President Robert Broomhead said the dogs have had a powerful impact on the entire school community.

"Dr. Dooley's willingness to share his dogs speaks to trust and building a mutually respectful environment in the district," Broomhead said.

Broomhead has seen the impact on his own family. His daughter is a student in Absecon Public Schools. At first, she was hesitant about the dogs, which are massive.

"She gets excited about when the dogs will be in the school now, and she's talking more about her day."

"Absecon is a family," Dr. Dooley said. "And the dogs helped us facilitate the transition to a new administration. For other districts interested in implementing this program, I would recommend starting small and seeing how all the stakeholders respond. Make sure the board, community, and staff are supportive and start with a half-day or a couple of hours. Some organizations will bring a therapy dog into a school as a trial."

Dr. Dooley and the other certified handlers are eager to share their success with the program, and welcome requests from other districts on how to implement similar therapy dog programs.

A LASTING IMPACT

"We are working to demonstrate the validity of this program in a quantitative way," Dooley said. "The staff team is collecting data on the number of students served and measurable ways we can assess the impact. We are excited about this program, but it's something that you really have to see firsthand. Most, but not all students, really respond," Dr. Dooley said.

Many board members and people in the community have asked to meet the dogs. Skye and

Hope have visited a senior living community; the popular food festival, CRABsecon; and there are plans for them to attend a youth football game.

Hope and Skye aren't the only animal superstars in Absecon. Third-grade class rabbits Mutters and Mr. Wiggles were recently certified as therapy animals. But their popularity predates their certification. In the past, the rabbits led the Halloween parade, in costume, of course, and have an impressive wardrobe that is primarily made by students.

From a financial perspective, the district is running the therapy dog program at zero to very low cost to taxpayers. The dogs are covered under Dr. Dooley's homeowner's policy for \$4 million per dog, and each handler is covered at \$4 million. Because they worked with FURever as Friends, the nonprofit carries an additional \$1 million per dog, per handler.

The only costs to the district has been the training for the handlers, which was considered professional development by the district, and bookmarks, pencils, and coloring books of Hope and Skye that are used as incentives for the students.

According to Dr. Dooley, if another district hoped to replicate the program, the same budget and insurance protocols would apply, even if the owner of the dogs were not the superintendent of schools.

Dr. Dooley originated the program with Skye, who was donated by a breeder who really believed in the value of therapy dogs. The one caveat the breeder had: that Skye be shown professionally.

That led Dr. Dooley and Skye to a whole new arena: the world of professional show dogs. In 2017 and 2018, Skye was invited to compete in the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. He has had more than 30 "Best of Breed" wins and has placed as high as fourth in the country.

But the Absecon community doesn't need anyone else to tell them their dogs are stars; they see it every Tuesday and Thursday. Skye has already done more than 270 visits to schools, nursing homes, mental health facilities, hospitals, at-home hospice, and colleges. Hope tails him with just over 100. In the coming year, Dr. Dooley and the team hope to bring the dogs into the school on a daily basis in order to meet more requests, and they are launching an Instagram account @skye_and_hope_gsm. Dr. Dooley said, "We know that working with these animals will have a lasting positive impact on their emotional and behavioral health, and is helping to inspire confidence and a love of learning."

"Our team, which includes administrators, child study team members, counselors, the school librarian, secretaries, and special education teachers, is really committed to enabling more students to engage with Skye and Hope," Dr. Dooley said. "We know that working with these animals will have a lasting positive impact on their emotional and behavioral health, and is helping to inspire confidence and a love of learning."



Hope with a student in Katherine Irwin's class.



Left to right: Supt. Dan Dooley, Principal Kevin Burns, Absecon EA President Bob Broomhead, Counselor Mary Alvarado, Supt. Adm. Asst. Alaina Baner, Counselor Jessica Torricollo, Dir. of Special Services/Curriculum Lindsay Reed, Librarian Rachael Wescoat, Teacher Katherine Irwin, Teacher Stephanie Swift, and Principal Joe Giardina. Hope and Skye, in orange and blue vests respectively.



Katherine Irwin's students reading to Hope.



Planned student participation in parent-teacher conferences fosters a team mentality.

WHEN A PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE TURNS SOUR

BY MELISSA ANTINOFF

It's your worst nightmare. What started as a friendly discussion with a parent about a student has suddenly turned sour. The parent is livid, your stomach is in knots, and you don't know what to do to turn this conference around. It happens to every teacher, seasoned and new. How do you get out of this unscathed?

It all comes down to preparation before the conference.

FORM A PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PARENTS

Any time a child is not making the right decisions in their behavior, or they are struggling academically, I start the discussion—whether through email, on the phone, or in person—with, “I need your help. You know your child best. [Child's name] is [state behavior, no judgment]. Do you see this at home? How do you handle it? What works best?” Parents are willing to work with me because I am not accusing their children of being monsters; rather, I am asking them for advice.

If behavior is an issue, I email the parents within the first couple of weeks of school. I follow up for a few days, letting the parents know if there was an improvement. If there isn't, I suggest a behavior plan and work with the parents so that there is a reward or consequence at home. The student sees that their parents and I are working together.

Melissa Antinoff is the 2019 Burlington County Teacher of the Year. She has been an elementary educator since 1993. Antinoff specializes in developing a love of reading in her students. She loves watching nonreaders blossom into avid readers. Her experiences with read alouds and teaching reading can be found in the last three editions of Jim Trelease's Read-Aloud Handbook. Antinoff was interviewed for the latest edition, which will be published this fall. Antinoff was a Teacher Leader with Columbia University's Teacher's College 2016-18 and ran lab sites in her school in Reader's and Writer's Workshop. She also developed a word study program that transfers spelling patterns to her students' reading and writing and has created an in-service course, “Word Study Can Be the Best Part of Your Day!” Antinoff is active in her school community and has taught family nights in reading, math, and science. Antinoff can be reached at Mrs.Antinoff@gmail.com.

I end the conversation with, “We are a team—you, me, and your child—and we work together so that your child is successful.”

Be aware, though, that tones can be read into emails. If a parent is not receptive to your email, or the child's behavior has not changed, request a face-to-face meeting.

SHOW THE PARENT YOU KNOW THEIR CHILD

To a parent, their child is the best, most special child in the world. While we love all our students (or try to), we have a class full of special children. Every parent wants to see that you know their child well, their weaknesses and strengths, what makes them more special than other people's children (in the parent's opinion). While it can seem overwhelming to get to know each student, especially when you have 150 of them for 40 minutes each day, you can learn a lot about your students through conferencing. Are they focused when you speak with them? Can they work with other students? Are they afraid to try a new skill because they don't want to fail? Are they receptive to your suggestions? All this information will allow you to show the parent you know their child.

My mother is a retired teacher. When she attended my brother's conference in middle school, the teacher started the conference with, “Your son owes me a ton of work.” My mother's first instinct was, “Wait until I get home. He's in so much trouble.”

She also questioned why this was the first she had heard of it; why hadn't this teacher contacted her? She would have made sure my brother completed his assignments. The teacher went through his grade book, page by page, and had nothing to say. He eventually apologized and explained he had mixed my brother up with another student. My mother was disgusted; this teacher did not know her son.

My mother learned then to always have an index card with notes ready before every conference. I now do this, along with copies of the child's work, so that I am prepared to speak about that particular child. I never want a parent to feel about me the way my mother felt about that teacher.

IT IS OUR JOB TO TEACH THE PARENTS HOW WORK IS GRADED. THE MORE THEY KNOW ABOUT HOW THEIR CHILD IS DOING, THE MORE WILLING THEY WILL BE TO WORK WITH YOU.

IF YOU KNOW YOU ARE GOING INTO A SITUATION WHERE THE PARENT IS GOING TO BE ANGRY, HAVE A COUNSELOR, ADMINISTRATOR OR COLLEAGUE WITH YOU.

THE REPORT CARD SHOULD NEVER BE A SURPRISE

Whether the child struggles with academics or behavior, the report card should never be the first time a parent learns of this. With report cards changing from letter grades to standards-based scoring, parents often don't understand how their child is doing. The first time I hand back a graded assignment in any subject with a rubric, I attach a letter explaining how the scores translate to the report card. I like to have work to show the parents at conferences, so I copy assignments and rubrics to send home.

I broke this rule this past November and shouldn't have. I kept my third graders' published pieces from the first writing unit to discuss with parents at conferences. Unfortunately, a parent was livid with me. This was the first time it was made clear to her that her child was not doing his work, but just socializing. While I had written notes and emails home telling her about his behavior, she didn't understand the impact his behavior had on his school work. I should have included how little writing her child was doing in my emails and notes about his behavior. Now, if I need to keep an assessment for the child's cumulative folder or for my own files, I copy it and send it home so that the parents know exactly how their child is doing.

It is our job to teach the parents how work is graded. It might be clear as day to us, but parents don't understand growth between pre- and post-assessments. We need to explain it clearly to them. The more they know about how their child is doing, the more willing they will be to work with you.

INVITE THE STUDENT TO THE CONFERENCE

When I first began teaching, it aggravated me when the parents would bring their child to the conference. How could I talk about the child right in front of them? About half-way through my teaching career, I was teaching fourth grade and my principal trained the teachers in "student-led conferences." I taught the kids how to assess their strengths and weaknesses by analyzing their work, and the child gave the conference. I came in at the end. It lasted about 15 minutes.

It was amazing. Kids rarely talk with their parents about how school is going, and now they were having deep discussions about their performance in school. When I joined, we could talk about concerns and work as a team to solve them. I also had 100 percent attendance. Every single parent came. When was the last time you had that?

Now, I invite the student to join their parents every conference. The parents tell me every year how much they like it. It fosters a "team mentality." I had an extremely anxious student a couple of years ago who would burst into tantrums when he couldn't handle his emotions. At his conference, we brainstormed strategies that he could use the next time he felt overwhelmed. He wrote them on one of my post-its with my pen—the kids LOVE using your supplies—and taped it to the inside of his desk. When I could see the emotions beginning to erupt, I could remind him to look at the post-it and help him choose a strategy that would help him.

HAVE EXAMPLES OF GRADE-LEVEL WORK TO COMPARE TO YOUR STUDENTS' WORK

We forget as educators that parents don't know what the writing should look like or how to interpret a running record. Have examples of reading assessments, grade-level writing, and math to compare to each student's work. Start with a compliment, indicating what the student is doing well. When you begin to explain what the child needs to work on, use terms like "Sophia is still working on..." Finish with restating what the student does well and that her goal is going to be what she is working on. For the rest of the school year, you can refer to her goal.

When that mother was so angry, I showed her what a third grader's narrative writing should look like, then compared it to the three sentences her child had written. I started with a compliment ("Bobby wrote a beautiful lead...") and then explained the parts her son was missing. Then, I explained the goal her son had: to socialize less and elaborate more. Parents are more likely to accept their child isn't progressing when you use more positive words.

SIT NEXT TO A PARENT

I don't like having a desk or table between a parent and me. That is a physical barrier. Instead, I sit next to the parent on the same side of the table. Our body language says so much and sitting with a parent instead of across from them gives the message, "I'm with you." I also sit next to my students when speaking with them, not across from them, and I make sure I'm down at their level.

WHEN THE PARENT IS HOSTILE

Years ago, I looped with a class, teaching them for kindergarten and then first grade. In spring of the first-grade year, a parent came to a conference with anger radiating from him. It was palpable. Before I could begin the conference, he growled, "Brian says you told him you would hit him if he didn't stop talking!" I laughed. It was so ludicrous, I was sure he was joking. I had had this student for two years and this parent knew me. When he didn't laugh back, and I realized this wasn't a joke, I said, "Wait, you're serious?"

The father moved into my personal space and yelled, "Yes! He says you are going to hit him! Why would you tell him that?"

I immediately went to call for my principal. Do not meet with a hostile parent without an administrator present. She came right down and was able to soothe this angry father.

If you know you are going into a situation where the parent is going to be angry, have a counselor, administrator, or colleague with you. Introduce everyone as part of the team that's going to work together to help the child. Do not meet with the parent alone.

If you aren't able to turn the meeting into a positive one, say, "Let's stop here and meet again another time." When everyone is angry, nothing is productive. Often, time to cool off is all it takes to have a positive meeting. Before the next meeting, make a game plan with your administrator. Anticipate anything that may go wrong and plan how to handle it, so everyone is calm. Remember to bring the student into the meeting, even if it's after you have met with the parent, so everyone can plan a goal for the child.

WHEN A PARENT COMPLAINS ABOUT YOU TO YOUR PRINCIPAL

No matter how long you've been an educator, being called down to the principal's office can make you feel sick. Knowing it's because of a parent complaint makes it worse. If you are lucky, your principal will support you. However, we have all had administrators who don't.

Let your building rep know if you are meeting with your principal and you think it's going to be a negative meeting. If you believe there is a possibility that disciplinary action will be taken against you, bring your building rep with you to that meeting. When discussing the meeting with your building rep, remember to protect the student's confidentiality. Do not identify the student or family in question.

Bring documentation to the meeting. Make sure you keep a log of any phone calls you have made with detailed notes. Print out emails and copy any notes you have sent home, along with anything you have received from the parent. Just like you have exemplars of work to compare to a student's work, make sure you have all the correspondence you have had with the parent.

Conferences don't need to be a nightmare. Just like we need to prepare our lessons, we need to prepare for our conferences. The more you have prepared, the smoother it will go. If it does go south, get help so that next time, it will be a positive experience. 🏠

2020

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

BY HANK BITTEN,
NJCSS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

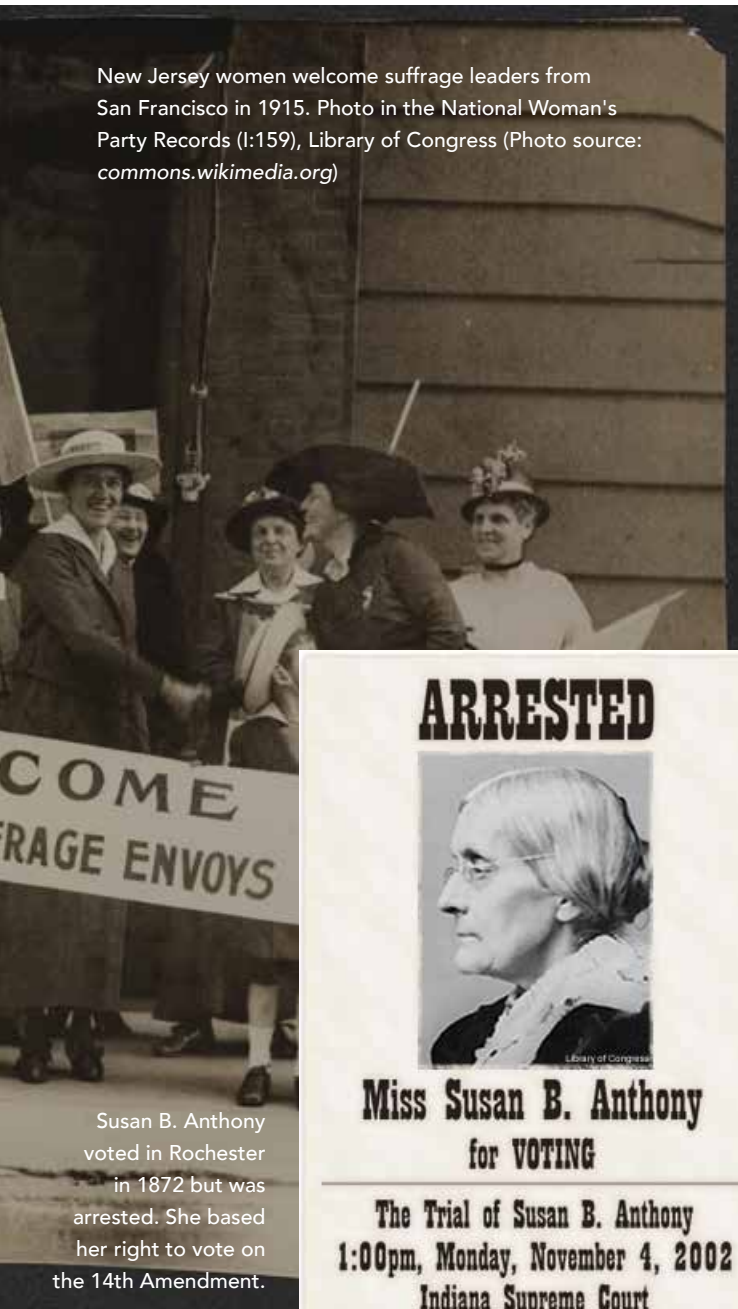
One of the most exciting historical anniversaries is on the horizon, and the time to plan community events and student projects is now! The history of the franchise to vote in the United States is an important part of civics, U.S. History, and World History. This is an amazing achievement in contemporary history as every country in the world gives women the right to vote except Brunei and Vatican City. New Zealand was the first in 1893 and Saudi Arabia is the most recent in 2011.



AS MANY AS 10,000 WOMEN VOTED IN NEW
JERSEY BETWEEN 1790 AND 1807.

AT LEAST 858 NEW JERSEY WOMEN VOTED OR ATTEMPTED TO VOTE IN NEW JERSEY AFTER THE RATIFICATION OF THE 14TH AND 15TH AMENDMENTS.

New Jersey women welcome suffrage leaders from San Francisco in 1915. Photo in the National Woman's Party Records (1:159), Library of Congress (Photo source: commons.wikimedia.org)



Susan B. Anthony voted in Rochester in 1872 but was arrested. She based her right to vote on the 14th Amendment.

At the time of the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the creation of the United States of America in 1789, voting was limited to debt-free male property holders, or freeholders. Representation in the Congress was determined by counting all natural born and naturalized citizens and 60 percent of the enslaved African-American population in states with slavery.

In its 1776 constitution, New Jersey gave the right to vote to "free inhabitants of the State" who were over the age of majority (age 21), had more than £50 of wealth and had lived in New Jersey for more than six months." New Jersey was unique in permitting women who met these criteria to vote. The other twelve original states all had constitutions specifically stating that voters had to be male.

New Jersey's suffrage clause applied mostly to single women, because a married woman lost her legal identity as a result of coverture and was therefore not permitted to own property. Free black voters, who owned enough property could also vote. In *Reclaiming Lost Ground*, Margaret Crocco reported that as many as 10,000 women voted in New Jersey between 1790 and 1807.

Elections in New Jersey were often close and contested. An election in 1807 over the location of a new Essex County courthouse resulted in claims of fraudulent voting. The now defunct township of Acquackanonk (now Paterson and surrounding communities) with 350 eligible voters recorded nearly 1,900 votes. As a result, New Jersey's constitution was modified on Nov. 16, 1807 by the passage of an election law that "reinterpreted" the state constitution's suffrage clause and passed an election law that

redefined voters solely as "adult white male taxpaying citizens."

MILESTONES IN VOTING RIGHTS

Access to voting expanded over the course of time, either at the state or national level. Key changes occurred during the following presidential administrations:

- Andrew Jackson (1829-1837): many states removed the requirement of a freeholder
- Ulysses Grant (1869-1877): the ratification of the 15th Amendment removed race or prior slavery status as an impediment to voting.
- Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921): the ratification of the 19th Amendment extended to women the right to vote.
- Lyndon Johnson (1963-1969): the ratification of the 24th Amendment outlawed poll taxes and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed literacy tests as conditions for voting.
- Richard Nixon (1969-1974): the ratification of the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18.

THE LONG CAMPAIGN FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

The 72-year campaign for women suffrage formally began in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York. The Seneca Falls Convention adopted the Declaration of Sentiments, modeling it after the Declaration of Independence. In its catalog of "injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman," the sentiment, "He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise," heads the list.

The language of the 14th and 15th amendments empowered many women to test their right to vote. The 14th Amendment reads:

"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the

Hank Bitten is the executive director of the New Jersey Council for the Social Studies and an independent curriculum consultant. He taught history in the Ridgewood Public Schools and was a supervisor in the Ramapo Indian Hills High School District. Bitten can be reached at hb288@sasmail.rutgers.edu.

United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

After the ratification of the 14th Amendment, Susan B. Anthony and her sisters were among 15 women who voted on Nov. 5, 1872, claiming that the state of New York could not “abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens.” About 50 other women attempted to vote in the Rochester area but were turned away. At her two-day trial in June 1873, Anthony was convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of \$100 and court costs.

NEW JERSEY WOMEN AND THE 14TH AND 15TH AMENDMENTS

Using news clippings and other sources, Susan B. Anthony kept careful records from 1868 to 1872 of attempts by women to vote following the ratification of the 14th and 15th amendments. Her records show that at least 858 New Jersey women voted or attempted to vote in New Jersey after the ratification of the 14th and 15th amendments.

MARCH 1868, VINELAND, LOCAL ELECTION

Portia K. Gage tried to vote and was refused because she had not registered.

MAY 1868, PASSAIC, LOCAL ELECTION

Women voted at an election for Commissioner of Streets and Sidewalks.

NOVEMBER 1868, ROSEVILLE

Hannah Blackwell and Lucy Stone tried to vote.

NOVEMBER 1868, VINELAND, FEDERAL ELECTION

Having provided their own ballots and box, 172 women, both white and black, voted.

MARCH 1869, VINELAND, LOCAL ELECTION

In a separate ballot box, 182 women cast ballots.

NOVEMBER 1869, VINELAND, COUNTY ELECTION

In a separate ballot box, 214 women voted.

MARCH 1870, VINELAND, LOCAL ELECTION

In a separate box, 161 women cast ballots.

NOVEMBER 1870, VINELAND

About 130 women cast ballots in a separate box.

MARCH 1871, HAMMONTON

Fifteen women tried to vote.

DECEMBER 1871, LANDIS TOWNSHIP, LOCAL ELECTION

Portia K. Gage and 10 to 12 other taxpaying women tried to vote in an election on bonding the town to build factories.

NOVEMBER 1872, JERSEY CITY

Two women tried to register to vote.

Source: The Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony Project, ecssba.rutgers.edu/resources/wompolls.html

CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS

Students should understand that there is a direct relationship between the inalienable right of the pursuit of happiness in the Declaration of Independence and the right to vote for representatives in the local, state and federal government to provide opportunities for citizens. This is an important concept in American history regarding voter participation and attempts to restrict or suppress voting. Too many students perceive the phrase “pursuit of happiness” as abstract words without substance. They should analyze its relationship to how citizens implement their inalienable rights of life and liberty.

The New Jersey Council for the Social Studies (NJCSS) is collaborating with the Alice Paul Institute and other historical groups in New Jersey in planning programs for students, teachers and the public. The main event that NJCSS would like schools to recognize is Feb. 9, 2020, the date that New Jersey ratified the 19th Amendment. NJCSS is considering a statewide digital vote for students as an activity for schools in each of

the 21 counties in New Jersey.

NJCSS, the New Jersey Historical Commission, New Jersey Women Vote, the Alice Paul Institute and other historical groups in New Jersey are developing plans to celebrate the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage. These include professional development workshops for teachers in May and July 2019 that will feature Janet Moore Lindman of Rowan University and Erica Ryan of Rider University as keynote speakers. Participants will engage with documents and classroom resources to collaborate on the development of a model lesson or activity.

Teachers interested in these programs should visit the website of njcss.org for information on their dates, locations and to register. Programs and activities for students are also being planned.

New Jersey National History Day will promote research related to women’s suffrage combining their professional development with the workshops sponsored by New Jersey Women Vote and coordinated by the New Jersey Historical Commission, the Alice Paul Institute and the NJCSS. The national theme for National History Day 2020 is “Breaking Barriers in History,” which provides the perfect platform for performances, documentaries, exhibits, papers and websites highlighting women’s suffrage.

For more information on New Jersey National History Day, email njhstoryday@wpunj.edu. 📧

FOR MORE INFORMATION

These resources expand upon information highlighted in this article.

“For a Few Decades in the 18th Century, Women and African-Americans Could Vote in New Jersey: Then Some Politicians Got Angry,” by Kat Eschner. *Smithsonian* Nov. 16, 2017. Visit bit.ly/nj18centuryvote.

“Did You Know: Women and African Americans Could Vote in NJ before the 15th and 19th Amendments?” National Park Service. Visit bit.ly/npsvoting.

“Confrontations for Justice: Mr. Beverly Jones – Susan B. Anthony at the Voting Polls, 1872,” Eyewitness: American Originals from the National Archives. Visit bit.ly/sbanthony1872.

The Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony Project, Rutgers University Visit ecssba.rutgers.edu/resources/wompolls.html.

THE NEW JERSEY COUNCIL FOR THE
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GET THE WORD OUT CHECK THOSE GYM FLOORS FOR MERCURY

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

"Local leaders should ask the administration about those rubberized floors," says Tracie Yostpille. "If you have them, they need to be tested."

As president of Freehold Township Education Association (FTEA), that's a lesson she learned quickly last fall. Despite years as a local leader, she'd never heard about the hazard with rubber-like polyurethane floors in gyms and other school spaces.

The district facilities use manager stumbled onto it at an August workshop. There, someone talked about what made the floors more pliable: a hazardous chemical called phenol mercuric acetate (PMA). Over time, and with use, it can break down, releasing toxic mercury vapor. (The hazards are listed on the side box.) The chemical is invisible, odorless, and comes off at room temperature; the warmer it is, the more off-gasses.

The district took action, arranging for the gym floor to be tested. It worked with FTEA, using NJEA's health and safety resources. They did air tests, closed the gym where test results were high, agreed to a presentation from a New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC) hygiene consultant, and gave staff time off for health tests. The custodian, who also is chair of the union's health and safety committee "was vital in ensuring follow-up," Yostpille says.

The concrete floor also had high mercury levels, so the board will dig deeper. Next summer, the concrete will be removed down to where the mercury levels are really low, and a new floor will be installed.

"I think we're in a good place now," Yostpille says. "Because I have a strong union, I can make a phone call to get services for my members, to protect their health and safety. Working with the union and administration, we remediated something that could have been dreadful."

Dorothy Wigmore is a long-time health and safety specialist, trained in occupational hygiene, ergonomics, work organization/stress and education. A former journalist, the Canadian has worked in the U.S. and Mozambique and been involved in efforts to prevent violence on the job since 1989.

Other districts have not responded as Freehold did. In another district, parents and the local had to work together to get information and action.

HOW MANY MORE ARE OUT THERE?

Although NJEA and WEC issued an alert in 2017, only 11 locals have asked for help with mercury in gym floors. The union suspects there are more mercury-laced floors out there, and some tests have had high results. You can read the alert at njea.org/mercuryalert.

The problem goes beyond the floors. Once the PMA breaks down, the floors, and anything in contact with them, emit mercury indefinitely. It's worse if the floors are damaged or deteriorated, the room is hot, and/or ventilation is poor—especially if there's no outside air. Covering or sealing them is often ineffective. Mercury can penetrate and contaminate the materials placed on top, adding to costs of fixing the hazard.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

1. Find and report suspect floors

- Use your health and safety committee or set one up.
- Ask the superintendent what kind of floors are in the school. Can they confirm or rule out the possibility that mercury is in the rubberized ones?
- At the same time, the committee can explore the school, looking for rubber-like floors that fit this description: Not wood or vinyl tile. Resilient, rubber-like, water-resistant. Can be any color. Usually poured into place.
- Use NJEA's brief form, found at njea.org/find-report-floors, which helps report possible problems. Report suspect floors to your association representative.

2. If you find a suspect floor, demand tests

- The only way to know if a floor contains mercury is to test it. A competent person collects several small bulk samples that are the full floor thickness. They can do others for the concrete underneath. An accredited lab does the analysis.
- If results are above 1 part per million (ppm), the air needs to be checked. Proper tests are

done for a whole day in representative spots at the level of people's breathing zones (different for students and staff). For worst-case scenarios, doors and windows are closed, the ventilation system is turned off for 24 hours, and the room is as warm as on a hot day. Accredited labs analyze the samples.

- The sampling instrument must be able to measure extremely low concentrations. It needs to be able to pull in enough air to get to a low detection level (e.g., 0.1 µg/m³), because mercury has toxic effects at very low levels.
- Ask your UniServ representative for technical help, including how to interpret the results.

3. How do you know if the numbers are high?


The California Office of Environmental Health and Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) numbers are your best guide. You'll find them at oehha.ca.gov/chemicals/mercury-inorganic. They are far more protective than others. Minnesota's—the one employers prefer to use—is more than 10 times higher than California's 60 ng/m³ (also reported as 0.06 µg/m³).

4. What solutions are needed for unacceptable levels?

- The district should regularly provide clear information about what's happening—for staff, students, parents, contractors and visitors. It also should provide information about mercury's hazards and post warning signs.
- The local association should educate members about mercury's hazards and their health and safety rights.
- The best solution is to remove the floor and any contaminated concrete under it when there are few people in the building. Since the floors will release high amounts of mercury, trained contractors must do the work, protecting themselves, the school and people in it. As hazardous waste, the removed material must be disposed of properly.
- After removal, "clearance tests" should be done to ensure that mercury air levels are down. Results should not be more than 0.06 µg/m³ or the "background" level (it

may be a bit higher).

· Until the floor is removed, the choices depend on the situation:

- Close the space off and increase the temperature and ventilation to release as much mercury vapour as possible, while paying attention to where it goes outside (avoid doing this if the exhaust is near air intakes, where children play, or people gather).
- If the gym must be used, or there are problems with where the exhaust goes, the ventilation or air conditioning needs to bring in lots of fresh air, the temperature should be low, and the room under negative pressure.
- Prevent installation of new mercury-containing floors. The district needs specs for new rubber-like floors and written statements from the manufacturer that they don't contain a mercury catalyst. The local union and health and safety committee should demand this. 

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR): "Mercury and Your Health," bit.ly/atsdrmercury

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH): "Mercury," bit.ly/cdcmercury

NJEA, WEC and the Healthy Schools Now Coalition: "Mercury hazard to staff and students from rubber-like floors in schools," njea.org/download/14509

New Jersey School Board Association (NJSBA) (with NJEA, WEC and the Healthy Schools Now Coalition) Health and Safety Guide: "Mercury hazard in schools from rubber-like polyurethane floors," njea.org/download/14515

MERCURY CAN AFFECT:

- The brain (starting with tremors, people appear drunk, leading to memory loss, and more; also affects behavior and personality)
- Kidneys
- Lungs
- Eyes
- Skin
- The fetus
- Heart rate and blood pressure
- Young children more than adults

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**- Christina Sebak, Social Studies,
Wayne Valley High School**

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A CLOSER LOOK

AT MUSIC EDUCATION

Thousands of "Classroom Close-up NJ" segments are viewable and downloadable at classroomcloseup.org. A searchable database makes finding an entire show or individual segments on any topic easy.

March is Music in Our Schools Month. To survey the broad selection of music-related show segments "Classroom Close-up NJ" has produced, visit classroomcloseup.org, click on drop-down menu under "Categories" and select among the multiple subject areas that connect to music.

On this page, three of those segments are highlighted.

watch

JAMMIN' WITH JULIO

A select group of music students at Hoboken High School have the honor of jamming with Julio Fernandez, a jazz guitarist for Spyro Gyra. A former graduate of Hoboken High, Fernandez returns to visit with the students, his former band director John Cuozzo and fellow band member from the 1970s Gary Enrico. While at the school, Fernandez was presented with an NJEA Award of Excellence, which is given to graduates of New Jersey high schools who have excelled in their field.

MUSIC MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Music makes a difference in the lives of students with disabilities who attend Joseph F. Cappello School, which is part of the Mercer County Special Services School District. Eric Marozine teaches children with autism and cognitive impairments how to enjoy music and develop some motor skills. For these children, small miracles consist of a smile or a simple nod to the music.

RUMPELSAURUS

New Egypt Elementary School teacher Janet Popyk teams up with family, community members, parents, and about 95 students from all grade levels to put on the 12th annual musical. Crossing over two eras, the 50s and the caveman period, an adventure with dinosaur called Rumpelsaurus teaches moral lessons on bullying and friendship.

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NJEA's "Classroom Close-up NJ" has won 16 Emmy® awards. It inspires and educates the public about the great things happening in New Jersey public schools. The show airs on Sundays on NJTV at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.



classroomcloseup.org

Visit classroomcloseup.org to watch individual segments or the entire show. On Twitter, follow @CCUNJ and "like" the show at [facebook.com/crcunj](https://www.facebook.com/crcunj). On Youtube, visit [youtube.com/c/classroomcloseup](https://www.youtube.com/c/classroomcloseup). On Instagram, search Classroom Close Up.



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SHOWCASE

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

NJAGC 2019 CONFERENCE:

IGNITE PASSION WITH PURPOSE

The annual conference of the New Jersey Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC), "Ignite Passion with Purpose," will be held Friday, March 22 at the Conference Center at Mercer. The program is open to educators, curriculum supervisors and administrators.

Participants will hear the keynote, attend one breakout session in the morning, and attend two breakout sessions in the afternoon. Jeff Danielian, specialist in the affective needs of gifted and talented students, creativity and eminence, and the school-home connection will present the keynote.

The keynote session and workshops will address what motivates gifted students to take ownership of their learning and how to inspire students to leave their comfort zones, capitalize on their passions and persevere through the inevitable failure they will encounter along the way, while incorporating the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Presenters will also speak on how to pursue and share unique interests and talents while developing individual skills and knowledge in the gifted field. Speakers will provide an overview of skills, share activities and materials, and explore the educational and social emotional needs of high ability students. Two computer labs will be available for technology sessions.

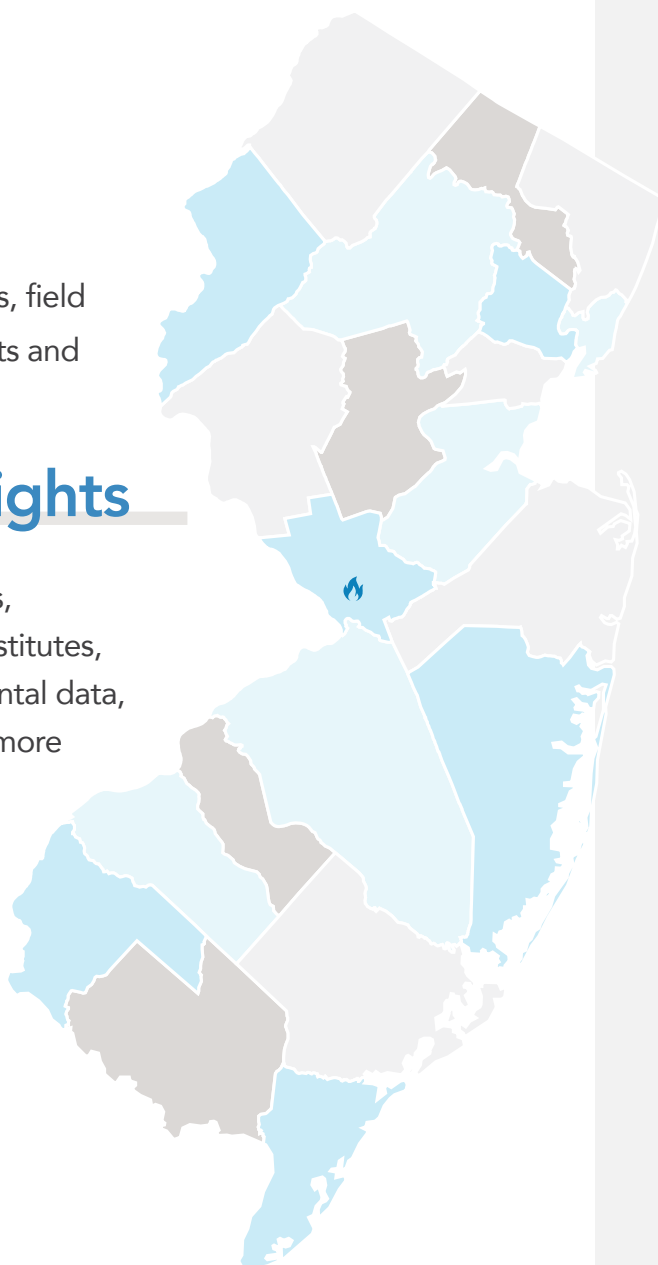
The purpose of this conference is to provide opportunities for classroom teachers, teachers of the gifted, administrators and curriculum coordinators to gain insight into the educational and social/emotional needs of gifted students and to support all those responsible for educating the gifted child.

Registration fees run from \$159 to \$219, depending on membership in NJAGC. Contact Sue Bosnjak at 856-273-7530 or bosnjaks@njagc.org for more information. Visit njagc.org to register.

Workshops, field trips, grants and more

highlights

Best books, summer institutes, environmental data, math and more



MORE TO LEARN ACROSS THE STATE

EARTH SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The New Jersey Earth Science Teachers Association Annual Conference, "Visualizing Natural and Human Changes in Earth Systems," will take place on Saturday, March 16 at Palmyra Cove Nature Park from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Our Earth is ever changing naturally and through human activities. Our space-based Earth observing system along with ground-based observations provide documentation of these changes happening at local, regional, and global scales. At the conference you will learn about the latest, student-friendly technologies for monitoring and analyzing the Earth system and how to involve your students in collecting data to monitor and visualize for change in their local area.

The topics addressed within the conference include those found in Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) ESS2 and ESS3. These coupled with selected science and engineering practices and crosscutting concepts make the conference a perfect event to gather resources for your NGSS classroom. Join our expert line-up and your colleagues for an inspirational day connecting with Earth systems.

For details and to register, go to njesta.org. Registration closes March 8. Contact Missy Holzer, PhD for additional information at mholzer@monmouth.com.

APPLYING SCIENCE PRACTICES TO DATA COLLECTION IN THE FIELD

Most schools have access to outdoor spaces to collect data related to localized phenomena. However, the challenges in doing so include minimal teacher experience, lack of supplies, safety in the field and connecting the content to science content in meaningful ways. This one-day workshop will provide support in all these challenges as participants identify ecology and Earth science phenomena and collect field data to make sense of the phenomena.

Join the New Jersey Earth Science Teachers Association (NJESTA) and the Biology Teachers Association of New Jersey (BTANJ) on

Saturday, April 6 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Duke Farms in Hillsborough for this middle school and high school level workshop linking core ideas, science practices, and crosscutting concepts.

Participants will receive materials that will assist them in replicated field studies in and/or around their school campuses. Professional development hours will be provided. Enrollment is limited to 25 participants. Meals are included. For details and to register, go to bit.ly/dukedatafield. Registration closes March 15.

Contact Missy Holzer, Ph.D. for additional information at mholzer@monmouth.com.

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE YEAR'S BEST BOOKS FOR CHILDREN, GRADES PRE-K TO 6

CELEBRATE JUDY FREEMAN'S 35TH WINNERS! WORKSHOP

Join Judy Freeman this spring to celebrate Judy and 35 years of Winners! You are guaranteed a full day of savoring the top 100+ books of 2018, examining children's responses to the books, networking with fellow children's literature lovers, gathering a plethora of storytelling and teaching ideas and visiting The Curious Reader Book Store.

CHOOSE FROM THREE DATES AND LOCATIONS

Central Jersey

May 14

Radisson Hotel Piscataway-Somerset

South Jersey

May 15

The Mansion on Main Street, Voorhees

North Jersey

May 17

Birchwood Manor, Whippany

Registration of \$209.00 includes continental breakfast, buffet lunch, and the brand new, comprehensive The 2019 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 internet resource list of exemplary websites.

Find all the details and registration form at JudyReadsBooks.com and share the site with

your colleagues and friends. The Winners workshop is always a day to laugh, connect, share, and celebrate the latest literature titles and trends with leading teachers, public and school librarians, administrators, reading and literacy specialists, art teachers, and other children's book hounds. Read Judy's latest news and fun at "Judy Freeman's Workshops, LLC" on Facebook.

Judy Freeman is a well-known speaker, consultant, and writer on all aspects of children's literature, storytelling, booktalking, and school librarianship. A former school librarian, she gives conferences, workshops, speeches, and performances throughout the U.S. and the world for teachers, librarians, parents, and children, and is a national seminar presenter for BER (Bureau of Education and Research). Judy served as a member of the 2000 Newbery Committee, the 2008 Sibert Informational Book Award Committee, and the 2014 Caldecott Committee.

ATTEND THE NGSS SUMMER INSTITUTES IN SUMMER 2019

Note: After the Review went to press last month, the Summer Institute switched the dates for the Grades K-5 and 6-12 programs. The dates below are the correct dates.

Is your classroom aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)? As the third year of implementation begins, many educators are ready to deepen their understanding of several foundational aspects of the NGSS:

- Developing and using phenomena.
- Developing instructional and assessment tasks that meaningfully integrate practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas.
- Prompting student responses using crosscutting concepts.
- Supporting students in using core ideas to construct explanations supported by arguments.
- Supporting students in defining engineering problems and developing/optimizing solutions.

This summer, the Science Education Institute at Raritan Valley Community College offers two weeklong Institutes designed to support teachers and supervisors with the implementation of the NGSS. These institutes are based on what we are learning about NGSS

MORE TO LEARN ACROSS THE STATE

implementation through our work with teachers in New Jersey and across the nation. The institutes are updated to reflect best practices.

- Grades 6-12: July 22 – 26
- Grades K-5: Aug. 5 – 9

The Summer Institutes provide an immersive experience with the vision behind the NGSS and its three dimensions: the core ideas, the practices and the crosscutting concepts. Participants engage in NGSS-aligned investigations to experience how Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas are meaningfully integrated in instruction and assessments in physical science, life science, earth science and engineering. Every day there will be multiple opportunities for reflection and structured time to plan NGSS-aligned lessons.

The Science Education Institute recommends sending leadership teams of three to seven teachers. These teachers can then support each other and their schools and district colleagues as they implement what they have learned.

Both weeklong Institutes are held at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg.

Each day begins promptly at 9 a.m. and ends by 3:30 p.m. Light breakfast and lunch will be provided.

The Institutes are led by Dr. Wil van der Veen, a nationally recognized expert on the NGSS and science education and a member of the New Jersey State Leadership Team for the NGSS. The Institute is co-facilitated by K-12 classroom teachers from the NGSS Teacher Leader Program.

The fee is \$300 for the week, or \$250 for registrations received by March 31.

Register early as the Summer Institutes tend to fill up quickly.

For more information and to register online visit raritanval.edu/ngss or contact Tina Gandarillas at tina.gandarillas@raritanval.edu or 908-526-1200, ext. 8942.

To develop a long-term NGSS professional development plan for your district, email Dr. Wil van der Veen at wil.vanderveen@raritanval.edu.

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. Workshops in May can be reviewed at the indicated websites.

HIGH SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

- Wednesday, April 17: Geometry Investigations with GeoGebra, Grades 9-12
- Monday, April 22: Exploring Trigonometric Functions and the Unit Circle, Grades 9-12
- Wednesday, April 24: Desmos Activities for Algebra 2 and Precalculus, Grades 9-12
- Monday, April 29: Everyday Applications of Mathematics, Grades 8-12

Registration and information: <https://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-HS-2018-19>

MIDDLE SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

- Tuesday, April 16: Differentiating Instruction in Math: It's not as hard as you think! Grades 5-8
- Friday, April 26: Memorable Hands-On Activities for the Middle School Classroom, Grades 5-8
- Monday, April 29: Everyday Applications of Mathematics, Grades 8-12

Registration and information: <https://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-MS-2018-19>

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

- Tuesday, April 9: Differentiating Instruction in Math: It's not as hard as you think! Grades 2-5
- Tuesday, April 16: Differentiating Instruction in Math: It's not as hard as you think! Grades 5-8
- Tuesday, April 23: Making Meaning of Fractions, Grades 3-5

Registration and information: <https://tinyurl.com/AMTNJ-DIMACS-Elem-2018-19>

CAMDEN COUNTY COLLEGE OFFERS MINI-COURSES AND FREE LECTURE SERIES

The Camden County College Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility (CCLR) is offering five-week mini-courses that started in late January. Each course costs \$30. For \$75, you may take unlimited mini-courses courses

through Aug. 31, 2019. In addition, the CCLR offers a free lecture series, special events, and a free 15-week course.

For more information, visit www.camdencc.edu/civiccenter or call 856-227-7200, ext. 4333 for details.

MINI-COURSES

Evenings at Blackwood campus

- March 5 – April 9 A Survey of Film Noir
- March 6 – April 10 Corporate Collaboration During the Holocaust
- March 7 – April 11 Cryptozoology – Mysteries of Monsters
- April 5 – May 10 The Emergence of Poetry & Music During the Great Migration and Harlem Renaissance

Evenings at Rohrer Center in Cherry Hill

- March 5 – April 16 William Shakespeare: The Histories
- March 6 – April 10 Big Dreams and Dead Ends: The Gangster Films
- March 7 – April 11 Jazz Legends
- March 8 – April 12 A Tumultuous Time: Victorian America and the Civil War

Ongoing free 15-Week Course

- Jan. 23 – May 8 Topics in History: Contemporary Muslim World

Free lecture series at Blackwood Campus Addiction Awareness

- March 20 – Empowering People in Recovery, Their Families and Allies
- May 1 – Care for Grandparents – Expos for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

Middle East: New Perspectives

- March 13 – In Between: A one-man semi-autobiographical theater performance on growing up the son of a Muslim Palestinian father and an Israeli Jewish mother
- March 27 – The Psychological Processes Behind Dehumanization
- April 3 – The Salesman: A film about a Young Iranian couple forced to leave their home and move to the center of Tehran.
- April 11 – (note, this is a Thursday) ISIS in Iraq
- April 17 – The Current Situation in Afghanistan 🇦🇫

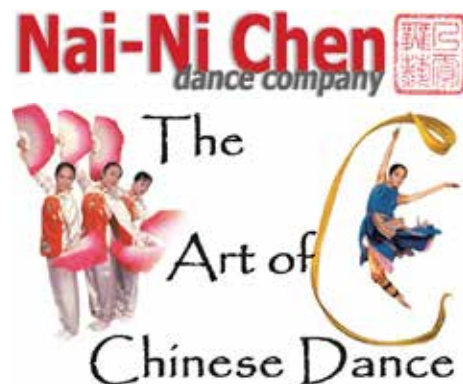
STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS



NJEA welcomed **SHANNON PELLEGRINO** to NJEA staff on Jan. 22 as the executive assistant to the president. Pellegrino brings 25 years of professional experience to her new job, primarily in the healthcare sector, where she was an executive assistant and board liaison to the president and chief executive officer in New York, New Jersey and Illinois. She

has also served on numerous philanthropic and foundation committees, was a co-chair and organizer of a hospital's annual community day and 5K race and has coordinated a number of initiatives benefitting underprivileged children, including holiday gift drives and an annual fishing expedition. She lives in Monmouth County with her daughter, Casey. 🏠



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NJREA SPRING LUNCHEON IS APRIL 10 | GROWING OUR POWER

On April 10, NJREA will host its annual Spring Luncheon. Throughout this popular member-exclusive event, retirees can learn more about what they can do to act on important issues, as well as how we can work together to continue to restore respect for public education and preserve the pensions and benefits public school employees have earned.

This luncheon event is held in honor of Dr. Frederick L. Hipp, past executive director of NJEA. Dr. Hipp was instrumental in the formation of NJREA and was a leading advocate throughout the state. In 1976, The New York Times named Dr. Hipp one of the eight “most powerful men” in New Jersey.

The luncheon will be held at the Nottingham Ballroom in Hamilton. The business agenda begins with the Delegate Council meeting at 10 a.m., followed by the “Member Information Session” at 11 a.m., where attendees will receive updates and can ask questions about the information shared.

The total cost remains just \$33, which includes a continental breakfast, your choice of lunch, and all taxes and gratuities. Reminder: As per NJREA

policy, only NJREA members may attend the business meeting and luncheon. Any member wishing to sit together with their county should indicate this intention on the coupon form provided. Reserved seating requests will be honored only if received by the registration deadline.

Can't stay for the whole event? For just \$5, attendees have the option to join their fellow retirees for breakfast and sit in on the day's Delegate Council meeting and/or Member Information Session, but not stay for lunch. Should you wish to do so, please indicate your intention on the coupon form found in the March NJREA Newsletter. This coupon is also available on njea.org/njrea under the “coupons” heading.

To register, send the coupon along with your check (payable to NJREA) to NJREA Second Vice President Joan Wright, 109 Bayberry Drive, Somerset, NJ 08873 by Friday, March 29. Be sure to include your meal choice of Chicken Francaise, Vegetable Primavera, or Shrimp Cocktail with soup and salad. All are accompanied by salad, rolls, and dessert.



Monmouth County REA members Sue Shrott (l) and Mary Szczepanik at the 2018 NJREA Spring Luncheon.

SUPPORTING STUDENTS THROUGH SCHOLARSHIPS

Do you know any high school seniors with high academic accomplishments, active participation in school activities and service to the community? NJREA wants to help them continue their education!

Through its annual scholarships, NJREA aims to assist well-rounded, high-achieving students embark on a successful college career and has done so for well over a decade. This effort has been so popular, NJREA added a third scholarship, the Elizabeth A. Allen Four-Year Scholarship, to expand its efforts.

All four-year and two-year scholarships are available for rising college freshmen, and each is renewable based on the recipient's cumulative grade-point average (GPA) at the end of each academic year and continued enrollment as a full-time student. The four-year scholarship has a total value

of \$6,000, or \$1,500 per year, and the two-year scholarship has a value of \$2,000, or \$1,000 per year.

To be eligible, a student must fulfill the following requirements:

ISABELLE M. HICKMAN/ ELIZABETH ALLEN FOUR- YEAR SCHOLARSHIP

- Will graduate from a New Jersey public high school, including vocational-technical and public charter schools.
- Has been accepted to a four-year college or university.
- Is in the upper five percent of his/her graduating class.

FRED E. AUG TWO-YEAR SCHOLARSHIP

- Will graduate from a New Jersey public high school, including

vocational-technical and public charter schools.

- Has been accepted by a community college.
- Has a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher.

To be considered for any of the three scholarships, the applicant must submit (4) copies of the following:

- The completed 2019 scholarship application form.
- A high school transcript.
- A brief, but revealing, statement of goals, interests, and community service.
- A list of extra-curricular activities, athletics, honors, community services and employment.
- Two letters of recommendation, one of which is from a teacher at the high school.

Encourage a student you know and respect to apply today. To be considered, all applicants must use the 2019 NJREA scholarship form.

Applications from previous years will not be accepted.

Both the four-year and two-year applications are available from county REA presidents, at njea.org/njrea, or by contacting Cathy Raffaele at 609-599-4561, ext. 2300.

All applications must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2019. **Late applications will not be accepted.**

Around the counties

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

THE ATLANTIC COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, May 7 at the Mays Landing Country Club in Mays Landing. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Linda Young at 609-226-6203.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY REA invites you to its annual Laura Maltman Health and Wellness Workshop on Thursday, March 14. For details, check the GCREA newsletter.

GCREA will also hold its spring meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 9 at Nicolosi Catering in Woodbury. The cost is \$25. To attend either event, call Candy Zachowski at 856-228-6854.

HUDSON COUNTY REA will hold its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 8 at La Reggia Restaurant in Secaucus. Joan Wright, NJREA second vice president, is the guest speaker. The cost is \$37. To attend, call Arlene Brown at 732-493-0662.

THE HUNTERDON COUNTY REA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 30 at the Mountain View Chalet in Asbury. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Joyce Kucyn at 908-479-6656.

Join **MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA** for its spring meeting/luncheon on Thursday, March 14 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge. An NJEA Members Benefits fair will be held, and a cardiologist from Deborah Hospital will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA will hold its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, April 9 at the Knob Hill Golf Club in Manalapan. The cost is \$30. To attend, contact Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754 or sueshrott@gmail.com.

MORRIS COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, March 13 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. Author Trish Chambers will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$30. To attend, Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

MCREA will also hold its scholarship fundraiser on Friday, April 12. The cost is \$35. This event also will be held at the Zeris Inn. To attend, call Marianne Dispenziere at 862-684-3818.

Finally, MCREA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 8 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. Jamie Novak, humorist and best-selling author, will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

The **OCEAN COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Thursday, March 14 at La Bove Grande Restaurant in Lakewood. Debbie Galletta from Debbie's House, a transitional housing facility designed to aid women and children, will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

The **PASSAIC COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, March 27 at the Brownstone House in Paterson. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at 201-445-7577.

SOMERSET COUNTY REA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 1 at the Elks Club in Bridgewater. Ash Ahluwalia, president of National Social Security Partners, will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-507-1548.

The **WARREN COUNTY REA's** next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, April 3 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. For more information, visit www.wcrea-njea.org. To attend, call Vickie Rhinehart at 908-319-1995.

The **NJRE-CENTRAL FLORIDA** invites you to its winter meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, March 20 at the Chesapeake Bay Grille at the Arlington Ridge Golf Club. The transition to Aetna Educators' Medicare will be the topic of discussion. To attend, call Steve Mockus at 352-638-2609. ☎

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NJEA PRESERVICE

LEADERSHIP MATTERS

BE INVOLVED, BE INFORMED, BECOME INSPIRED

BY ANTHONY ELIA, GRADUATE STUDENT, THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Choosing to become a part of the NJEA Preservice is one of the best decisions I ever made. It has put me on a path where I have taken on numerous roles, been part of phenomenal discussions and have had the opportunity to meet some incredible educators nationwide. When I compare who I am today to who I was in the beginning of my freshmen year, I see a huge difference. NJEA Preservice is an opportunity that I hope all preservice teachers grab at the start of their college careers.

I decided to start small and serve as a treasurer for my college chapter. I also became an NJEA Preservice ambassador on my campus. Later, I became interested in moving to the state level and serving on the executive board and as an officer. These experiences have served me well in preparing to become a teacher. They helped me improve my organizing skills, network with other preservice teachers in New Jersey and hone leadership qualities.

For NJEA Preservice members interested in getting more involved, the best place to start is as an ambassador for NJEA Preservice at your college. An ambassador represents NJEA Preservice to all future educators on campuses throughout New Jersey.

When you serve on the state level, you also may have the opportunity to serve NJEA

committees as a representative for preservice members. I was part of the NJEA Membership Committee last year. The opportunity to serve with experienced active NJEA members on this committee taught me some valuable strategies on how to increase membership. This year I have the privilege to serve on two NJEA committees: Exceptional Children and Affiliation.

Aspiring Educators, a preservice program of the National Education Association, holds an annual Summer Leadership Conference. Scholarships are available to help members attend. Along with workshops and meetings, there are opportunities to meet people like yourself from all across the United States. I have made some great friends at this conference who understand me and with whom I can share the journey to becoming an educator.


Aspiring Educators holds elections for preservice members to serve on the NEA Board of Directors and the NEA Resolutions Committee. Every other year, an election is held for the Aspiring Educators chairperson. In my second year attending the conference, I was elected to serve on the NEA Resolutions Committee. This committee proposes to the NEA Representative Assembly (NEA RA) resolutions that express the beliefs of NEA on matters related to public education. NEA

Resolutions are an important document that helps govern NEA positions and actions.

Serving on that committee, I learn about—and have an influence on—education policy at the national level. I learned the process by which resolutions are brought to the floor at the NEA RA to be considered by its nearly 7,000 delegates. As you listen to the debate among delegates and work with your own state and collaborate with delegates from other states, you can't help but be inspired by your colleagues.

Because of the path I chose to leadership through NJEA Preservice, I feel prepared to enter the classroom and tackle the tough discussions that are needed in our classrooms.

If you know college students preparing to become teachers who aren't NJEA Preservice members, send them to njea.org/preservice. Help them sign up. Let them know that when they become members, they are opening a door and welcoming themselves in network of passionate, dedicated educators. They'll gain access to free professional development that will make them the best educators they can be and enjoy many phenomenal benefits.

Preservice educators, are the future of education. By becoming involved in NJEA Preservice, we become more informed and more inspired along the way. 

NJEA PRESERVICE CONFERENCE SET FOR APRIL 13

Join the NJEA Preservice on Saturday, April 13, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Princeton Marriot at Forrester for the annual Preservice Conference.

You'll meet New Jersey State Teacher of the Year Jennifer Skomial and Rachel Immerman, who represents preservice members nationally as chair of the NEA Aspiring Educators program.

You'll also participate in valuable breakout sessions all geared toward preservice educators. These include:

- Classroom Management and Restorative Practices for Elementary Educators
- Classroom Management and Restorative Practices for Secondary Educators
- EdTPA Q&A
- Intellectual Engagement
- Landing Your First Job
- People Get Ready: The Global Majority and The Power of Identity
- Tools for Innovative and Effective Parent Communication

Nominations and elections for officer positions within the organization will take place during the General Membership meeting. The day concludes with prize drawings for items donated by NJEA Member Benefits partners and other exhibitors.

Go to njea.org/preservice for more information and to register.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT FOR CTE STUDENTS

BY LARRY TISDALE,
NJEA MEMBER

Career Technical Education (CTE) or, as most parents remember it, vocational education, has blossomed and given a new generation of graduates an abundance of options for those who understand the value of a trade career. CTE has undergone revitalization across this country and it is in high demand. With more than 17,000 students turned away from county vocational-technical schools in New Jersey in 2017 alone, it's clear that there is a need to increase capacity in CTE programs whether offered at the county level or in the context of a comprehensive high school.

This is a remarkable turnaround from the image problem once suffered in CTE programs when college prep was held up as the ultimate path to graduation and a successful life after high school. The result was fewer skilled workers available for often high-paying jobs. The new CTE accessibility requirements along with the skyrocketing price of college has created a new vision for a skilled workforce.

Students who apply to participate in CTE programs at the county level must meet high standards including an outstanding attendance record, good grades and excellent discipline in their previous public or private school.

Larry Tisdale is a culinary arts instructor at the Burlington County Institute of Technology in Medford. He represents Burlington County on the NJEA Vocational, Career, and Technical Education Committee and serves on his county's Legislative Action Team. Tisdale can be reached at ltisdale05@gmail.com.

The New Jersey Department of Education is working to meet the skilled workforce needs and has reestablished career and technical education as a priority focus in education. To meet the workforce demand, local high schools and county programs have strengthened existing CTE programs and develop new ones.

The New Jersey State Board of Education devoted its February meeting to CTE with presentations from such programs: a partnership with IBM and Paterson Public Schools, partnerships among CTE programs at comprehensive high schools in Morris County, an allied health program in Elizabeth Public Schools, an onsite apprentice program at Festo Didactic, Inc. though the Monmouth County Vocational Technical School District, and a partnership between the NJDOE and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development for a pre-apprentice program for high school students. The culinary arts program from Middlesex County Vocational-Technical School (MCVTS) in Perth Amboy provided lunch for the State Board and its guests at the meeting. MCVS's program was the first public school restaurant in the nation to be certified "green" by the Green Restaurant Association.

CTE is by nature a more hands-on style of teaching. Most instruction is individualized with students receiving one-on-one attention leading to deeper student engagement, more comprehensive learning, and increased teacher student relationships. CTE provides students with the ability to find their individual learning styles while its diverse delivery of instruction meets all learning abilities in the same setting.



Culinary students at the Passaic County Technical Institute compete in a culinary challenge sponsored by NASA.

WITH MORE THAN 17,000 STUDENTS TURNED AWAY FROM COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN NEW JERSEY IN 2017 ALONE, IT'S CLEAR THAT THERE IS A NEED TO INCREASE CAPACITY IN CTE PROGRAMS WHETHER OFFERED AT THE COUNTY LEVEL OR IN THE CONTEXT OF A COMPREHENSIVE HIGH SCHOOL.

New Jersey school districts are committed to creating more rigorous content-driven curricula, which has helped to bridge the skilled workforce gap. An emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) has been receiving its deserved share of attention as schools are adopting curricula that will prepare students for advanced STEM careers. STEM programs offer greater access to underrepresented groups including women and the socially disadvantaged.

As in Paterson, Elizabeth, and Monmouth and Middlesex counties, districts are developing business partner relationships to maintain current and future industry standards and new technologies.

These partners provide mentors, training, and internships and other resources.

Over 25 percent of those who do not have a bachelor's degree but hold a trade certificate or trade licenses ultimately earn more than those who hold a bachelor's degree. Vocational schools are preparing and training students to fill the jobs that are critical to the success of New Jersey's economy—including the kinds of jobs that have not yet even been imagined. The future is bright for the next generation with the new and improved career options taught in CTE. 📍

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MAKE MARCH A GREEN MONTH!

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Buyer's Edge Inc.** is a buying service that offers all NJEA members the lowest prices guaranteed on many major purchases such as appliances/TVs, cars (new and used), furniture, mattresses, kitchen cabinets, jewelry, real estate sales, luggage and much more, including 15 additional member benefits.

Buyers Edge Inc. has many member benefit direct links on its website. Through the convenience of toll-free numbers, you can call many Buyer's Edge vendors direct and talk to a live specialist, who has product and service expertise, knows inventory availability and, in most cases, can arrange delivery directly to your door ASAP.

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PROTECT YOUR PAYCHECK

Too many members do not realize that running out of sick pay and benefits is a real possibility. Even with sick pay, expenses normally increase when members are disabled. That is why NJEA crafted income protection insurance exclusively for members. Call Educators Insurance Services** at 800-704-1365 for questions or assistance and for help enrolling. Information is also available at www.educators-insurance.com.

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The NEA Retirement Program offers a full suite of products aimed at building your retirement nest egg. Log into www.neamb.com and click "What We Offer." Select Retirement Accounts. Of special interest is the DirectInvest option. This self-directed option avoids commission costs for members who can make investment decisions without the services of a financial advisor.

DO YOU NEED AN EYE EXAM AND/OR EYEWEAR?

NJEA members can schedule Optical Academy full-day visits to schools by calling 800-530-2730. See optical-academy.com to find locations for their school visits.

BE SURE TO VISIT THE MEMBER BENEFITS SECTION AT MEMBERBENEFITS.NJEA.ORG.

MARCH WEB GIVEAWAYS

For **MARCH**, one member will win two prizes:

A \$100 voucher toward vision services/eyewear at Optical Academy*

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

RECENT WINNER:

MARY JENSEN of Long Branch School Employees Assn. won a \$100 voucher toward vision services/eyewear at Optical Academy*.

MAKE SURE TO REGISTER ONLINE EACH MONTH FOR THE WEB GIVEAWAY!

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MARCH & beyond

for more information go to NJEA.org

3/1

Friday

Read Across
America Day

3/1-2

Fri. & Sat.

Winter
Leadership –
North

3/22-23

Fri. to Sun.

Winter
Leadership –
Central

3/29

Friday

NJEA Executive
Committee
meeting

3/30

Saturday

NJEA Delegate
Assembly
meeting

4/6

Saturday

T.E.A.C.H.
Conference

4/12-13

Fri. to Sat.

Higher
Education
Conference

4/13

Saturday

NJEA Preservice
Conference

4/23

Tuesday

NJEA PAC
Operating
Committee
meeting



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NJEA.ORG/TECHSTOCK.

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION
ENDS **MAY 15TH (\$25)**
REGISTRATION ENDS
JUNE 26TH (\$35)

deadlines

3/23

NJEA Preservice Conference
Event date: April 13

3/23

Higher Education Conference
Event date: April 12-13

3/29

T.E.A.C.H. Conference
Event date: April 6
(Register by 2/15 and save \$10.)

6/28

Summer Professional Learning Institute
Event date: July 16
(Register by June 3 and save \$10)

WHATEVER YOU ARE DOING, IT'S WORKING

Early March can be a challenging time of year. The holiday break is a distant memory, and the warmer, longer hours of sunshine seem a little too far in the future. The weather may tease you with an occasional warm, bright day, but you might awaken the next morning to face a cold, damp day. And while you are devoted to the students you serve, you wonder if it's too early to start counting down the days to summer.

You know that once the weather is consistently warmer, you'll feel rejuvenated and ready to take on the world with your students, whether you are teaching Advanced Placement Chemistry first thing in the morning or transporting students on the bus that takes them to that 7:34 a.m. class. But right now, you could use a boost.

Maybe this will help: whatever you are doing, it's working—even when you're battling January-to-March fatigue. New Jersey's students are receiving a world-class education, and you are among the 200,000 NJEA members who are delivering it.

YOUR STUDENTS' READING SCORES ARE AT THEIR HIGHEST LEVELS EVER

The 2017 administration of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) revealed that the proportion of New Jersey public school fourth-graders who scored at the proficient and advanced levels is at its highest, increasing by half since 1994. The proportion of eighth-graders scoring at proficient or advanced is also at its highest levels, increasing by more than one-fourth since 2003.

NAEP, nicknamed the nation's report card, is a congressionally mandated project administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within

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the U.S. Department of Education and the Institute of Education Sciences. It is given to a representative sample of students across the country. Results are not reported for individual students, but for groups of students with similar characteristics, such as gender, race and ethnicity, and school location.

Not only are your students scoring higher in reading than ever before, they are scoring at among the highest levels in the nation. Compared to New Jersey, no other state has a statistically higher share of public school fourth graders scoring at the proficient and advanced levels in reading on the NAEP, and only one state, Massachusetts, has fourth-graders with an average score that is higher than New Jersey's. The results are similar for New Jersey's eighth-graders: no other state has a statistically higher proportion of public school eighth-graders scoring at proficient and advanced levels.

YOUR STUDENTS' MATH SCORES ARE AMONG THE NATION'S BEST

The news for your students' performance in math is just as good. Compared to New Jersey, no other state in the nation has a statistically higher proportion of public school fourth- and eighth-graders scoring at the proficient and advanced levels on NAEP in math. And no other states have an average score that is statistically higher than New Jersey on the fourth-grade mathematics NAEP Exam. Only one other state has an average score that is statistically higher than New Jersey on the eighth-grade mathematics NAEP Exam—Massachusetts. In this rating, New Jersey is statically tied with New Hampshire and Minnesota.

YOUR STUDENTS' WRITING SCORES ARE THE BEST IN THE NATION

New Jersey eighth-graders rank first—far above any other state in the nation in writing on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). This

is one statistic where you won't read that we rank behind Massachusetts. For the eighth-grade NAEP writing test, Connecticut follows New Jersey, and Massachusetts follows Connecticut.

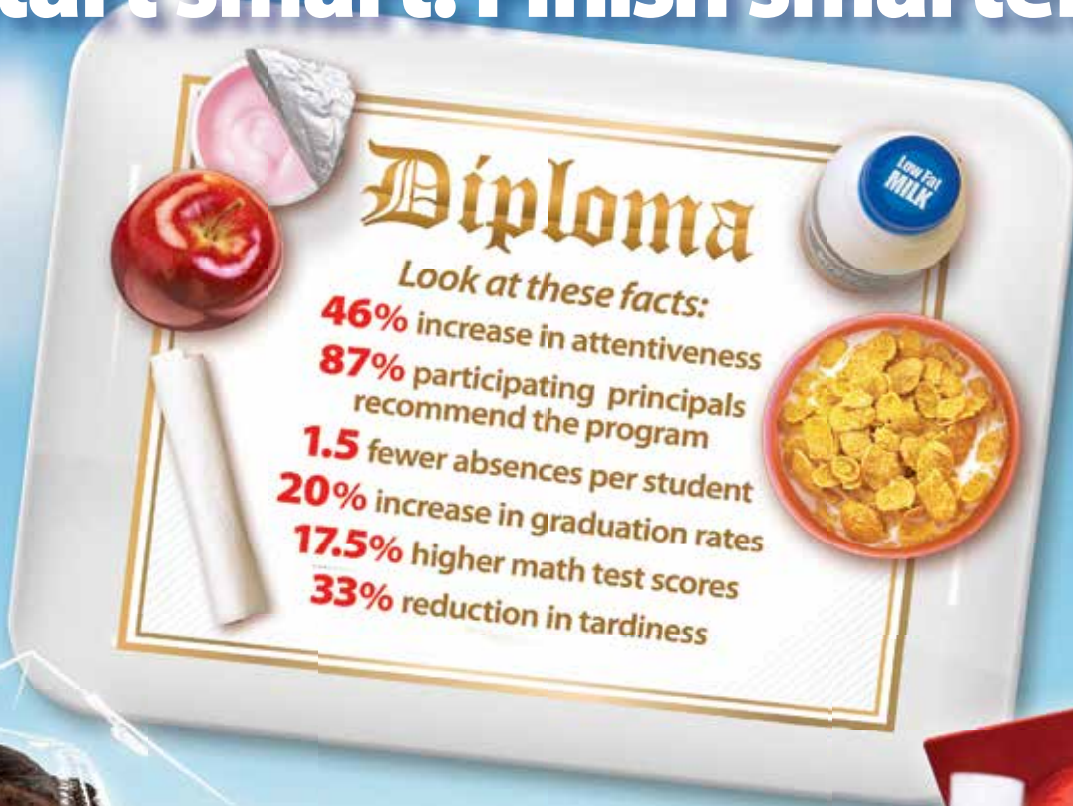
GOOD NEWS BEYOND EIGHTH GRADE

While the results for fourth- and eighth-graders on NAEP give pre-K, elementary and middle school educators some bragging rights, NJEA members who work in the state's high schools are also getting great results. New Jersey is second in the nation for its graduation rate in 2018, ranking only slightly behind Iowa. And only one state, New Hampshire, has a lower drop-out rate.

New Jersey's Advanced Placement teachers continue to deserve a special pat on the back: the state's public high school students outperform the state's private school students on AP exams. Not only that, New Jersey public high school students are more likely than private and religious school students to earn AP exam scores that are high enough to qualify for college credit. In fact, New Jersey is first in the nation in the percentage of students to earn AP exam scores that are high enough to qualify for college credit.

New Jersey's students perform at high levels across the board. That success is because of your efforts day in and day out—even on those days when you arrive at school before sunrise and leave after sunset. As we approach spring, brighter days are coming. But because of you, the days have been bright for your students all year long. 🌞

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and how your union can help.*



**MAY 18, 2019 &
AUG. 24, 2019
10 A.M. – 4 P.M.**
At NJEA Headquarters in Trenton