

REVIEW
MAY 2019

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW

MAY
2019
njea.org



an education and advocacy resource

EDUCATION

KEAN UNIVERSITY

LIFE-THREATENING
ALLERGIES AND
EPINEPHRINE

ACTIVISM IN THE
ART ROOM

MEETING THE
NEEDS OF
A GLOBAL
CLASSROOM

NORTHERN
VALLEY
REGIONAL
TEACHERS
ASSISTANTS
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Megan Meyer was one of two hundred Paterson Education Association members, board of education members, parents, and administrators who traveled "using their outside voices" to Trenton on March 27 to tell the Assembly Budget Committee that cuts to state aid to schools in Paterson and elsewhere will harm students.



The Union County Education Association held its annual Legislative Dinner on April 3 to meet with lawmakers and discuss issues important to UCEA members and students. From Left: UCEA President Lisa Palin, NJREA Rep. Leonard Sobel, UCEA 1st VP James Frazier, Union County Freeholders Al Mirabella and Chris Hudak, UCEA GR Co-Chair Nancy Lucas-Miller, Assemblywoman Linda Carter, Assemblyman Jon Bramnick, Union County Freeholder Sergio Granados, and UCEA GR Co-Chair Frank Stebbins.



The Clifton Teachers Association is all in for #RedForEd. CTA President Lori Lalama sent photos to the NJEA Review from across her local association, including this one of members at Clifton School #3.



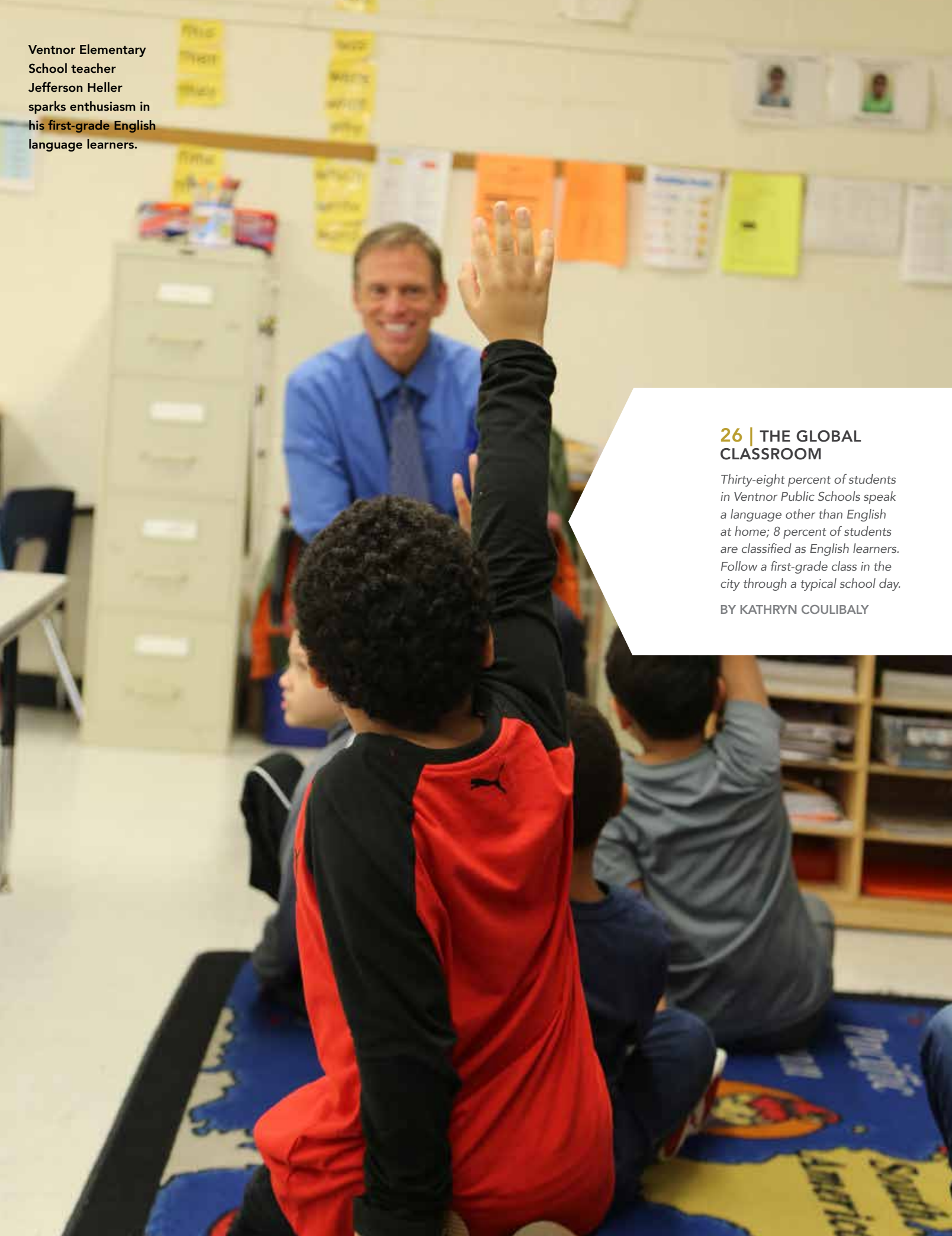
Members of the Newark Teachers Association combined a Wacky Wednesday school event with #RedForEd—dressing wacky and wearing red are two early career members at D. E. Alma Flagg School with NTA Membership Chair Linda Kelly-Gamble (center).

Ventnor Elementary School teacher Jefferson Heller sparks enthusiasm in his first-grade English language learners.

26 | THE GLOBAL CLASSROOM

Thirty-eight percent of students in Ventnor Public Schools speak a language other than English at home; 8 percent of students are classified as English learners. Follow a first-grade class in the city through a typical school day.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



FEATURES



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The Memory Project educates students about their connection to children their own age who have been affected by the Syrian conflict. Many art programs around the state and country have participated in this organization's mission.

BY LORA MARIE DURR



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Teacher assistants in the Northern Valley Regional School District were told by administration that they didn't need a union because they were a "family." But when they were told to accept drastic benefits cuts or quit their jobs, they realized they needed more than "family," they needed a union.

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY



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Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening, severe allergic reaction, often with a sudden onset. Anaphylaxis trained delegates are school district employees who volunteer to receive education regarding anaphylaxis and how to administer the epinephrine auto-injector.

BY GINA EMGE



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The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation was established by Steven Van Zandt, the songwriter, producer, actor and activist who is a member of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band. TeachRock is the foundation's national middle and high school curriculum initiative. The foundation is just one of many exciting programs to look forward to at the 2019 NJEA Convention.

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We wear red



ON THE COVER:

For the last five years, Teaneck Township EA members Sandra Warren-Givens (l) and Tawana Smith (center) have made it a point pair up to attend the NJEA Convention. Two years ago, Englewood TA member Claudette Peterkin (r) joined them on their journey. Make your plan now to attend the 2019 NJEA Convention.

PHOTO BY
JENNIFER MARSH

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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*.



WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

One of the most important concepts we help our students master is our connection to each other. In our classrooms, on our school buses, in line at the cafeteria, and in our communities, we teach our students that we are all connected and that we have a responsibility for one another.

In this issue of the *Review*, we will look at some of the many ways that we connect with each other. In "Meeting the Needs of a Global Classroom," one teacher demonstrates the skills and resources he employs to ensure that he is meeting the diverse needs of his first-grade English language learner students. He helps them build connections to each other, to the material that he is teaching, and between the cultures they experience at home and in their community.

In "Northern Valley Regional Teachers Assistants join NJEA," we hear the story of 155 teacher assistants who forged a deeper connection with their colleagues in order to establish a union to protect their rights and improve their benefits. As they work to settle their first contract, they are committed to standing together to restore the benefits that were stripped from them when they did not have the protection of a union.

Hopewell Valley art teacher Lora Durr uses The Memory Project to educate her students about their connection to children their own age who have been affected by the Syrian conflict. By building this connection, she is helping them understand the role art can play to address trauma. Learn more in "Activism in the Art Room."

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening, severe allergic reaction that requires quick treatment with epinephrine. People who are susceptible to these reactions are dependent upon those around them to provide this life-saving treatment. That's a powerful connection. In "Life-threatening Allergies and Epinephrine," Lenape Education Association member and certified school nurse Gina Emge explains current laws, regulations and practices to keep students and staff experiencing anaphylaxis safe.

One of the most powerful opportunities to build connections among NJEA members is at the NJEA Convention. While there are many workshops, speakers, and networking opportunities at the convention, in this issue we highlight the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation. Established by Steven Van Zandt, the songwriter, producer, actor and activist who is a member of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band, the foundation is planning workshops for the 2019 Convention that include 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the Berlin Wall, Anita Hill and Third Wave Feminism, and LGBTQ history. Read about the programs and begin making your plan to join us in Atlantic City in November, in "Get Ready to Rock and Roll at the 2019 NJEA Convention."

E.M. Forster famously wrote: "Only connect! ... Live in fragments no longer." The point of education is to make the connections that help all of us who share this planet live lives of dignity, excellence and respect. Thank you for all that you do to help students make those connections and to building them in your own lives.

Marie Blistan

OFFICERS ONLINE

MARIE BLISTAN

Facebook

@Marie.Blistan: NJEA T.E.A.C.H. Conference was SUPER! Beginning with our keynote speaker through the workshop presenters, members remained engaged and enthusiastic around the factors that help our students learn!

NJEA President Marie Blistan shared photos and videos from the NJEA T.E.A.C.H. conference, held on April 6. Dr. Pedro Noguera was the keynote speaker. The conference included 12 breakout sessions that focused on issues of equity for racial, social and educational justice.

SEAN M. SPILLER

Facebook

@SpillerForNJEA: Always exciting and appreciated when the governor stops in to let us know how much he values education and what we do. Let's help him pass a budget that restores fairness in NJ with a tax on millionaires and more funding for our kids' schools!

On March 30, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller posted photos from Gov. Phil Murphy's visit to the NJEA Delegate Assembly meeting. In addition to expressing his deep appreciation for the work of New Jersey's teachers and educational support professionals and the value of the collective bargaining, the governor discussed his budget proposal for the coming fiscal year.

STEVE BEATTY

Facebook

@SteveBeattyNJEA: Incredible morning spent at Cinnaminson Middle School for their 34th annual Unity Day PRIDE event. Hearing from the students who participate and work to serve their community and engender character, compassion, and empathy—guided by so many great educators! Thank you, Andy Kim and Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, for your inspiring words.

On April 9, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty posted photos from his visit to Cinnaminson Middle School and its Unity Day event. The Cinnaminson Education Association had a strong presence throughout the day and supported Unity Day with a grant from the NJEA PRIDE in Public Education program. The day included a program with Congressman Andy Kim and Assemblywoman Carol Murphy as speakers.

NJEA President Marie Blistan and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty with presenters at the NJEA T.E.A.C.H. Conference on April 6. From left: Blistan, Pedro Noguera, Beatty and Jesse Hagopian. Noguera is the faculty director for the Center for the Transformation of Schools at UCLA. Hagopian teaches ethnic studies and is the co-adviser to the Black Student Union at Garfield High School in Seattle.



KNOW. LEAD. ACT.

TEACHER OF THE YEAR HONORED AT DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

New Jersey State Teacher of the Year Jennifer Skomial was recognized by the NJEA Delegate Assembly at its March 30 meeting. As the NJEA liaison to the teacher of the year program, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller introduced Skomial to the delegates.

“We are so fortunate that there are thousands of teachers in our state who have the skills and qualifications to be considered for New Jersey Teacher of the Year,” Spiller said. “That makes it all the more impressive when one individual is able to distinguish him or herself from such an exceptional group.”

Skomial is a career and technical education teacher at the Morris County School of Technology, where she prepares her students to become teachers, child psychologists, social workers and school counselors. She coaches students as they teach in the on-site preschool, create lesson plans and organize field trips.

Spiller presented Skomial with a gold ring to commemorate her experience as the state’s teacher of the year.

Skomial discussed her experiences so far, focusing on opportunities to visit schools across the state. As an educator who prepares future educators, she made special note of addressing recent graduates from William Paterson University who will be begin their first year in the classroom this fall. She also visited schools in Newark, East Orange and Wall Township that are developing future-educator programs.

DA ELECTS NEA DIRECTORS AND ALTERNATES

NJEA’s representatives to the

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

James Frazier of Union County, Susan McBride of Cumberland County, and Kimberly Scott of Essex County were elected directors.

Pete Moran of Hunterdon County, Ashanti Rankin of Cumberland

noted that childcare is offered at the NJEA Convention and had been offered at several NJEA events in the early 1990s in response to a 1992 NBI. That early 1990s program was terminated in 1994 because only three children had participated over the course of two years, despite publicity for the service. In considering this 2017 NBI, the committee examined costs, logistics, liability and space constraints, ultimately

DELEGATES CONSIDER NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Delegates considered two items of new business.

The first NBI, submitted by delegate Jennifer Clemen of Bergen County, recommended that the NJEA Professional Development Grant Program be amended to include audiovisual equipment rented or purchased by county associations be included in the expenses eligible under the grant. In her rationale for the NBI, Clemen noted that the current grant language is unclear regarding covered audiovisual costs. Delegates adopted the NBI.

The second NBI, submitted by delegate and Somerset County Education Association President Dan Epstein, recommended that NJEA aggressively pursue legislation in accordance with the association’s existing charter school policy with the goal of having those measures signed into law by the end of 2021. In his rationale, Epstein noted that charter school

growth and expansion is a threat to traditional public schools as well as NJEA membership. He explained that new legislation is needed to protect against the unfair laws and politics currently governing charter schools. The NBI was adopted.

Detailed minutes of DA meetings, when available, are printed in the *NJEA Review* and posted at njea.org/da.

ABOVE PHOTO: NJEA honored Jennifer Skomial, the 2018-19 New Jersey Teacher of the Year, at its March DA meeting. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, Jennifer Skomial, husband Chris Skomial, and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty.



County, and Barbara Rheault of Atlantic County were elected as director alternates.

DELEGATES CONSIDER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Delegates considered and approved recommendations from two committees: the Leadership and NEA Activities committees.

In response to a new business item (NBI) approved by the DA at its Sept. 9, 2017 meeting, the Leadership Committee has spent the past year investigating the feasibility of offering childcare at NJEA-sponsored events. In considering the NBI, the committee

recommending that, except for the NJEA Convention, NJEA not offer childcare at NJEA-sponsored trainings, meetings, and events. Delegates adopted the committee’s recommendation.

The NEA Activities Committee made recommendations concerning the expenses of New Jersey’s state and local association delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly and the amount of reimbursement to which the delegates will be entitled. The committee also made recommendations concerning the requirements to qualify for reimbursement. Delegates adopted the recommendations.

CHANGING SCHOOL DISTRICTS? SALARY GUIDE PLACEMENT IS NEGOTIABLE

Did you know that placement on a salary guide is negotiable for members moving from one school district to another?

According to Statute 18A: 29-9, “Whenever a person shall thereafter accept office, position, or employment as a members in any school district of this state, his initial place on the salary schedule shall be at such point as may be agreed upon by the member and the employing board of education.”

In other words, if you are leaving School District A for School District B, you have the right to negotiate placement on your new salary guide with the board of education. Some locals have contract language to this effect. Contracts may require the board to give full credit to an employee moving from one district to another while other contracts may spell out limitations.

So if you are accepting employment in a different school district, you may want to contact the local president there before you agree on salary guide placement.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRS: USE POTENTIAL MEMBER REPORTING FORM

The Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act (WDEA), which became state law on May 18, 2018, requires boards of education to send local associations information about their respective members and potential members.

Specifically, it requires public employers to provide—within 10 calendar days of hiring—the organization the following information about a new employee:

- Name
- Job title
- Worksite location
- Home address
- Work telephone number
- Date of hire
- Work email address
- Any personal email address and home and personal cellular telephone numbers on file with the public employer.

NJEA requests that each month you have new employees, submit a Potential Member Reporting Form, with the appropriate information. This form will be used to help keep your membership and potential membership records up-to-date. This form can be found on njea.org. Slide over to “My NJEA,” click on “Docs and Downloads” and the select “Forms.”

SELFIE OF THE MONTH

Gov. Phil Murphy made a surprise visit to the NJEA Delegate Assembly meeting on March 30. While delegates didn’t know he was coming, that didn’t stop Mary J. MacRae, a Somerset County delegate and vice president of the Bernards Township EA, from having her smartphone ready to capture a selfie with the governor on his way from the podium.

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.



NJEA TO LAUNCH “MEMBER VOICES: AN NJEA PODCAST”

Looking for a new listening option that will inform, inspire and encourage you in your work? NJEA is launching a new podcast called “Member Voices.” NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller is the host, and will be joined by veteran podcaster Jeff Bradbury of TeacherCast to share stories of NJEA members from across the state. The program will showcase some of the amazing things members are doing in our schools and community college campuses. You will also hear from special guests from the world of education and get information you need to help you advocate for your students and your colleagues.

Find the podcast on njea.org/podcast or any of your listening platforms. Look for “Member Voices: an NJEA podcast.”

If you have an idea for a story to share, please email the podcast team at podcast@njea.org to submit your story.

GOV. MURPHY SPEAKS AT NJEA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy made a brief, surprise visit to the March 30 meeting of the NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA). The DA, which meets five times a year is the association's policy-making body. It includes 127 representatives proportionately elected from the 21 counties for two-year terms. Representatives from higher education, NJREA, and NJEA Preservice also serve on the DA.

Murphy expressed pride in working alongside organizations, such as NJEA, that represent public employees.

"I do not now and will not ever consider it pandering to work side-by-side with organized labor and, in particular, public-sector employees and educators," Murphy said. "You are our neighbors, you teach our children, and you ensure that they have the skills to achieve their dreams. You are also taxpayers. And if I'm not working with you in partnership and in good faith, well then, I am not doing my job."

Murphy noted that in the past

two years, the state has restored nearly \$500 million dollars in state aid to schools, but recognized issues remain concerning cuts to in aid to numerous school districts.

"I fully recognize that some districts are currently facing funding challenges, and I have directed the Department of Education—including and beginning with the commissioner—to work alongside those school districts to ensure that we're looking out for everyone.

"This is our commitment: to work together to find solutions," the governor continued.

Murphy told delegates that the proposed budget includes a \$3.8 billion state contribution to the pension system.

"You all paid into the fund without fail," Murphy said. "Our administration is living up to our obligation."

On Chapter 78, the 2011 pension and benefits law that has caused members' health care premium contributions to outpace take-home pay, Murphy committed to

working toward a fair solution. In fact, in their most recent contract, state workers have negotiated what teachers and ESP are seeking through S-2606—to tie health care premium contributions to a percentage of salary rather than a percentage of the premium cost.

"I recognize that getting things right for you, especially with regard to health care will take a different route because you don't negotiate directly with state," Murphy said. "But we will continue to work together to get things right and restore fairness."

Murphy also expressed support for legislation to ensure job justice for educational support professionals (ESPs).

"I heard you loud and clear on the 116,000-plus petitions my office received," Murphy exclaimed. "We must make sure that ESPs are treated fairly and enjoy basic justice by not having their positions unduly outsourced."

Turning to standardized tests, Murphy proclaimed that "we are

going to move our state forward doing things the right way, and doing things the right way includes making sure that classroom time is spend teaching to the needs of our kids and not to a test."

Murphy concluded by asking NJEA members for help in passing his proposed budget, including revenue from a proposed millionaires tax—which would be invested in schools and communities. He noted that middle class and working families in New Jersey did not benefit from tax cuts at the federal level, despite proclamations to the contrary from the Trump administration. The very wealthy and the largest corporations, however, experienced a windfall. Murphy contended, that everyone benefits when the middle class is strong.

"When the middle class does well, everybody does well," Murphy said. "A strong middle class builds a strong society and a strong economy." 🇺🇸



Gov. Phil Murphy addresses the NJEA Delegate Assembly in March, flanked by NJEA, NJREA and NJEA Preservice leadership.



Gov. Phil Murphy with association leadership at the March DA meeting. From left: NJEA Preservice President Jennifer Bentivegna, NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller, NJREA President Judy Perkins, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, Murphy, NJEA President Marie Blistan, NJEA Assistant Executive Director Steve Swetsky, and NJEA Executive Director Ed Richardson.

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The New Jersey Department of Agriculture Farm to School Program wants to know if your school is serving locally grown, Garden State produce, has a school garden, or is connecting to New Jersey growers with farm field trips or classroom visits. We want to include you in the Jersey Fresh Farm to School Recognition Program! Download the application from bit.ly/njfarmtoschool and learn more about Farm to School at farmtoschool.nj.gov. The online application must be completed by May 31, and all hard copy documentation requested must be postmarked by May 31 and sent to the address at the bottom of the survey.



DISPLAY BOOKS YOU'VE WRITTEN AT THE NJEA CONVENTION

The authors' area at the NJEA Convention is a space on the exhibit floor that provides active, retired and preservice NJEA members a chance to showcase materials they have published that enhance and add value to the teaching profession or that can serve as useful educational resources for teachers and parents. Members interested in exhibiting in the authors' area must be willing to offer members advice on how to go about publishing their authored works. Submissions must meet NJEA criteria.

The 2019 NJEA Convention will take place on Thursday, Nov. 7 and Friday, Nov. 8, in Atlantic City. Member authors will be responsible to exhibit on both days of the convention—during all show hours—displaying and selling their published works and conversing with members. The cost to participate in the authors' area is \$50.

The application to reserve your space can be found at njeaconvention.org. Slide over "Program" and click on "Authors' Area." The application must be printed, completed and returned with your submission(s) and check for \$50 made out to NJEA/Author's Alley. For questions, call Felicia Davis at 609-599-4561, ext. 2260.

NJEA must receive your space reservation by June 28, 2019.



STUDENTS CAN HONOR SCHOOL HEROES

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

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

Three winners will be selected. Each winning student, the school employee they write about, and a total of eight of their family members and friends will be guests of NJEA and the Trenton Thunder at the NJEA Back-to-School game on Aug. 1. The Thunder will be squaring off against the Altoona Curves.

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

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

Send entries to:

NJEA-Thunder Essay Contest
Attention: Kimberly Crane
PO Box 1211
Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Submissions must be received by Friday, May 10.



From left: Union County Freeholder Alexander Mirabella, teacher Frank Stebbins, and former director of Human Rights Institute at Kean University Hank Kaplowitz, Ph.D.

A+ EFFORT

CLARK TEACHER HONORED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

Frank Stebbins, a social studies teacher at Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark, was chosen as the 2019 Hank Kaplowitz Human Rights Educator of the Year. The award honors leadership in bringing human rights activism into the classroom, inspiring students and educators to be more than just a bystander but to take action where it is needed. Stebbins was selected by the International Human Rights Conference Committee at Kean University. The award was presented at the Human Rights Institute at Kean University's 12th annual Human Rights Conference, "Hunger: The Politics of Food," on March 22. Stebbins also represents Union County on the NJEA Government Relations Committee. 🇺🇸



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The Law and You

YOUR LEAVE OPTIONS UNDER NJFLA AND FMLA

BY LOUIS P. BUCCERI, ESQ.

The need to take care of our families is one of the core motivations of people everywhere. The conflict between work and that need is the reason for the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and New Jersey's Family Leave Act (NJFLA). This article addresses unpaid FMLA and NJFLA. Next month we'll look at family leave insurance.

The FMLA guarantees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period either for an employee's own disabling serious health condition, or to care for a family member. The family leave aspect of the law applies when you need to deal with the serious illness of a family member or require a leave for child-rearing within a year after the birth or the placement of a child in your care as an adoptive or foster parent.

The NJFLA permits up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 24-month period, but only to care for a seriously ill family member or for the birth or placement of a child in your care as an adoptive or foster parent. For employees or their family members who are victims of domestic violence or sexually violent offenses, 20 days of leave are permitted within a year. NJFLA may not be used for the employee's own illness or disability, unless it is

Louis Bucceri, Esq., is a partner at Bucceri Pincus. He is one of NJEA's network attorneys.

due to such violence.

In both FMLA and NJFLA, the amount of leave time allotted is the total time to which an employee is entitled in the 12- or 24-month period. The employee is not entitled

THIS ARTICLE ADDRESSES UNPAID FMLA AND NJFLA. NEXT MONTH WE'LL LOOK AT FAMILY LEAVE INSURANCE.

to additional time for a new event. For example, if an employee exhausts their leave time to care for a seriously ill parent, additional leave time is not extended if the employee becomes a parent within the FMLA 12-month period or the NJFLA 24-month period.

Leaves for illness under the FMLA and NJFLA can only be taken to care for serious illnesses or injuries that require inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or conditions requiring continuing medical treatment or continuing supervision by a health care provider.

Qualifying for FMLA leave requires that you have worked

N.J. FAMILY LEAVE ACT

(NJFLA)

SITUATION	DURATION	QUALIFICATION
Seriously ill family member, birth of child, or placement of child in employee's care as an adoptive or foster parent.	Up to 12 weeks in a 24-month period	Worked 1,000 hours during last 12 months
Employee or family member of employee who is a victim of domestic violence or sexual violence	Up to 20 days per year	Worked 1,000 hours during last 12 months

FEDERAL FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

SITUATION	DURATION	QUALIFICATION
Employee's own disabling condition, care for family member with serious illness, childcare within a year after birth of child or placement of child in employee's care as an adoptive or foster parent.	Up to 12 weeks in 12-month period (unpaid)	Worked 1,250 hours during last 12 months

NJFLA LEAVE RUNS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH FMLA.

for your employer at least 1,250 hours during the last 12 months. The NJFLA requires only that you have worked for that employer for 1,000 hours during the last 12 months. NJFLA leave automatically runs simultaneously with family leave taken under the FMLA.

INTERMITTENT LEAVE

Leave on a reduced (intermittent) schedule for a family member's serious health condition or to care for a new child is possible. All such intermittent leave must be taken within 12 consecutive months from when the leave begins. An intermittent leave request must normally be given with 15 days' notice, absent an emergency. Thirty days' notice of an intended continuous leave for child-rearing must be given to an employer or a loss of some benefits may result. The only exception is when

unexpected circumstances move up the birth or placement of the child, then reasonable notice is sufficient. As to a domestic or sexual violence leave, only "reasonable and practical" notice is required, absent an emergency. As noted, that form of leave is limited to 20 days within a year.

DEFINITIONS

The NJFLA defines "child" as any biological or adopted child, as well as a foster child, resource family child and a legal ward. It also includes a child who becomes a child of a parent because of a written agreement with a gestational carrier. Family leave may be taken to care for the serious medical condition of a child of any age.

The definition of "family members" for whom care, due to a serious illness, may be given includes all children, parents-in-law, grandparents,

grandchildren, domestic partners, any individual related by blood, or anyone else who can be shown to have a close relationship that is the equivalent of a family relationship. Note that a child-rearing leave—not associated with a child's illness, following birth or placement—can only be taken for a child of the employee by birth (including by contract with a surrogate), or placement through adoption or foster care. Leave for child-rearing must begin within one year of birth or placement.

The type of "care" for which leave can be taken can mean, but is not limited to, physical care, emotional support, visitation, assistance in treatment, transportation, arranging for a change in care, assistance with essential daily living matters and personal attendant services.

HEALTH INSURANCE

While you are using FMLA or NJFLA leave your employer must continue your health insurance on the same terms as were in effect while you were working. This means you must pay your monthly insurance contribution, sometimes in advance, even though you are not earning a salary. If you do not return to work after the leave, your employer may demand payment for the health insurance premiums it paid during the leave.

State payments, similar to unemployment benefits, may be available to employees taking unpaid family leaves. As always, consult your NJEA regional UniServ office for detailed information to ensure you will enjoy the full benefit of the laws on family leave. 🏠

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NJEA REPORT

LOCAL ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT HONORED AS SCHOOL DISTRICT'S TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Watching Desirée Brennan move seamlessly from her role as union leader at a nearly pre-dawn general membership meeting to French teacher in first period, it's easy to see why she is both the president of the Gateway Regional Education Association (GREA) and the 2019 Gateway Regional Teacher of the Year. In the union meeting and in the classroom, Brennan manages to balance what one of her students calls a "comfortable classroom vibe" with a personality that draws attention.

But a closer look reveals that the attention is not commanded; it's earned.

In both roles, Brennan is a leader who trusts her students and trusts her members.

"I really want my students to be the ones speaking French," Brennan says. "They sit at whiteboard tables with four to five students at a table. The room is student-centered, not teacher-centered."

In the association, Brennan has focused on building a strong committee structure and a cadre of talented building reps. GREA is a 126-member—but soon to be 152-member—organization in this Grade 7 to Grade 12 district serving students from four communities in one building.

FINDING LEADERS AND BUILDING A STRUCTURE

Brennan describes the association's relationship with district administration as excellent. That contention is backed up by an agreement she developed with administrators that enabled her to meet individually with each GREA member over the course of two days. In those meetings she and NJEA UniServ field rep Anna Waltman asked the three basic questions:

- What are your key concerns?
- What are some good things that are happening?

- Who are the people in this building whom you trust?

The question about trust helped Brennan identify new individuals to serve as building reps and committee members. The answers to the other questions provided direction for the new leader and her leadership team.

"I was able to say to some members, 'Your name came up a lot as a trusted voice, and I need your voice in this association,'" Brennan recalls.

Brennan and the GREA Executive Committee instituted monthly informational general membership meetings. To accommodate members' busy professional and personal schedules, GREA holds the general membership meeting twice on the same day: first in the early morning before school and then in the late afternoon after school.

"I want this to be a place where instead of asking, 'What is the union doing?' we all see ourselves as the union and instead ask, 'What are we doing?'" Brennan says.

EXPANDING "WE" TO INCLUDE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Until recently, GREA represented professionally certified, non-administrative staff and instructional aides. The school's custodial/maintenance staff and transportation staff were employed by the board but not represented by any union. Last year that began to change.

When Brennan learned that the custodial/maintenance staff had approached the Communication Workers of America (CWA) about organizing their 12-member bargaining unit, she explained the advantages of joining GREA and NJEA instead.

"Do you want to be a bargaining unit of 12, or do you want to be a bargaining unit of 125?" Brennan asked them.



ABOVE (top): Desirée Brennan, third from right, serves on the NJEA Leadership Committee. From left: Seated (l-r): NJEA Committee Staff Contact Michael Saffran, Kathy Wood, Minnie Mozee. Standing (l-r): Laurie O'Brien, Robert Mangel, Andrew Coslit, Allyson Pontier, Nicole Carminati, Isabella Pagán, Committee Chair Ann Kaspereen, Carolyn McKinney-Croix, Melissa Foremny, Annette Ruch, Cheryle Haynes, Desirée Brennan Daniel Fields and Twanda Taylor.

ABOVE (bottom): Gateway Regional EA Teacher of the Year Desirée Brennan with students from her French class. From left: Jade McNulty, Emmie Moran, Abby Godsey, Lindsey Helmbrech, Brennan, Jordan Showler, Niobe Engel, Amanda Gill, and Sophie Freind.



ABOVE: Gateway Regional EA President Desirée Brennan conducts monthly general membership meetings.

When a healthy majority of the custodial/maintenance bargaining unit signed union cards to join, they became a part of NJEA. Ultimately, the entire bargaining unit joined.

With the GREA contract expiring at the end of this school year, two members of the custodial/maintenance staff sit on the negotiations team.

The 26-member Gateway Regional transportation staff quickly followed suit and are in the process of joining GREA.

The association boasts 100 percent membership, and Brennan and her team aim to keep it that way.

BECOMING TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Of the 18 staff members nominated, Brennan was shocked to hear her name called at the Board of Education meeting as the 2019 Gateway Regional High School Teacher of the Year.

"I was already seated up front so I could video the naming of the winner, so I must have looked pretty egotistical, as if I was expecting it to be me!" Brennan remembers. "That's when GREA's secretary, Andrea Keenan, took the camera and started recording me. I really had no clue."

One of Brennan's students, Gateway senior Jade McNulty, had nominated her.

"Mrs. Brennan has so much on her plate, but still continues to put all of her energy into teaching," McNulty wrote. "French is an insanely difficult language, but she manages to teach it in a way that's easy for students to understand."

McNulty went on to describe stand-out classroom activities and the personal interest that Brennan took in students' lives outside her classroom.

"Since she knew that a few members of her class were in the marching band (myself included), she would always congratulate us on our wins and ask us how the show was coming along," McNulty wrote. "Even students from past years come back to talk to her and update her on their lives as she has been such an influential part of it."

HELPING CREATE A POSITIVE CLIMATE

Brennan has been teaching at Gateway since the 2002-03 school year. She became active in GREA in only the last three years. Prior to her union leadership, she said she was known as the "club queen." She was a class adviser for 12 years and had been an adviser for the National Honor Society, the French Club and the Key Club.

"I feel like I shifted because first I wanted to contribute to a positive culture among the students, and then I realized that I wanted to start to help create that kind of culture in the association," Brennan says. "That's when I started to get involved with NJEA and create a positive culture for our staff because I think that will flow into our classes with our students."

BLISTAN NAMED TRAILBLAZER, HONORED BY SEN. MENENDEZ

When U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez's parents came to the United States to escape the rule of Cuban dictator General Fulgencio Batista, their actions would set in motion a move toward a better life for their family. Menendez was born in 1954, two years after his parents immigrated to the United States. Life was not easy for the family but Menendez's mother, Evangelina, taught him the importance of education, hard work and perseverance. She passed away in 2009.

As a tribute to her legacy, Menendez created the Evangelina Menendez Trailblazer Award to recognize New Jersey women who promote equal rights for all and champion the rights of women, families and children.

"Last year was truly the Year of the Woman," said Menendez. "A record number of women were elected to Congress and local office, shaping our legislature to look more and more like the people it represents. We have the most women ever to serve in the Senate at one time. The fight for women's rights is far from over, but I am proud to fight alongside these women every step of the way."

NJEA President Marie Blistan, was recognized along with New Jersey State Teacher of the Year Jennifer Skomial, Jolt USA Founder Catherine Brienza, President and CEO of Metropolitan Family Health Network Joan Dublin, MomsRising Maternal Justice Campaign Director S. Nadia Hussain, Blue Wave President Marcia Marley, and Women's March on New Jersey Founder Elizabeth Meyer.

"As we honor your mother, an amazing and trailblazing woman from Cuba who came to our great state and thrived, I feel such rejuvenation," said Blistan, upon accepting her award. "Sen. Menendez, as I have heard you say many times before, it was your mother who instilled in you the values of education, and I am honored to be here today receiving this award in the name of educators everywhere. My mother taught me that we stand up for what is right because it is right, and that foundation of compassion allows me to stand up and advocate for what's best for New Jersey's children."

Blistan went on to say that "in this role, our NJEA members have empowered me to contribute to our profession, the profession that made me who I am, and to teach students—to truly teach children—that together, we can make and will make the world a better place."



ABOVE: From left: Rob Menendez Jr., NJEA President Marie Blistan and Sen. Bob Menendez.

PATERSON COMMUNITY PROTESTS SCHOOL FUNDING CUTS



Frustrated and angered by the program and staffing cuts facing their district, nearly 200 educators, administrators and parents from Paterson traveled to Trenton on March 27 to protest the state’s chronic underfunding of public education. They urged legislators to increase state aid to the Paterson School District. Wearing stickers that read “Cuts hurt kids” and “Paterson students deserve better,” they descended upon the Assembly Budget Committee to advocate for their schools.

“We firmly believe that any reductions must not be made on the backs of the people who dedicate their lives to educate the children of this city,” declared PEA President John McEntee. “Doing so only makes it that much harder for our students to receive the first-rate education they deserve.”

The proposed state aid is significantly less than what Paterson is entitled to under the School Funding Reform Act of 2009 (SFRA). This, coupled with the state’s call to increase by over \$9 million the funding the district must turn over to the city’s charter schools, leaves Paterson’s public schools facing a budget crisis. Moreover, a million dollars now needs to be allocated for the Passaic County Technical School to fund the expansion of its STEM program.

This combination of cuts has led the district to propose a budget that would cut over 120 teachers, resulting in class sizes of up to 40 students, as well as eliminate over 60 administrative positions. In addition, these cuts will result in the elimination of SAT preparation courses, vocational education services, textbook purchases, science lab upgrades, art and music instruction, and intervention programs designed to improve student performance in reading and math.

“Our district is already struggling with an educational deficit because of exploding class sizes, crumbling buildings and insufficient technology and teaching materials,” McEntee stated. “How are layoffs and reallocation of funds going to help solve any of these problems?”

PEA members and educators Lakresha Hodge and Charles Ferrer delivered testimony at the budget caused by the underfunding of Paterson.

“As you have heard and will hear from several speakers, we have been underfunded for many years as a result of an unsuccessful state takeover,” Hodge said. “I know this because I am a product of Paterson Public Schools. I know what it used to be; I know what it is; and I know what it can be.”

Despite a steady increase in enrollment since 2013, Paterson has been flat funded for years, and, under SFRA, should be receiving \$72 million more in state aid as of 2018-19. Additionally, the district currently allocates over \$50 million to the city’s charter schools. To close the gap, Paterson would have to raise \$51 million through increased property taxes, but it would mean an average property tax bill of over \$12,000 to achieve that amount.

“If we continue down the path of underfunding, our children will not receive the thorough and efficient education they are due by law and principle,” Hodge continued. “Someone once said, ‘It comes down to what your priorities are and, if public education is about kids, then every decision we make should be focused on the question of whether it’s good for a child.’”

McEntee agrees and vowed to continue to fight until more funding is secured.

“As we debate this war over school funding, our children are the ones who are suffering,” McEntee said. “Frankly, they deserve better.”



TOP: Paterson EA President John McEntee addresses a post-hearing rally at the Statehouse.

BOTTOM: Parents, teachers, educational support professionals, and NAEA leaders from Paterson and Toms River at the Assembly Budget Committee hearing on March 27.

WALL TOWNSHIP EA SCORES MAJOR LEGAL WIN IN SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT CASE

SUPERIOR COURT ORDERS BOARD OF EDUCATION TO TAKE A NEW VOTE ON DYER'S CONTRACT

The Superior Court of New Jersey, Appellate Division, has ruled that the Wall Township Board of Education failed to comply with the state's public notice and public hearing requirement when it replaced Wall Township Superintendent Cheryl Dyer's unexpired contract with a new one that increased her salary and extended her contract.

With less than a week's notice given to board members, the contentious vote passed 5-1 with three members unable to vote due to conflicts. Dyer, who had previously agreed to a five-year contract extension, modified the agreement to a three-year agreement on the day of the board meeting, sensing that she would have difficulty getting the five-year deal passed.

Within a month of the board meeting, members of the Wall Township Education Association (WTEA) filed an appeal with New Jersey Commissioner of Education Lamont Repollet, asking that the commissioner rescind the board's decision. WTEA argued that the board had violated state law by not providing the mandated notice to the community.

"My colleagues and I work hard to advocate for our students and staff," said WTEA President Gail Maher. "Taxpayers need to trust that elected officials are being open and transparent with how they govern. We believed that community members deserved to have their voices heard, and that the law had to be respected. That's why my colleagues Eugene DeLutio, Kathleen Sayers, Robert Leach II, Jaimielynn Campbell, Kristy Ansbach and I pursued this case with the assistance of NJEA Field Representative Ron Villano, and with the full support and resources of the NJEA."

"NJEA worked with the local association to identify the right attorney for this case, and to provide the support the association needed to see it through to the end," said Villano. "This is what our members pay dues for: to ensure that their voices are heard, their rights are upheld, and our students are always the priority."

New Jersey state law requires that boards of education must provide the community with 30 days' notice before taking any actions to "renegotiate, extend, amend or otherwise alter" the terms of a superintendent's contract.

Commissioner Repollet transferred the case to the Office of Administrative Law and an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) recommended that the WTEA's petition be dismissed, upholding the board's vote. The commissioner adopted the ALJ's recommendation.

However, the WTEA pursued further legal action and, with the expertise of NJEA network attorneys Zazzali, Fagella, Nowak, Kleinbaum and Friedman, brought the case before the appellate court.

On March 14, the court ruled that "the Commissioner misinterpreted N.J.S.A. 18A:11-11 under the circumstances of the case" and directed the board to vote on a new employment contract covering Dyer's employment from Nov. 19, 2017 to June 30, 2020, in accordance with the law.

"We are pleased that the Court overturned the original decision," said Maher, "And we look forward to the opportunity to have stakeholders' voices heard through the public hearing process. As always, our goal is to ensure that decisions are made that put the best interest of Wall Township's students first."



ABOVE: From left: Wall Township EA 1st Vice President Eugene DeLutio, 2nd VP Kathleen Sayers, President Gail Maher, former Administrative Projects Chair Kristy Ansbach, Secretary Jaimielynn Campbell, and former Grievance Chair Robert Leach.

NJ STATUTE ON SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTS

Other New Jersey boards of education have illegally extended a superintendent's contract without prior notice to the community, and without providing them with an opportunity to speak to that issue. The statute (N.J.S.A. 18A 11-11) that mandates boards of education inform the community and provide a public forum for their feedback reads:

"A board of education shall not renegotiate, extend, amend, or otherwise alter the terms of a contract with a superintendent of schools... unless notice is provided to the public at least 30 days prior to the scheduled action by the board. The board shall also hold a public hearing and shall not take any action on the matter until the hearing has been held. The board shall provide the public with at least 10 days' notice of the public hearing."

MARGATE EA LEADS FIGHT TO SAVE PARAPROFESSIONALS

A COMMUNITY STANDS TOGETHER

It took just three days for the Margate Education Association (MEA) to organize a powerful showing of community support at the Margate Board of Education meeting on March 6. Parents, community members, teachers and educational support professionals (ESP) attended the meeting as one group with a unified message: “Don’t RIF our paras.”

Facing budgetary shortfalls because of a drop in state aid, the Margate School District had to reevaluate its priorities under its new reality.

After the initial evaluation, the board proposed to cut the health benefits of nine paraprofessionals by making them part-time employees. If it passed, the paraprofessionals would have been forced to leave the district. However, the community stood together to let the board know the value those paraprofessionals held in the education of children and the overall school community.

Emphasizing the importance of relationships over time, parent after parent addressed the board. Parents told stories about the nine paraprofessionals and the influence they had on the lives of children. As parents told the stories of countless heart-felt moments with their children, many board members shed tears. Ultimately, the board agreed to work with MEA for the sake of the students and the future of the district.

“Here in Margate, we absolutely pride ourselves on being the very best of the best,” said MEA President Sherry Scott. Last year, we were named a Blue Ribbon School because

our students performed so well. That didn’t happen on its own. It happened because the people—all of the individuals who stand with me tonight—worked together to help educate our children. We are the best school because we’ve have the best staff. We’re able to maintain the best staff because we value our staff—all of our staff.”

There was an association-wide display of unity from teachers and ESP. Many teachers explained that, while these 9 paraprofessionals weren’t “certified” teachers, they were teachers in the eyes of the students because, simply, they helped them learn.

“We treat the people who work with children with the utmost respect and we must continue to do this, we must not vote to strip these dedicated educators from the benefits that they so deserve,” said Scott.

After the meeting, the board agreed to meet with MEA leadership and NJEA UniServ Field Representative Myron Plotkin. The board, expressing its shared value in the people who make the Margate schools successful, committed to re-evaluating its priorities and would do what was necessary to save the paraprofessional with their full benefits. Ultimately, both sides worked together and were able to save the nine paraprofessionals with their current compensation packages.

In Margate, the commitment from the board to work with the association will surely have a positive impact on the children in the district and the staff who work in the schools. The members of the MEA expressed their pride in working with educational leaders who are willing to work, with open hearts and minds, across the perceived barriers to do what’s right for the children.

WAYNE STUDENTS, STAFF RAISE \$32K FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Schuyler Colfax Middle School in Wayne raised over \$32,000 to raise funds to research a cure for leukemia and lymphoma through the Pennies for Patients program. Wayne Township Education Association (WEA) member Noël Anderson, an eighth grade Language Arts teacher, runs the program. Anderson lost her own mother to blood cancer.

Two WEA teachers, WEA FAST Chair Rob Sarti and building rep Dave Bright upped the ante when they announced a special challenge if students stepped up with contributions. Sarti committed to having his head shaved on stage at a school assembly. Bright, whose head was already reflecting light, announced that he’d have his legs waxed.

Last year, when Schuyler Colfax raised \$27,840 in a three-week period, it was the highest fundraising school in the state, and the eighth in the nation, for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. By raising over \$25,000, a research grant was named after the school. This year, they will be the first school in the history of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to have two research grants named after it.

BELOW: Wayne EA building rep David Bright couldn’t volunteer for a shaved head to raise funds, so he opted for a leg wax to increase donations for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

From left to right: Paraprofessionals Janice Saul, Patty Holland, Carol Reilert, Natalie Carlucci, Holly Ferry, Joan DiBartolomeo, Cindy Gresham, and Leigh Turner. Seated: Paraprofessional Popi Kounis and MEA President Sherry Scott.



THE NUMBERS

62

The number of New Jersey Retirees' Education Association members who are 100 years of age or older.

Source: NJREA membership records.



ABOVE: From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, Assemblywoman DiAnneGove, Burlington County Freeholder Director Tom Pullion, NJEA ESP Committee Chair Donna O'Malley, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty, Burlington County EA President Anthony Rizzo, Tabernacle EA Co-President Kate Cutts, and NJEA UniServ Field Rep Harry Zakarian.

REDEFINING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TABERNACLE

MEMBER-LED, MEMBER-ORGANIZED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The members of Tabernacle Education Association (TEA) took ownership of their professional development by designing and hosting a districtwide professional development conference titled ECET2.

ECET2, an acronym for Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers, was facilitated in Tabernacle by four TEA members: Scott Shinn, a middle school math and science teacher, Brittany Murro, an elementary ISTEM teacher, Stacey Arzt, a school psychologist, and Michael Dunlea, a third-grade teacher.

TEA aimed to redefine the professional development experience for teachers and educational support professionals by providing a teacher-led experience that benefited all who attended.

The theme of the conference was "School is CommUNITY" and it focused on bringing everyone in the school and outside community together under the umbrella of professional growth. The conference was open to all school employees, as well as educators from other school districts. It was free to attend, and all food was provided by local stores and vendors. More than 400 educators, primarily from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, who sought practical strategies to use with their students, attended the conference.

NJEA President Marie Blistan and NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty spent the day in Tabernacle participating in the sessions.

"This is professional development that works," said Blistan. "It's student-centered and member-focused. Our members are taking the lead on their growth as educators because they know their professional needs better than anyone. Today's conference includes relevant content delivered by classroom educators, a captivating keynote speaker, and a true sense of community that you can feel as you walk through the halls."

The conference offered specific places for networking and sharing ideas. Breaks throughout the day allowed educators to talk with one another.

"It's not just about presentations," said Murro. "It's about the meaningful connections and conversations during the breaks between workshops."

"Education can be a lonely profession and we wanted to break down some of that isolation," added Shinn. "We wanted to give people the chance to share what works and what doesn't work in their classrooms with one another."

The conference was designed to accommodate educators who work outside of the classroom.

"We wanted a real focus on broad topics that benefit every school employee," said Arzt. "We offered sessions on social-emotional learning, mindfulness and design thinking theory that apply to all educators. We can take what makes the most sense to us in our roles and bring it back to our work with children and schools."

Throughout the day, out-of-district educators were guided through the building by student volunteers who were happy to help support the event. Ten students volunteered to come into school on a day off to take photos for social media and help educators navigate hallways. The students who participated got a firsthand experience of what goes on "behind the scenes" in the professional lives of educators. Those students who volunteered to help the participants were excited to be included in the day.

"I designed the shirt and the logo," said Olympia, a fourth-grade student in the Tabernacle School District. "It feels a little bit crazy, and really fun and really good to help my teachers learn."

NJEA supported the conference by providing all who attended with badges and bags from NJEA. There was also an on-site NJEA Member Benefits Fair that offered access to deals and discounts to all NJEA members who attended.

#WEAREWORTHIT, #REDFORED AND #FIXTHEUNFAIRNESS GO TO THE MALL

NJEA members are not only demonstrating their solidarity on Wednesdays where they work but are taking their message about relief from Ch. 78 and job justice for educational support professionals to the public. Members wore #RedForEd and staged Days of Action at the Willowbrook Mall in Wayne, Passaic County on Jan. 30, the Moorestown Mall in Moorestown, Burlington County on Feb. 13, Bridgewater Commons in Somerset County, on March 27, and the Deptford Mall in Deptford, Gloucester County, on April 2.



NJEA OFFICERS THANK MEMBERS FOR SUPPORT

OFFICERS' SECOND TERMS BEGIN SEPT. 1

We deeply appreciate the confidence you have once again placed in us as your NJEA president, vice president and secretary-treasurer. You will always be our first priority as we stand shoulder-to-shoulder in the face of our current challenges and the challenges to come. It is through you and with you that all of us will continue to succeed. We commit to never relent in securing job justice for educational support professionals, in achieving relief from the devastating financial impact of Chapter 78, in holding firm on members' pensions and health benefits in retirement, in ensuring full and fair funding of public schools from preschool to community college regardless of ZIP code, in protecting

collective bargaining, in advocating for social, racial and economic justice, and in elevating our members as the leaders of our profession. It is because of the work you do every day that our schools are the best in the nation, and we look forward to working with you to keep them strong.

Marie Blistan

Sean Smith

Sh. Bean



U.S. SENATE APPROVES BILL CREATING NATIONAL AWARD PROGRAM FOR ESPS

The U.S. Senate approved the Recognizing Achievement in Classified School Employees Act (H.R. 276) on March 30. The legislation provides recognition for the outstanding contributions of educational support professionals (ESPs) to the nation's public schools and the students they serve. It directs the U.S. Secretary of Education to establish a national award program recognizing the excellence exhibited by public school system employees who provide services to students in pre-kindergarten through grade

12. The National Education Association (NEA) already annually recognizes such educators with its ESP of the Year award.

"Education support professionals are an integral part of the nation's public education system and the more than 50 million students it serves," said NEA President Lily Eskelsen García. "They often are the first in the building and the last to leave. They promote student achievement, ensure student safety, and contribute to the establishment and promotion of a positive instructional environ-

ment every day."

There are almost 3 million ESPs in U.S. public schools, colleges, and universities, and they make up one-third of the public education workforce.

"Whether driving a bus, working a computer lab, assisting a teacher in the classroom, serving lunch to students, or making sure the building is clean and healthy, ESPs work hard every day knowing the important role they play in creating learning environments that help students reach their fullest potential. They are the

gears that keep school operations moving," Eskelsen García said.

Eskelsen García thanked Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) for sponsoring the bill as well as the members from both sides of the political aisle of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Of NJEA's 200,000 members, over 50,000 are ESPs. Of NEA's 3 million members, 500,000 are ESPs. <#>

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MEETING THE NEEDS OF A GLOBAL CLASSROOM

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

Jefferson Heller stands outside his first-grade English language learner (ELL) classroom door at Ventnor Elementary School greeting colleagues and students as they pass by.

His colleague, Denise Tinucci, a fourth-grade ELL teacher, stops by to confer about their Book Buddies program. Once a month, Heller and Tinucci bring their students together to read one-on-one. The older students serve as role models to the wide-eyed first graders, and a living success story to show them how far they can go if they work hard.

Heller and Tinucci discuss this month's theme for the books the buddies will read and the craft activity they will work on together. The activity will help students demonstrate their ability to follow directions in English. Both teachers have found that the program helps them address behavior issues, boosts confidence and self-esteem, and builds a social connection among students in the school.

As Tinucci moves on to prepare for her day, students begin

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.

to enter Heller's classroom, most of them loaded down with breakfast. Since 64 percent of students in the district are economically disadvantaged, breakfast is a critical part of a successful school day.

ROUTINES ARE INSTRUCTIVE

Students are well-versed in the routines by this point in the year. Heller projects the lunch choices using pictures and words on a large TV monitor. Students know to move their personalized magnets appropriately to make their selections and move on to the next task.

Students now look to the board for their writing prompt. Heller has modeled the skills of introducing the topic, finding evidence from the text, and using a closing sentence to complete their responses. Most students have become quite skilled at referring to their science or social studies books to locate answers. As they finish at different times, Heller is able to have one-on-one time with every student to address their individual writing needs. Soon the bell rings and students and staff rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The 15 students in the class settle into their seats at tables

of two to three. The groupings help with behavior issues, but also permit students to collaborate in small groups.

While several of the students are ELL, one arrived in August with no English language background at all. The student also had no literacy in the language of her country of origin. Heller has her seated in the front of the classroom, near him, and next to another student who speaks her language—a student who was new to America himself last year. He is now thriving and eager to share what he has learned.

Thirty-eight percent of students in Ventnor Public Schools speak a language other than English at home; 8 percent of students are classified as English learners. But by mid-January, all students know what is expected of them.

"In an ELL classroom, you need a lot of structure in the day," Heller says. "After breakfast, we do housekeeping, and then a morning activity. Students who finish early are encouraged to read a book or complete any unfinished work. Then we have our morning meeting and the morning song. We then move on to our literacy block."

WHILE SEVERAL OF THE STUDENTS ARE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS, ONE ARRIVED IN AUGUST WITH NO ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND AT ALL.



Heller poses with his first-grade class.

CLASSROOM RULES

1. Raise your hand to talk.
2. Respect all people and things
3. Keep your hands, feet, and unkind words to yourself.
4. Try your best.
5. Have fun



A student reads during independent reading time.



Using the buddy system, students share a book and help each other.

HELLER PREPARES EXTRA LESSON PLANS FOR HIS STUDENTS AND IS CONSTANTLY USING MODIFICATIONS SUCH AS GESTURES, PICTURES, GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS, TECHNOLOGY, AND PAIRING STUDENTS FOR GROUP WORK.

BUILDING SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

Juggling the students' different needs effectively requires some additional support, so a basic skills teacher comes in daily to assist.

After a brief lockdown drill, there was a spelling test. With four levels of language learners, Heller has divided the students into groups based on a program that focuses on the spelling skill, rather than just rote memorization. The two teachers each take two groups and read the spelling words as students write. Another student works on the computer with headphones to build her proficiency with English.

"We always have to be careful that our assessments accurately reflect students' comprehension of the material we are assessing," Heller says. "Tests are modified for these learners so that a lack of English proficiency does not affect their grades."

Heller uses Class Dojo to provide incentives, monitor progress and communicate with parents.

"I like that it allows some socializing, reinforces communication and encourages positive behaviors," Heller says. "It really helps keep parents connected. Since the parents in my class may have their own language challenges, it really has improved our ability to be on the same page when it comes to their children."

In this district, there are four first-grade classes, but this is the only ELL inclusion class. There are no ELL inclusion classes in kindergarten or preschool. There is one ELL inclusion class in first, second, third and fourth grades.

The first-grade team collaborates on a regular basis. Recently,

Heller worked with the other first-grade teachers on a unit teaching Christmas around the world. It enabled the students to work collaboratively and to highlight different cultures and traditions. This year, the countries they studied were Mexico, Italy, Sweden and Israel. Parent volunteers came in and taught about their cultures as well.

"It's really important that we help our students to feel connected with other students in the school," Heller says. "Learning a new language and living in a different culture can be very challenging. It's very important for them to feel accepted and supported in our school community."

Heller is in his 13th year of teaching and is fluent in English and Spanish. He has spent approximately half his career teaching Spanish, and half teaching ELL.

"I loved teaching Spanish, but I am always looking for a new challenge," Heller says. "I thought that I could do something to help ELL students because I understand what it is like to learn a new language and how intimidating it can be when you can't express yourself the way that you want. I've really enjoyed the transition to ELL."

RESOURCES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Heller prepares extra lesson plans for ELL students and is constantly using modifications such as gestures, pictures, graphic organizers, technology, and pairing students for group work. An abundance of visual elements can be found throughout the room, including a word wall.

One of his most successful tools is music and singing. Stu-

dents light up during morning music time. Sitting on a brightly covered rug in front of Heller's chair, they sing along to a CD as he points to words on a large pad. This helps them connect the sounds and the words without singling out any one student. These songs also serve to teach students the days of the week, the months of the year, holidays, and much more.

They are typical first-graders as they bounce along with the song. They have even developed their own hand motions to go with some of the music.

After lunch students work cooperatively in groups for math centers. The groups change every week and so do the skills in the centers. Currently students use playing cards or dice to add and subtract, some are working on laptops on a math program, some are playing a math board game, and some are using their imaginations to build things. All the while, students are helping each other, regardless of their level of English acquisition.

By the end of the day, students have collected their bookbags, take-home folders, and lunch boxes and carefully arranged their desks and chairs to be ready for the morning. They wish Mr. Heller a good night as they file out to their buses.

"Teaching ELL students is one of the most rewarding experiences I have had in my career," Heller said. "It's fascinating to watch a student's language ability and confidence grow over the course of the school year. I know that this is a vital step in ensuring they are able to make the most out of their educational opportunities." 🌟

TEACHING ELL STUDENTS IS ONE OF THE MOST REWARDING EXPERIENCES I HAVE HAD IN MY CAREER.



ELL could also stand for Eager Language Learners in Heller's class.

ACTIVISM *in the* ART ROOM

Linking the work of Shepard Fairey to the Memory Project

BY LORA MARIE DURR

Fine Art 1 students at Hopewell Valley Central High School in Mercer County recently participated in a portrait project that connected them to children on the other side of the world. As its website notes, the Memory Project is a charitable nonprofit organization that invites art teachers, art

Lora Marie Durr has been an educator in Mercer County since 2001. She currently works at Hopewell Valley Central High School teaching Art 2, Fine Art 1, Fine Art 2 and AP Studio Art. Outside of the classroom, Lora is a painter and currently serves as President Elect of the Art Educators of NJ. She can be reached at loradurr@hvrsd.org.

students and individual artists to help cultivate global kindness by creating portraits for children around the world who have faced substantial challenges, such as violence, war, extreme poverty, neglect and the loss of parents. Participants create these portraits to help children feel valued and important, to know that many people care about their well-being, and to provide a special childhood memory in the future.

Twenty-seven students from Hopewell Valley joined this meaningful project in the fall of 2018 to create portraits of Syrian children. These portraits were created using acrylic paint and used

*Many art **programs** around the state and country have **participated** in this organization's mission. Working with **portraiture** is a part of almost every high school art curriculum and thus the Memory Project can easily be incorporated into the year's **plans**.*



*The **Memory Project** brought a personal voice to the **crisis** that helped the students to **connect** with the individuals for whom they were creating portraits.*

the grid method for reproducing the image. Students use a ruler to draw a grid on the original photo. They then draw a grid of equal or larger scale onto the final surface. Each box of the grid is redrawn onto the new surface. It is a mathematical way to approach drawing—specifically if you desire to enlarge an image—that breaks the image down into smaller parts.

Upon completion, the portraits were returned to the Memory Project where they will be distributed to the Syrian refugee children.

Many art programs around the state and country have participated in this organization's mission. Working with portraiture is a part of almost every high school art curriculum and thus the Memory Project can easily be incorporated into the year's plans. To date, artists

working with the Memory Project have created over 130,000 portraits for children in 47 countries.

THE ROLE OF ACTIVISM IN ART

At Hopewell Valley we decided to take a slightly different approach for the creation of our portraits. First, we discussed the work of street artist, Shepard Fairey, best known for the “Hope” and “Change” posters from the campaign of President Barack Obama. We also viewed and discussed the “We the People” campaign released during the first Women’s March. The students applied their understanding of the visual art elements and principles of design to interpret the style and symbolism in Fairey’s images. Students read and responded to articles

about the role of activism in the contemporary art world, both in America and in Syria.

“The biggest take away from my participation in this project was the realization of what’s happening in other parts of the world,” student Nicole Bartnikowski wrote. “It opened my eyes to new perspectives and allowed me to understand how grateful I am to be living in this country with freedom.”

With an understanding of Shepard Fairey’s style in hand, each student selected a child from the photos we were sent by the Memory Project. Each photo contained a child’s name, age and favorite color. The students used the Syrian child’s favorite color as a starting point for a three-color palette, keeping in mind the way Shepard Fairey used color in his portraits. Students also selected a traditional Syrian pattern that

would commonly be found in fabrics produced in Damascus. This pattern was incorporated into the background of the portrait, similar to the way Shepard Fairey has incorporated pattern in many of his portraits.

Throughout the creation of the portraits, students watched videos from the Memory Project exploring the culture and crisis in Syria. These video clips helped the students at Hopewell Valley to empathize with children from the other side of the world living lives very different from their own. The lesson materials shared by the Memory Project brought a personal voice to the crisis that helped the students to connect with the individuals for whom they were creating portraits.

BELOW: Hopewell Valley Central High School students display portraits of Syrian children created for the Memory Project.



A TIME FOR REFLECTION

Upon completion, students were asked to reflect on the project in writing. Student responses referred to the shift that occurred during the lesson as they began to empathize with their child.

“The Memory Project forced me to constantly think about the refugee I was drawing,” Aima Bhatti wrote. “I felt something sad in her eyes, and that’s when it struck me that I should be forever grateful for everything in my life and the country that I live in. This project taught me humility and reminded me of how people in America constantly take their lives for granted.”

Students stated they had a deeper understanding of the role of art as a tool for activism and social change and felt they had personally participated in an activist art project.

“This project shows how you can help people with your artistic talent,” wrote Dominic Guarino.

“Art can have a role in politics and foreign affairs because you can spread emotion and views of certain topics through your work.”

Other students referenced the way the lesson allowed for engagement with a contemporary issue in a more meaningful and direct way.

“For me, the biggest take-away from The Memory Project is that art can be a powerful way to bring joy to someone’s life while also teaching an important message,” Ellie Brown wrote. “During this project, I learned a lot about the issues occurring in Syria that opened my eyes to the lives that these children are living.”

SHARING LESSONS LEARNED

Students shared the lesson with our school community. First, the work was displayed in our school building with QR Code links to more information on the Memory Project and the Syrian crisis. Next,

four students were interviewed by our television and video students for the “Morning Buzz,” a weekly morning news program produced by students at Hopewell Valley. Lastly, four more students attended a Hopewell Valley Regional School District Board of Education meeting on January 14, 2019, to present their work and their thoughts to the school board and the administration.

After the “Morning Buzz” presentation many faculty members commented on the power of the lesson. Members of the school board and administration personally thanked the students for sharing their learning and were moved by the artwork.

Participation in the Memory Project was meaningful for the students. As an educator, I saw this project as a wonderful opportunity to connect learners with contemporary approaches to artmaking that involve activism and social issues. I believe the

connection we made between the mission of the Memory Project and the work of Shepard Fairey helped the students to develop a deeper understanding of the power of art and its ability to connect people from different cultures across the world. I believe that painting portraits for children on the other side of the world made a difference in the lives of the artist and the recipient.

I am especially grateful to Hopewell Valley Regional School District Board of Education and the Visual and Performing Arts Department Supervisor Ron Heller for supporting the students in this endeavor.

To learn more about participating in the Memory Project with your students, visit memoryproject.org. 📍

Portraits created by Hopewell Valley Central High School students were done in the style of artist and activist Shepard Fairey.





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NORTHERN VALLEY REGIONAL TEACHERS ASSISTANTS ORGANIZE, JOIN N J E A

BY KATHRYN COULIBALY

The 155 teacher assistants who work in the Northern Valley Regional School District, which includes Demarast and Old Tappan high schools, and also provide services to special education students in its sending districts, believed their health benefits were safe, despite the fact that they were nonunionized.

But on May 15, 2018, they learned otherwise. On that day, the district administration presented the teacher assistants with their new contract. Since the teacher assistants did not have a union, there was no discussion or information provided the staff before the contract was revealed to them—and they had no recourse to change the contract's contents.

The district was moving the teacher assistants from Direct 10

to 2035 with a high deductible. There would be an opportunity to “buy up” for better coverage, but the costs were out of reach for most of the staff.

“The news was horrible,” said Rose McPartland. “We each got a letter with information on insurance changes. Included with the letter was a pink slip instructing us to return the signed contract and health care form to the superintendent in two weeks.”

The teacher assistants were told that if they did not sign and return their letters by the deadline, it would be considered a resignation.

“We were in shock,” said Jill McGuire. “We were horrified to find out what the board was doing to us. We were worried about what would happen to our families. Our starting salary is about \$21,000. Most of the people who work here rely heavily on their medical benefits. Without quality benefits, we knew we would lose a lot of good people who



Northern Valley Regional teachers assistants celebrate their unity. From left: Rose McPartland, Käersten Levi, Lisa Carbaugh, and Jill McGuire.

really care about our students.

“We are the educators who work one-on-one with the district’s most vulnerable students, from pre-school through age 21,” McGuire continued. “We were really worried about what the consequences of the board’s decision would be on our students.”

In a letter the teaching assistants sent to the board, they acknowledged “given that we are union-less and lack a collectively bargained contract, we have had little recourse to advocate for ourselves in the process of this decision.”

The teaching assistants were motivated to unionize to ensure that nothing like this would ever happen again.

About 60 teaching assistants met to discuss the board’s health

care changes and began an email chain that helped them to communicate and mobilize. Spread across multiple buildings and towns, communication is challenging for the group.

McPartland did her research, made phone calls, and got NJEA Field Representative George Lambert’s contact information.

“My contacts told me, ‘George is the person you need,’” she recalled.

The teaching assistants never considered joining any other union but NJEA.

“I didn’t realize that we were the only school employees in the district, besides the computer technicians, who weren’t unionized,” McGuire said. “We trusted that the board would take care of us. We didn’t think that we had to have a union because we had

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.

**THE TEACHING ASSISTANTS
NEVER CONSIDERED
JOINING ANY OTHER
UNION BUT NJEA.**

a very supportive principal who fought for us and our benefits.”

“When I took this job, I asked if it was a unionized position and I was assured that ‘we are a family here and we take care of our family,’” McGuire remembered. “Well, we were a family until we weren’t anymore. If we’d had the benefit of collective bargaining, the board would not have been able to unilaterally reduce our insurance benefits.”

The teaching assistants began organizing immediately. Because they work September through July, they were able to maintain their momentum even with the traditional end of the school year looming. Beginning in June and continuing throughout the summer, the teaching assistants collected union cards. By Oct. 19, they had returned all their cards and were formally recognized by the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC). The board made no efforts to oppose the newly organized local association, known as the Northern Valley Teachers Assistants Association (NVTAA).

And while the teaching assistants are excited about their new union, the protections and voice that it affords them, and negotiating their first contract, a lot of the damage has already been done.

Staff is working under the newly imposed health benefit reductions, and many are struggling to pay the cost of health care for their families.

The health care changes and other administrative decisions have led to low morale and an exodus out of the district.

“I came from another district, where I was in a union, to Northern Valley because I wanted to work full time,” said Lisa Carbaugh. “I had been on the negotiations team in my previous district. It’s so sad to see the lack of support from the board here. I was disappointed to find out they were not unionized here. Board members, administrators, and teachers aren’t fully aware of all that we do. Many people have left the district, and many others continue to look for a new job. Morale is very low in the district and administration is having a hard time finding new hires.”

Lisa Carbaugh and Nicole Cowley are negotiations chairs; Jill McGuire is the local president; Nicole Cowley is the vice-president; Rose McPartland is secretary and Káersten Levi and Denise Reeves are the treasurers.

EAGER FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Despite the painful way the union formed, the members are eager for the future.

“I want our union to be able to sit with the board and have the benefit of collective bargaining,” McGuire said. “I believe we were robbed of these benefits. We are the lowest-paid employees in the district. The benefits are the most important part of the salary package and we’re going to fight for them.”

“We’re very concerned about privatization,” Levi said. “So many people have left the district, and the district’s reputation among people who do this work is so poor, that they’re not able to



(l-r) Rose McPartland, Káersten Levi, Lisa Carbaugh, and Jill McGuire look forward to a better future for teachers assistants in Northern Valley Regional.

fill the open positions. Administration brought in an agency to staff these teaching assistant positions, but the people they’re bringing in don’t understand or seem to want to do the work. They think they are overqualified and refuse to handle some of the students’ needs.

“On top of everything, we’re short-staffed and expected to fit training into our already overwhelming workload. At reduced benefits?” Levi wondered. “Even if I wanted to, there’s just not enough time. My first priority is seeing to the students’ needs. It is beyond frustrating to see the students not get what they need.

“If you hire a math teacher, you expect her to be able to teach math,” Levi continued. “If you hire a teaching assistant, you need someone who knows how to do what we do. We’re changing diapers and helping to toilet-train some of our students.”

CONNECTING WITH OTHER LOCAL ASSOCIATION ESP MEMBERS

The NVTAA is learning more about NJEA’s advocacy on the educational support professional

(ESP) bills currently before the Legislature. That kind of activism on their issues reinforces their decision to join the union.

“We’re already working to register members for NJEA conferences and get them networking with other local association members as soon as possible,” said Lambert. “These members have felt alone. Although they work in a big district, their work can feel very isolated. And when the district imposed a contract with benefits reductions on them, they had no power as individuals. It was sign, or leave. But now, they’re part of an organization that encompasses 200,000 members statewide and more than three million nationally. They’re not alone anymore.”

“I feel in hindsight that we were an easy target because we didn’t have a union,” McGuire said. “We didn’t have the benefit of collective bargaining. Without that, you have no recourse, no warning, and no way to protect yourselves.”

**THE TEACHING ASSISTANTS
WERE MOTIVATED TO
UNIONIZE TO ENSURE THAT
NOTHING LIKE THIS WOULD
EVER HAPPEN AGAIN.**

EDUCATORS ARE SAVING LIVES

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES AND THE USE OF EPINEPHRINE IN SCHOOLS

BY GINA EMGE, MSN, RN, CSN-NJ

New Jersey strives to keep students safe in school and during school activities. The state is a trailblazer, being one of the first states to pass laws for self-administration of medications for life-threatening medical conditions (P.L. 2001, c.61) permitting trained delegates to administer certain medications, such as epinephrine for students with a history of known anaphylaxis (P.L. 2007, c. 57) and glucagon to students with severe hypoglycemia from diabetes (P.L. 2009, c. 131).

New Jersey further expanded the epinephrine law permitting nurses and trained delegates to administer epinephrine via an autoinjector to a student, without a history of known anaphylaxis, if the student appeared to be experiencing anaphylaxis (P.L. 2015, c.13).

Gina Emge is a certified school nurse at Lenape High School in Burlington County. She serves on the board of directors of the National Association of School Nurses and the New Jersey State School Nurses Association. She can be followed on Twitter at @ginaemge and reached at gemge720@gmail.com.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening, severe allergic reaction, often with a sudden onset. It is a medical emergency and requires quick treatment with epinephrine. Anaphylaxis trained delegates are employees of the school district, usually teachers, coaches and administrators, who volunteer to receive education regarding anaphylaxis and how to administer the epinephrine auto-injector.

HISTORY RECAP

Regarding P.L. 2007, c. 57, the epinephrine law that permitted trained delegates to administer epinephrine for a student with a history of known anaphylaxis, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) promulgated educational materials, titled Training Protocols for the Emergency Administration of Epinephrine (see sidebar). These materials are very specific and provided guidance for districts to enact the new law.

The NJDOE, however, did not provide any regulations, guidance or educational tools

for P.L. 2015, c.13. This law permits nurses and trained delegates to administer epinephrine to students suspected of having an anaphylactic reaction without a known history of anaphylaxis, and for schools to “stock” epinephrine. Stock epinephrine is a dose or multiple doses of epinephrine that is available at school without being designated to a specific student.

ANAPHYLAXIS EDUCATION

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening, severe allergic reaction. It is increasing in prevalence and only responds to treatment with epinephrine. Anaphylaxis may develop very quickly and requires the rapid administration of epinephrine, which is recommended by professional medical groups such as the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI), and educational organizations such as Asthma and Allergy Network and Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE). Anaphylaxis

emergency care plans are used for students with known anaphylaxis.

Many districts provide anaphylaxis education to staff via an online, self-learning module. Student-specific anaphylaxis education, which includes demonstration and return demonstration of the epinephrine autoinjector (EA), is provided by the certified school nurse (CSN) to those staff who volunteer to be trained in anaphylaxis response. The student-specific emergency care plan is maintained with the student’s epinephrine autoinjector or given to the trained delegate when the student is participating in an activity away from the school campus.

However, recognizing that 25 percent of anaphylaxis in schools occurs in students without a previous food allergy diagnosis, my school provides a generic FARE anaphylaxis emergency care plan with each stock epinephrine autoinjector, whether the medication is stored on school campus or if supplied for a school trip. This

form clearly illustrates symptoms and delineates tasks to be carried out, minimizing medical or nursing assessment.

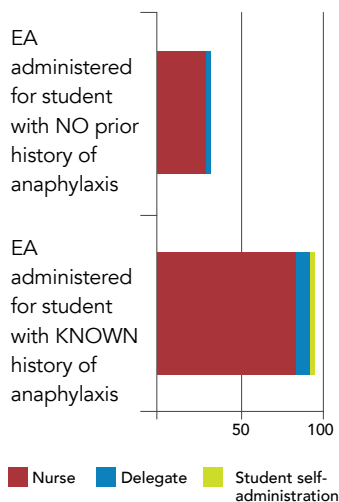
Epinephrine can be life-saving when administered as rapidly as possible once anaphylaxis is recognized. Storing the stock epinephrine auto-injector in tandem with the generic FARE emergency care plan ensures accurate information with clear interventions is readily accessible for the trained delegate when suspecting and thus responding to anaphylaxis.

You can learn more about the FARE emergency care plan at bit.ly/fareecp. The plan is available in English and Spanish. The AAP plan form, which provides step-by-step guidance, can be downloaded at bit.ly/aapplan. Another plan form is available from the AAAAI at bit.ly/aaiplan.

ARE EDUCATORS GIVING STOCK EPINEPHRINE?

New Jersey does not mandate the reporting to the state of anaphylaxis and administration of epinephrine to students in school or during a school sponsored activity. To gather data regarding the administration of epinephrine to New Jersey students, the New Jersey State School Nurses Association (NJSSNA) surveyed its membership in 2017 and 2018.

EPINEPHRINE GIVEN 9/2017 TO 4/2018

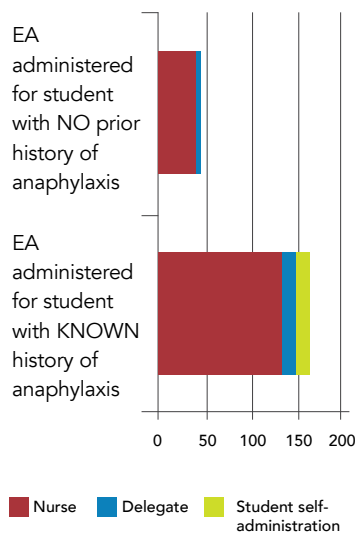


Over 7 month period, 120 EAs were given; 17 per month

SURVEY RESULTS

In 2017, an online survey was sent to 1,284 NJSSNA members, yielding responses from 505 certified school nurses (CSN) for a 39 percent response rate. The dates of the data collected encompassed September 2015 to April 2017. In that 18-month period, 205 epinephrine doses were administered, an average of just over 11 per month.

EPINEPHRINE GIVEN 9/2015 TO 4/2017



Over 18 month period, 205 EAs were given; Eleven per month

Of those 205 doses to students with anaphylaxis, the majority were administered by the CSN. Of the 173 total doses given by the CSN, 39 doses were given to a student without a known history of anaphylaxis. Trained delegates administered a total of 18 doses. Of those, seven were administered to a student with known anaphylaxis on school campus and 3 doses to a student without known anaphylaxis on the school campus. Six doses were administered by a trained delegate to a student with known anaphylaxis off campus and two were given to a student for unknown anaphylaxis off campus. Fourteen doses were self-administered by students.

In 2018, 1,201 surveys were sent to NJSSNA membership, yielding

responses from 371 CSNs, for a response rate of 31 percent. The dates of the data collected ranged from September 2017 to April 2018. During this time frame, 120 total doses of epinephrine were given for students with anaphylaxis with the majority of the doses administered by the CSN. Of the 105 total doses given by the CSN, 24 doses were given to a student without a known history of anaphylaxis. Trained delegates administered a total of 11 doses. Seven doses were administered to a student with known anaphylaxis on campus, three doses were given to a student with known anaphylaxis off campus; and one dose was given to a student off campus for unknown anaphylaxis. Four doses of epinephrine were self-administered by students.

ARE EDUCATORS SAVING LIVES?

Yes! Although the majority of epinephrine was given to students with a known history of anaphylaxis, 69 stock doses of epinephrine were administered to students without a known history of anaphylaxis. Of these 69 doses, six were given by trained delegates.

ANAPHYLAXIS IS ON THE RISE

There has been a drastic increase in the prevalence of anaphylaxis. The NJSSNA Epinephrine Survey illustrates this trend in New Jersey. Successful management of anaphylaxis requires early recognition of signs and symptoms and the immediate administration of epinephrine. The CSN's role in providing anaphylaxis education, and the staff who volunteer to respond as trained delegates, are instrumental in keeping students safe. Providing a student-specific ECP for a student with a known history of anaphylaxis and attaching a generic ECP along with stock epinephrine auto-injectors ensures accurate, directive information is readily available, if anaphylaxis is suspected. 🚑

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Training Protocols for the Emergency Administration of Epinephrine, 2008. Accessible from bit.ly/njdoeeap.

"Anaphylaxis in children: Epidemiology, risk factors and management," by Katherine Anagnostou. *Current Pediatric Review*, 2018.

"Anaphylaxis in children," by Karen S. Farbman and Kenneth Michelson. *Current Opinion in Pediatrics*, 2016.

"Administration of epinephrine for life threatening allergic reactions in school settings," by C Lynne McIntyre, Anne H. Sheetz, Constance R. Carroll, and Michael C. Young. *Pediatrics*, 2005.

"Steps to stock: Keeping students safe with fully implemented stock epinephrine," by Sandra Moritz and Sally Schoessler. *NASN School Nurse*, 2018.

"To give epinephrine or not to give epinephrine – That is (no longer) the question!" by W. Scott Russell and Sally Schoessler. *NASN School Nurse*, 2017.

"Epinephrine for first-aid management of anaphylaxis," by Scott H. Sicherer and F. Estelle R. Simons. *Pediatrics*, 2017.

"Anaphylaxis treatment: Current barriers to adrenaline auto-injector use," by T. Ted Song, Margitta Worm and Phil Lieberman. *Allergy*, 2014.

"Guidance on completing a written allergy and anaphylaxis emergency plan," by Julie Wang and Scott H. Sicherer. *Pediatrics*, 2017.

GET READY TO ROCK AND ROLL AT THE 2019 NJEA CONVENTION

STAY
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COVER OF
THIS NJEA
REVIEW FOR
SOME GREAT
DEALS THAT
NJEA HAS
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STAYS AT
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RESERVATIONS
TODAY.

The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation was established by Steven Van Zandt, the songwriter, producer, actor and activist who is a member of Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band. TeachRock is the foundation's national middle and high school curriculum initiative. Created to address the challenges of an environment in which schools face cuts to arts funding, TeachRock includes interdisciplinary, arts-driven materials designed to keep students engaged and in school. Its groundbreaking curriculum is available at no cost to educators.

The foundation will bring its impressive resources to the 2019 NJEA Convention.

The foundation is planning workshops that address historical events through music including:

- 9/11
- Hurricane Katrina

- The Berlin Wall
- Anita Hill and Third Wave Feminism
- LGBTQ history

The foundation will also provide programs for music and visual art, STEAM and music, and culturally responsive perspectives on history through music.

You'll also find the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation on Digital Boulevard where presenters will showcase their tech tools, which are built into the foundation's PBS Soundbreaking lesson plans.

In addition, the foundation is creating a two-day program for NJEA Preservice members that addresses curricular integration of art and music and a documentary screening during through which participants will create their own lesson and unit plans from the material.

READERS' AND WRITERS' WORKSHOPS WITH LUCY CALKINS

Acclaimed literacy educator and author Lucy Calkins will run a full day of readers' and writers' workshop programs. To ensure that no one is disappointed upon arriving in Atlantic City and finding her sessions full, pre-registration will be available for attendees. See future editions of the *NJEA Review* and the *NJEA Convention Program* for details.

Lucy Calkins is the author of over 40 books that have quickly become an indispensable part of classroom life in tens of thousands of schools around the

world. These include *Leading Well: Building Schoolwide Excellence in Reading and Writing: Units of Study in Phonics, Grades K-2*; the best-selling, grade-by-grade *Units of Study for Teaching Reading, Grades K-8*; and *Units of Study in Opinion/Argument, Information, and Narrative Writing, Grades K-8*; *Up the Ladder: Accessing Grades 3-6 Units in Narrative, Information, and Opinion Writing* series. She has also authored such classroom essentials as the groundbreaking *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Classroom Libraries* and the *Workshop Help Desk* series.

Calkins is also the author or coauthor of numerous foundational professional texts with Heinemann, including *The Art of Teaching Writing: Writing Pathways: Performance Assessments and Learning Progressions, Grades K-8*; and *One to One: The Art of Conferring with Young Writers*. She is also the author of *The Art of Teaching Reading*.



ABOVE: Lucy Calkins

Next page, top right photo: The NJEA Convention Committee oversees convention programming. Last year, they took a break from their busy convention schedules for a quick photo. In the foreground is Convention Committee Chair Susan Davis.

A WHOLE NEW VIEW OF MATH

You and your students will be saying “Gimme More Math!” as you learn how to make math everyone’s favorite subject! Shake up your view of numbers, shapes, and math literacy in this first-ever convention math institute.

Speakers on the mathematics behind Jersey Mike’s subs, Cake Boss creations and Atlantic City casino tricks will connect shapes and numbers to our favorite real-life fun. “Math engagement

gurus” James Tanton of Exploding Dots and Laura Overdeck of Bedtime Math will illustrate how small tweaks in the ways we present math can entice kids to hunger for more.

Teachers will come away with a whole new view of math as the obvious best part of the school day, with concrete tools for stoking students’ curiosity, perseverance, and sense of victory at problem-solving.

BELOW: Lisa Funari Willever speaking at the 2016 NJEA Convention.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS

Each year, NJEA’s options for educational support professionals have grown, whether it is new workshop programs, networking opportunities, or more resources on the exhibit hall floor. This year, it will be taken to a new level as NJEA works with

partners in NEA to bring new workshops and programs to meet the needs of secretaries, custodians, paraprofessionals and aides, bus drivers, cafeteria staff, security, all others who make up the school team.



The convention empowers you as an educator and as a leader.

The NJEA Convention Committee oversees convention programming. In the foreground is the committee’s chair, Susan Davis.



NICKY FIFTH MAKES A TRIUMPHANT RETURN

For five of the last six years, author Lisa Funari Willever has caused long lines that snake around the aisles of the Atlantic City Convention Center’s exhibit hall floor. Why? Because the former Trenton teacher makes a big splash when she releases her newest books at the NJEA Convention, exclusively for New Jersey educators. After a one-year hiatus, Funari Willever will return to launch her latest titles and distribute classroom sets of selected titles complete with teacher’s guides designed for educators in second through 12th grades.

Funari Willever is best known for her pride in New Jersey as exemplified in her Nicky Fifth

series. The books follow Nicky and his friends, T-Bone, Wanda and Timmy as they get caught up in all sorts of humorous adventures set in the Garden State. Funari Willever was inspired to write the series after attempts to teach students about New Jersey from the texts available.

“I was all too familiar with the dry, boring materials that were used to present our great state,” Funari-Willever writes in Nicky Fifth’s New Jersey Teacher’s Guide. “A classroom full of excited, enthusiastic children and no one thought, ‘Hey, maybe we should make this fun. Maybe we should get them excited enough to explore and see the state firsthand.’”



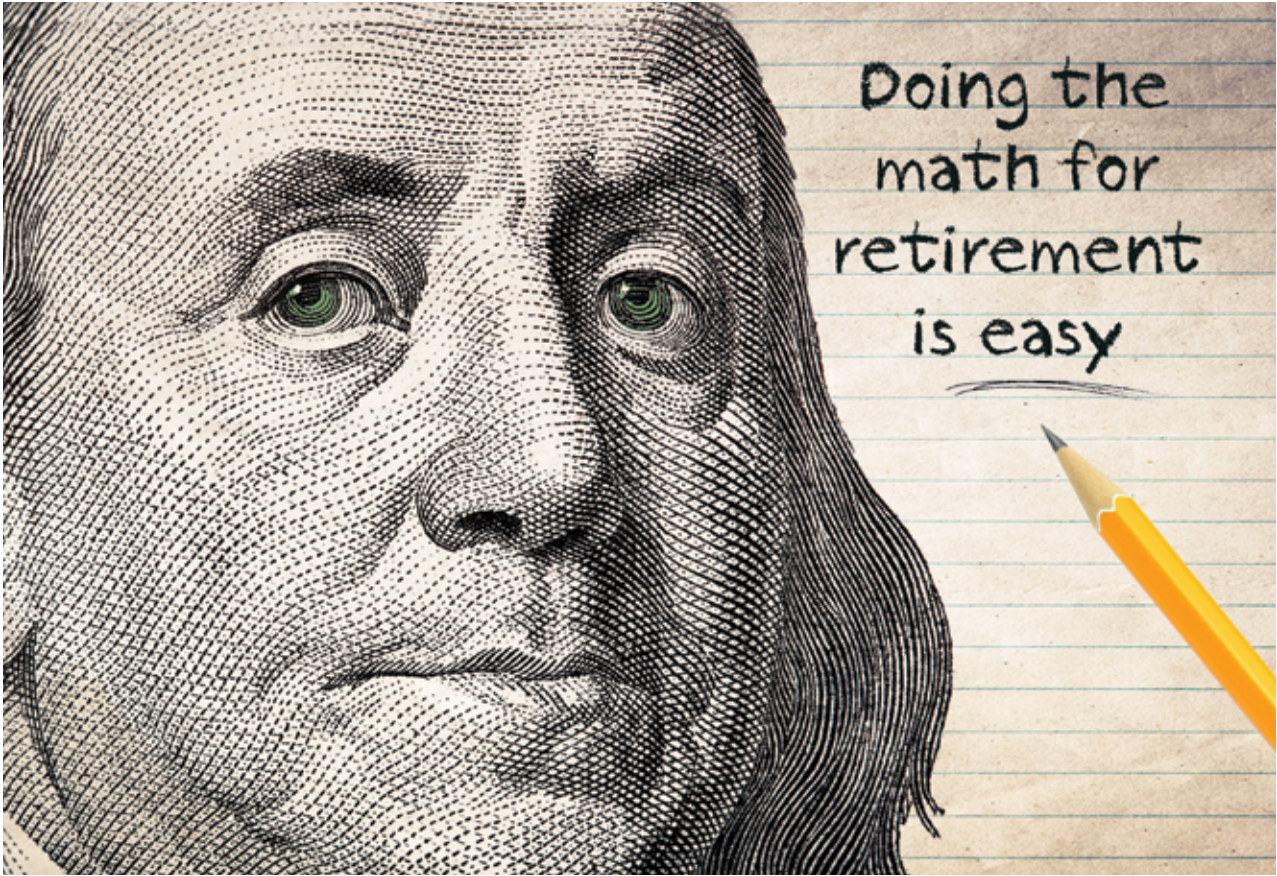
There are workshops available for all members.

FAVORITES RETURN

Everything else that helps make the NJEA Convention the association’s most popular event return: Digital Boulevard, Higher Education programming, the Celebration of Excellence, Hipp Grant winners, NJEA member authors, NJEA Preservice workshops, sessions with

the New Jersey Commissioner of Education and the State Board of Education, the Boardwalk NJEA, and hundreds upon hundreds of exhibitors on the main floor of the Atlantic City Convention Center.

We’ll see you in November. 🇺🇸



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BLOOD AND OTHER BODILY FLUIDS

WHAT'S SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN IN YOUR SCHOOL?

BY DOROTHY WIGMORE

Nurses encounter blood and other bodily fluids in their schools, some of which may contain infectious hazards. Bus drivers, custodial staff, security guards, teachers, paraprofessionals, athletic directors and others also face such hazards.

In New Jersey's Madison Public School District (See bit.ly/mpsdbbp), the "others" include speech therapists, playground monitors, principals, physical/occupational therapists and others who provide first aid. The Paterson Board of Education (See bit.ly/patersonbbp) separates the jobs facing possible exposure into two categories: those where it is assumed every employee doing certain jobs is likely to encounter blood or other potentially infectious materials, referred to as OPIM, and those where some employees may have that exposure, such as Epipen delegates and food service workers.

The differences are found in school districts' Exposure Control Plan (ECP), required by the New Jersey Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) standard. Last revised in 2001, the regulation focuses on infectious hazards found in blood, especially the human immunodeficiency (HIV), hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C (HCV) viruses. HBV is the greatest concern because it can survive for a week or more on surfaces, and it is much more

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 Canada, the U.S. and Mozambique and been involved in efforts to prevent violence on the job since 1989.

infectious than HIV.

Since it's impossible to know on sight who is infected, the standard asserts that you must assume that all blood is contaminated. The same assumption applies to other bodily fluids contaminated with blood, such as tears, vomit, urine, feces, or saliva, and those fluids where it is hard to see what they contain, all known as OPIM. Needles and other materials (e.g., broken glass) may be contaminated with blood or OPIM.

DOES YOUR DISTRICT HAVE A PLAN? ARE YOU COVERED?

The BBP standard first took effect in 1993, yet 25 years later, some districts still don't have an ECP, while others limit the plan's coverage.

Recently, the Cinnaminson Education Association discovered that its district didn't have a plan. A student with special needs was spitting, defecating in the hallway and acting out in other ways. Worried about infections and the time it took cleaning staff to arrive, members went to CEA President Tamara Gross for help. Gross asked her NJEA UniServ field representative for information, leading to a technical assistance request of the New Jersey Work Environment Council (WEC).

"A meeting with the WEC consultant brought attention to the fact we didn't have an accurate plan in place to deal with the contamination and the clean-up of it afterwards," she says. "It forced the district to create a plan."

To develop an ECP, the standard allows districts to decide who is exposed, and, therefore, covered by the plan. "Exposure"

is defined as "reasonably anticipated" to come in contact with blood or OPIM via eyes, mucous membranes, or skin breaks (e.g., from cuts, bites, needle sticks).

For accuracy, districts must

**WHEN COVERED
BY A PLAN,
SCHOOL STAFF
NEED RELEVANT
TRAINING,
PROTECTIVE
GEAR, AND—
WITHIN
HOURS OF
ENCOUNTERING
BLOOD
OR OTHER
POTENTIALLY
INFECTIOUS
MATERIAL—A
HEALTH
EVALUATION.**

look at more than job descriptions. What happens when the school nurse is not there, and someone gets injured in after-school wrestling or at football games? Who cleans up when students act out their frustrations by spitting or defecating, or when someone's colostomy bag becomes loose? When clean-

ing is outsourced, how many custodians are on the job at any time, and where are they? How do teachers deal with blood in their classroom?

An ECP should cover everyone in a school, says WEC consultant and former art teacher, Allen Barkkume.

"With 120 students a day for 180 days, to think that one of them is not going to bleed in your classroom ignores reality," Barkkume says. "Every year I had at least a dozen incidents with bleeding students in my classroom or the hallway. At our school, we had almost everyone—teachers, custodians, others—come out to the training every year. It doesn't take long. Give everybody some gloves, and more if they need it. It's a no-brainer."

That's what the New Jersey Department of Education expects. Its August 2017 letter (bit.ly/doeschoolhealth) about school health mandates says, "Schools and daycare facilities are required to provide training and appropriate supplies for all school personnel" to meet the standard.

WHAT SHOULD BE IN AN EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN?

When covered by a plan, school staff need relevant training, protective gear, and—within hours of encountering blood or OPIM—a health evaluation. They also must be offered an HBV vaccine, at the employer's expense and on work time, within 10 days of starting their job.

The HBV vaccine is one of several control measures in a plan. (See the resources sidebar for the state's model ECP.) Oth-

ers include:

- Universal precautions to handle all human blood and OPIM as if they are contaminated.
- Methods to contain or remove the hazard without human contact.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, goggles or a face shield, aprons (when splashes, sprays, splatters, or droplets of potentially infectious materials are likely through the mouth, nose or eyes), and more (e.g., covers for clothing, footwear, head) for extensive contamination.
- Schedules for regular cleaning and disinfecting for contaminated materials, e.g., carpet and surfaces.
- Disposal methods consistent with hazardous waste regulations.

Everyone who's covered must have training about BBP hazards, the plan, how to remove PPE, cleaning procedures, responsibilities, etc. The employer must provide the PPE, making sure it's what is needed for the job and that it fits, is readily available, maintained and cleaned properly, and replaced as needed.


The regulation also requires:

- The district to maintain a sharps injury log.
- The plan to be reviewed and updated at least every year, during which technological changes to eliminate or reduce BBP exposure must be considered.
- The district to keep records about training and exposures, recording the latter on the 300 logs.
- The plan to be accessible to all employees.
- The district to provide free, confidential medical evaluation and follow-up for any employee exposed on the job to blood or OPIMs, including blood testing (with consent), post-exposure treatment and counselling and a written report about the incident.

WHAT SHOULD LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS DO?

- **Check to see that your school has an ECP.** If not, contact your NJEA UniServ field representative and meet with the district and develop one.
- **Review the ECP.** Make sure everyone in the school will get basic training, and those who are expected to clean up have the training, information, time and equipment they need.
- **For EAs that don't include cleaning staff, reach out to the union representing them,** or the individuals

involved, to ensure they have the proper information, training, equipment and time to deal with bloodborne pathogens.

- **Bring it up at your health and safety committee meeting.** Determine how the committee and/or the EA should be involved in the annual plan review and negotiate for that to happen.
- **Ask NJEA for the best plans in the state or elsewhere.** Negotiate changes in your district's plan to improve it to those "best practices." 

USE THE SAFEST CLEANING PRODUCTS

Disinfection and cleaning products can be hazards too. Some districts have banned bleach which, for example, can cause and aggravate asthma and can burn skin, and suggest EPA approved disinfectants as alternatives. The San Francisco Department of the Environment offers more protective advice, saying:

"Products must be EPA registered as disinfectants or hard surface sanitizers and contain only the following active ingredients: hydrogen peroxide, citric acid, lactic acid, or caprylic acid. Products must not contain quaternary ammonium compounds or alkylphenol ethoxylates. Concentrated products must be adapted for use in a closed-loop dilution system." (See sfapproved.org/disinfectants#info)

RESOURCES

"PEOSH Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030)" and other materials (including a Model bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan) available at bit.ly/peoshbbp.

"Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Reduces Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens," OSHA, available at bit.ly/oshappfactsheet.

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A CLOSER LOOK

AT PHYSICAL 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.

May is National Physical Fitness and Sports month. To survey the broad selection of show segments “Classroom Close-up NJ” has produced about physical education, fitness, and sports, visit classroomcloseup.org, click on drop-down menu under “Categories” and select among the multiple subject areas.

On this page three of those segments are highlighted.

watch

ALL CHILDREN EXERCISE SIMULTANEOUSLY

The world’s largest exercise class originated in Montville at Valley View Elementary School. The program, called ACES (All Children Exercise Simultaneously) was created by teacher Leonard Saunders. He has encouraged millions of children from all 50 states and over 50 countries to exercise together. The program motivates students to exercise regularly by placing a value on physical fitness.

FITNESS FRIDAY

Copeland Middle School physical education teachers in Rockaway run a mini training camp for kids called “Fitness Friday.” The students scale hills, navigate lateral steps-ups, lift road cones for arm endurance, jump rope and jog around a track.

RISE & SHINE

Three days a week, students at Broad Street Elementary in Gibbstown start the day with heart-pumping activities. The school community recognizes the importance of movement in helping students to be alert and ready for the school day. Current research shows that physical activity stimulates formation of new brain cells in areas of the brain associated with memory and learning. The organizers of Rise & Shine won a national Active Schools Acceleration Project grant to fund the program.



ALL CHILDREN EXERCISE SIMULTANEOUSLY



FITNESS FRIDAY



RISE & SHINE



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WATCH CCU ON NJTV

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.

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.

SHOWCASE

SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY:

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.

📖 STATEWIDE EQUITY CONFERENCE

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is excited to announce its first statewide "Equity for All" conference to be held July 31 at The College of New Jersey in Ewing. The conference is designed to highlight educational expertise from across the state that shares best practices and strengthens teaching, leading and learning through the lens of equity for all in education.

The sessions will:

- Recognize educators and schools/districts that exemplify the best the state has to offer.
- Showcase best practices in equity (e.g., exemplary educators, local education agency partnerships).
- Strengthen teaching, leading and learning in a collaborative environment.

There is no cost to attend. For additional information contact Tonya Breland at tonya.breland@doe.nj.gov or 609-376-9075.

🎵 2019 NEW JERSEY UKE FEST

Music educators of all levels are invited to attend the Folk Project's sixth ukulele festival, 2019 New Jersey Uke Fest, held at the Ukrainian American Cultural Center of New Jersey in Whippany on Aug. 23-24, with an outdoor Jam on the Green in Morristown on Sunday, Aug. 25. In addition to workshops that will provide six hours of professional development credit, there will be concerts, vendors, an open mic and jams offered throughout the weekend.

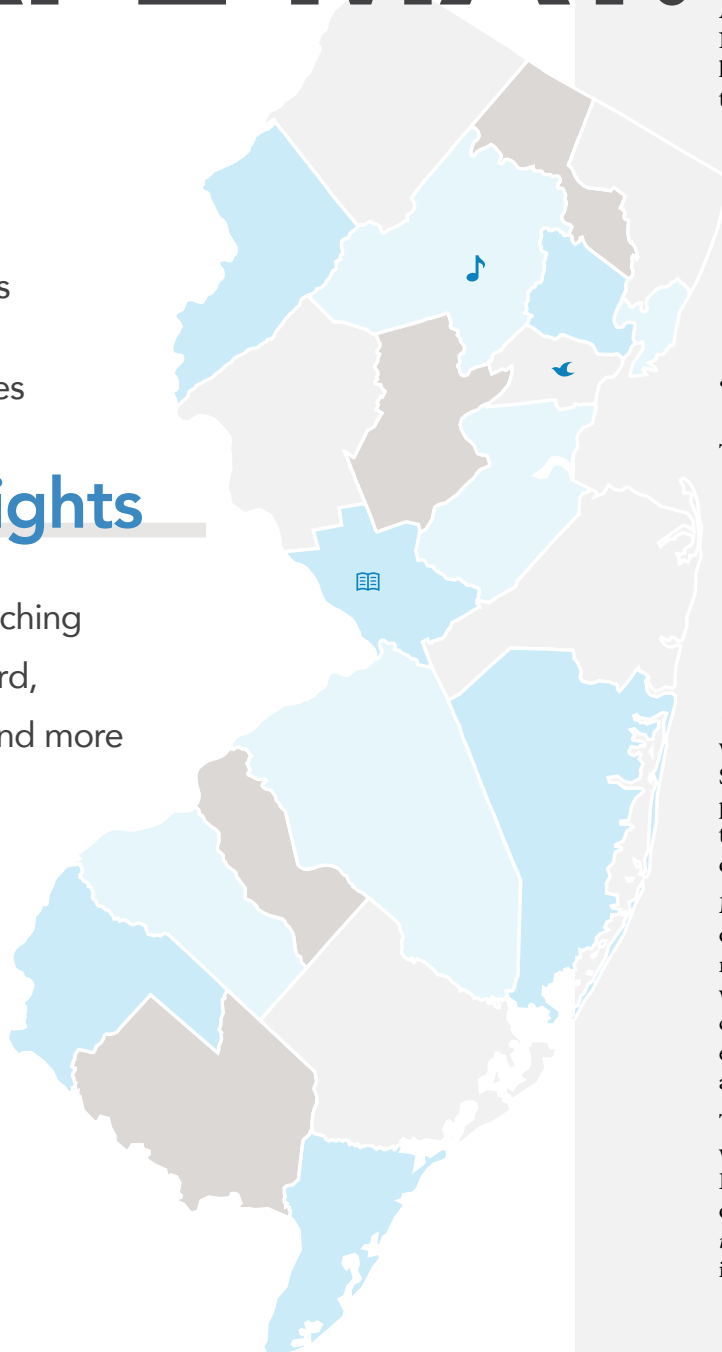
Music has been proven to enhance learning. A variety of workshops on musicianship and skill with the primary focus on the ukulele will be offered. Additional workshop topics will include skill building, techniques, composition, collaboration, production and hands-on experience. Music teachers and professional performers are part of the Uke Fest population.

The cost of the event is \$132 for the weekend, \$102 for workshops only. For additional information, contact Elizabeth Lachowicz at Elizabeth.Lachowicz@gmail.com or 908-230-2280. You may go to www.folkproject.org/njukefest to register and review additional workshop information.

Workshops
and
conferences

highlights

Equity, Teaching
Mockingbird,
Uke Fest and more



SHOWCASE (CONT.)

✦ A NEW APPROACH TO "TEACHING TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD"

Educators of grades 6-12 are invited to attend a three-day seminar "A New Approach to Teaching 'To Kill a Mockingbird,'" July 16-18 at Kean University in Union. This seminar introduces Teaching Mockingbird, which incorporates civic education, ethical reflection and historical context into a literary exploration of Harper Lee's beloved novel. Sponsored by Facing History and Ourselves, it offers a unique approach that integrates multimedia, historical sources, and literacy strategies that deepen students' understanding of the novel and illuminate fundamental questions of human behavior.

In this seminar you will:

- Discover new interdisciplinary teaching strategies and classroom activities that reinforce historical and literacy skills.
- Receive a free copy of Teaching Mockingbird.

After this seminar you will:

- Receive coaching and support as you implement this unit in your classroom.
- Become part of the Facing History Educator Network, with access to a rich slate of educator resources, including units and lesson plans, study guides, and online tools.
- Be able to borrow books and DVDs through our online lending library at no cost.

Recommended for 6-12th grade English language arts, humanities, U.S. history, and world history teachers who are committed to implementing a four-week Facing History unit. Teachers of elective courses covering issues of human rights are also welcome.

The cost is \$420. The registration deadline is July 8. For additional information please contact Renee Harleston at renee_harleston@facinghistory.org or 646-998-5840. You may visit facinghistory.org.

MORE TO LEARN ACROSS THE STATE

THE YEAR'S BEST BOOKS FOR CHILDREN: GRADES PRE-K TO 6

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

Choose from three dates and locations.

TUESDAY, MAY 14

Central Jersey: **Radisson Hotel Piscataway/Somerset**
21 Kingsbridge Road, Piscataway (centrally located, just off 287, near New Brunswick)


WEDNESDAY, MAY 15

South Jersey: **The Mansion on Main Street**
3000 Main Street, Voorhees

FRIDAY, MAY 17

North Jersey: **Birchwood Manor**
111 North Jefferson Road, Whippany

The registration fee of \$209 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 an 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 www.JudyReads-Books.com. 

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July 8–11 & July 15–18

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Fairleigh Dickinson University's Regional Center for Learning Disabilities has more than 30 years experience helping college and high school students achieve academic success.

TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:

- Effective learning strategies
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To learn more, visit fdu.edu/LD or call **201-692-2716**



**FAIRLEIGH
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Regional Center
for Learning Disabilities

STAFF NEWS

HIRES AND PROMOTIONS




NJEA welcomed **COLLEEN NEIL** to NJEA staff on April 1 as a UniServ field representative in the Region 7 office in Toms River. Prior to joining full-time staff, Neil had worked as a part-time UniServ consultant since 2016 in the

Region 7 office. Serving as president of the Southern Regional Education Association since 2016, she had been a social studies teacher in the Southern Regional School District since 1998. Neil holds bachelor's degrees in political science and history, both from the University of Scranton. She earned her teaching certification at Stockton University and holds a master's degree in the art of teaching from Marygrove College. Neil is a former high school adviser for David's Dream and Believe Cancer Foundation, which directly serves cancer patients and their families in southern Ocean County. She remains active in the group. She is the proud mother of Ryan, 24, Sarah, 14, and Finn, 12. Neil lives in Manahawkin and is excited to join NJEA full time to work and advocate for our members throughout Ocean County and the state.



NJEA welcomed **ERIC JONES** to NJEA staff on April 1 as a field representative for organizational development. An elementary school teacher in the Plainfield School District since 2002, Jones also served as the

district's public information officer. He was president of the Plainfield Education Association from 2015 until his full-time employment with NJEA and has held numerous positions in his local association. He also held a seat on the Union County Education Association Executive Committee. Since 2017, he had been employed part-time as a consultant in the NJEA Communications Division. A graduate of The College of New Jersey, he received his bachelor's degree in elementary education. Jones lives in New York City. 

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Jennifer Leach
Teacher of the Year for 2019

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NJREA

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

STAY PROTECTED AND CONNECTED

Union membership is one of the best investments a retiree can make, especially in the current political climate. As a member of NJREA, you have access to a variety of resources to get the most out of your retirement, as well as offer peace of mind knowing there are people working on your behalf to protect your interests.

Current NJREA annual members will receive their 2019-20 membership renewal form in May. Retirees are urged to complete the renewal form and enclose a check for dues no later than Aug. 1 to ensure the benefits of NJREA membership continue uninterrupted. Remember: Your annual dues payment covers membership in NJREA, NJEA, NEA-R, and your county retired education association (CREA). Frequently, mailings announcing September CREA and NJREA events are mailed during the last week of August.

NJREA members may also pay their dues online at njea.org by selecting the automatic renewal option beginning with the 2019-20 fiscal year. Those who avail themselves of this opportunity will be informed in advance of the dues rate for the membership year and will be automatically charged to avoid a lapse in their membership. Go green and consider automatic renewal today.

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP FOR RETIREES AVAILABLE

The NJREA membership renewal form also lists dues for those who want to become lifetime members.

If you are a recent retiree, you will want to consider lifetime membership and avoid the annual renewal process and any future increase in dues. Lifetime membership for retired members may be paid in five installments. Interested retirees may contact the NJEA Membership office at 609-599-4564, ext. 4123, to set up a payment schedule.

PRE-RETIREMENT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP FOR ACTIVES

Current active professional and support staff who intend to retire in the near future should also consider joining NJREA as pre-retired lifetime members. Lifetime dues would be calculated at the 2019-20 rate and then paid in ten installments, beginning in September 2019. Interested in this option? Contact the NJEA Membership office at the number listed above to get started.

MEMBERSHIP MAILINGS

The September issues of the NJREA Newsletter and the NJEA Review will be bundled together and mailed in early September to NJREA members who have renewed their membership by the Aug. 1 deadline. Membership cards will be mailed shortly thereafter.

Be certain your membership profile is up to date in order to receive important emails about legislative issues that affect you, as well as information about the upcoming New Jersey Assembly elections this fall.

Any current or future retiree with questions regarding membership may email njrea@njea.org.



ABOVE: Union County REA members Robert Burkhardt and Donna Mertz-Burkhardt at an NJREA workshop for county retiree association activists on how to use MailChimp for association communication.

SAVE MONEY WITH SEHBP

You may know that New Jersey state law requires that every auto insurance policy contains personal injury protection (PIP) benefits. Moreover, PIPs that include no fault provisions pay benefits to those injured in an accident, regardless who was deemed responsible for the collision.

However, what you may not know is that if you are a non-Medicare eligible member of the School Employees' Health Benefits Plan (SEHBP),

you can save money on your car insurance bill simply by using your SEHBP Horizon or Aetna plan as the primary insurance provider to cover your state-required PIP needs. By having your PIP covered under your current SEHBP benefits, it eliminates the need for duplicate coverage in your auto policy. To learn more, contact your individual automobile insurance company and find out how you can make the change.

Around the counties

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

BURLINGTON COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming general membership meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 16 at Marco's at the Indian Spring Country Club in Marlton. The cost is \$20. To attend, call Doriann Dodulik-Swern at 856-722-8952.

BCREA will also be holding a cyber security and estate planning workshop on Monday, June 3 at the Burlington County EA office in Willingboro. The cost is \$6. To attend, call Marge Gessmann at 609-953-9417.

The **CAMDEN COUNTY REA** welcomes you to its 100th anniversary spring meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 16 at the Tavistock Country Club in Haddonfield. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Barbara Haase at 856-627-3391.

HUDSON COUNTY REA will also be hosting its annual cocktail party on Wednesday, June 5 at the Waterside Restaurant in North Bergen. The cost is \$50. To attend, call Jackie Tuzzio at 201-348-0862.

Join **MIDDLESEX COUNTY REA** for its end-of-year meeting/luncheon on Thursday, June 6 at the Grand Marquis in Old Bridge where

MCREA's annual scholarship awards will be presented. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Anne Chomko at 732-675-1734.

MERCER COUNTY REA will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Thursday, May 16 at the Mercer Oaks Golf Club in Princeton Junction. NJREA President Judy Perkins will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Susan Karoekiewicz at 609-223-2570.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA welcomes you to its June meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, June 11 at the Spring Lake Manor in Spring Lake Heights. The MCREA philanthropic awards will be presented. The cost is \$30. To attend, contact Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754 or sueshrott@gmail.com.

MORRIS COUNTY REA will hold its scholarship awards luncheon on Wednesday, June 12 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

Join the **PASSAIC COUNTY REA** for its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, June 5 at the

Brownstone in Paterson. To attend, call Kitty Sausa at 201-445-7577.

The **SALEM COUNTY REA** will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Monday, May 13 at the Alloway Municipal Building in Alloway. Marilyn Patterson of the Salem County Nature Club will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$16. To attend, call Rosemma Ward at 856-534-0782.

UNION COUNTY REA welcomes you to its spring meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 21 at The Westwood in Garwood. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Donna Mertz-Burkhardt at 908-686-2390.

The **WARREN COUNTY REA**'s next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, June 5.

WCREA will also hold its fall meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, September 4. Both events will be held at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost for each is \$30. For more information, visit www.wcrea-njea.org. To attend either, call Vickie Rhinehart at 908-319-1995. 📍

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HOW ARE YOU A LEADER IN THE CLASSROOM?

BY JENNIFER CELESTE, WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY

Leadership can be characterized as guiding others in a specific direction, enacting a series of regulations or expectations to maintain the general order, and pushing forward a specific cause. When we think of leadership, we point to some of the greatest leaders of all time: Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, Barack Obama, even Walt Disney.

Leadership is as risky as it is rewarding, and it is easy to find ourselves in a place where we hold too much control—so much control, in fact, that it has the potential to hurt others. A good leader is one who allows their people to grow independently and find their own way. In the classroom, this is no different.

I argue that true leadership in a classroom takes place when teachers or facilitators decide to loosen the grip they have on their classes and shift the focus from teacher-centered instruction to a student-centered approach. This approach aims to develop autonomy and independence in learning by putting responsibility for the learning in the hands of the students.

When students are responsible for their own learning, they are able to take personal responsibility for their learning and are able to learn in new, exciting and creative ways. More importantly,

this practice encourages lifelong learning and independent problem-solving, and it shows students that they have a voice in a classroom, that their opinions are being taken into consideration, and that they have the ability to positively affect the overall classroom climate.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING DISCUSSIONS

One simple way to achieve a more student-centered approach in the classroom is by facilitating a thought-provoking discussion. While there are other useful ways to conduct a student-centered lesson—such as literature circles, group work, or think-pair-shares—beginning a deep discussion is one of the best ways to enable students to learn from each other. This is a great example of true leadership: guiding students in the right direction rather than giving them the answers shows true mastery in the classroom.

However, to effectively ignite a class discussion, educators need to ask the right questions. This comes with knowing your students, tailoring your teaching style to their needs and assessing them on what they have been taught. This is a great way to lead students into higher-order thinking.

I achieved this during my student-

teaching experience during a lesson on transcendentalism. Although many educators get caught up in the details when it comes to more thought-provoking, philosophical topics such as transcendentalism, which eventually leads students to either hate the topic or forget it altogether, I was able to lead students into a more meaningful discussion by connecting the elements of the philosophy with their previous knowledge and personal opinions. I asked them, “are people born good or evil?” and proceeded to ask them to explain their reasoning.

As you can imagine, I got a wide range of responses. Some students initially stated that they believe some people are born good, others evil. I played the “devil’s advocate” role by asking deeper questions based on their answers. This caused them to stop and think and forge new opinions based on the information that was presented. With the help of my cooperating teacher, I was able to guide students into a thought-provoking conversation that caused them to evaluate and accommodate their ideas to new information.

Overall, a great leader is one that both guides others, and knows when to be guided. 🏠

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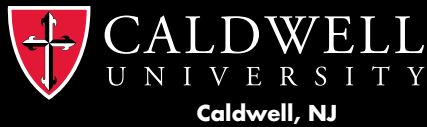
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PROUD MOMENTS



The **BERGENFIELD EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Bergen) was proud to host a March Madness Event on March 15. In addition to multiple basketball games between student teams, the middle school faculty squared off against an eighth-grade team. Food donations from the event went to the Bergenfield Food Pantry.

The **CHERRY HILL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Camden) was proud of its members at Clara Barton Elementary school for organizing a PRIDE-funded STEM Night. Students enjoyed activities and experiments in classrooms throughout the school.



The **ESSEX COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** was proud of its Public Education Expo 2019 in March. The opening ceremony featured the West Orange High School Jubilee Choir and Boys and Girls Step Teams. Pictured is the ECEA Pride Committee with the WOHS Jubilee Choir and both Step Teams. Schools from all over Essex County displayed student work throughout the mall and students performed in Center Court all week.

Members of East Windsor PBA 191 thanked the **EAST WINDSOR EDUCATION ASSOCIATION** (Mercer) for its annual donations to the Police Unity Tour. Each year, the officers ride from East Windsor, N.J. to Washington, D.C. to honor law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. The money raised also helps fund the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial and Museum. EWEA PRIDE chair Angela Castaneda was on hand to present the officers with this year's donation of \$1,000. EWEA President Ellen Ogintz proudly holds the plaque presented by the officers.



Submit your best local association PRIDE photo to proudmoments@NJEA.org. 🏠



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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5/17

Friday

NJEA Executive Committee and County Presidents Council meetings

5/18

Saturday

NJEA Delegate Assembly meeting

6/7

Friday

NJEA Executive Committee meeting

6/8

Saturday

NEA-RA Statewide Caucus meeting

7/2-7

Tues. to Sun.

NEA Representative Assembly

7/16

Tuesday

NJEA Summer Professional Learning Institute

7/31

Wednesday

Techstock 2019

8/1

Thursday

NJEA PAC Operating Committee meeting

8/3

Saturday

NJEA Executive Committee meeting

8/3-7

Sat. to Fri.

NJEA Summer Leadership Conference

Save the Date

100 
njrea
 for the **1920 • 2020**

100th Anniversary Celebration of the

New Jersey Retirees' Education Association

Sunday, May 3, 2020 • 1-5 p.m.

Grand Marquis, 1550 U.S. 9 South, Old Bridge, NJ • \$50 per person

deadlines

6/1

NJEA Summer Leadership Conference
 Event Dates: 8/3-5 and 8/5-7

6/26

Techstock 2019
 Event Date: July 31
 (Register by May 15 and save \$10)

6/28

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

WE WEAR #REDFORED

BECAUSE...

The campaign to Fix the Unfairness is centered on the passage of three bills that would help return respect to public school employees.

- The Chapter 78 Relief bill: S-2606/A-4352
- The Anti-privatization bill: S-296/A-3185/A-3395
- The ESP Due Process bill: S-3089/A-3664

These bills won't pass through the Legislature on their own, so it's up to NJEA members to participate in actions that change the minds of elected leaders. One action designed to harness our collective union power is to wear Red For Education, or "Red for Ed."

Beginning in January of this year, the member leaders on the state-wide steering committee that is guiding this campaign called on all NJEA members to wear red to school each Wednesday. In January, many of NJEA's local and county affiliates participated in actions that built unity and raised awareness about NJEA's campaign to Fix the Unfairness. Since then, thousands of NJEA members have been wearing red each Wednesday and posting photos of themselves on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter using #FixTheUnfairness and #RedForEd.

SO WHAT IS #REDFORED, AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

IT'S A SIMPLE ACT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Wearing red is a simple act of solidarity that any NJEA member can participate in simply by wearing red on a Wednesday to school. While legislators in

Trenton may not see every single NJEA member wearing red to school on a given Wednesday, your fellow colleagues will.

Wearing a red shirt, hat, tie or other accessory signals to your fellow union members that you are committed to a better future for public school employees. If a colleague doesn't know about the campaign to Fix the Unfairness, use this outward sign of union solidarity to invite fellow members into the campaign.

EDUCATORS DESERVE RESPECT. Last year, educators across the nation participated in #RedForEd campaigns to return respect to public education. As a result of many courageous actions of our union sisters and brothers in other states, Red for Ed has become synonymous with respect for public education. Politicians know that when educators are wearing red, they are fully committed to stand up for themselves and the children they serve.

EDUCATORS DESERVE AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE. Here in New Jersey, Red for Ed means that educators shouldn't have to watch their paychecks shrink year after year as a result of Chapter 78. Chapter 78 was the law passed under Gov. Chris Christie that ties the deductions educators pay toward their health benefits to a rising percentage of the cost of the premium of the health care plan. As premiums continue to skyrocket, the cost for educators and their families rises, causing overall take-home pay for educators to decrease every single year. It's neither right nor fair, and wearing red signifies that you deserve better.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS DESERVE JOB JUSTICE. Red for Ed means that educational support

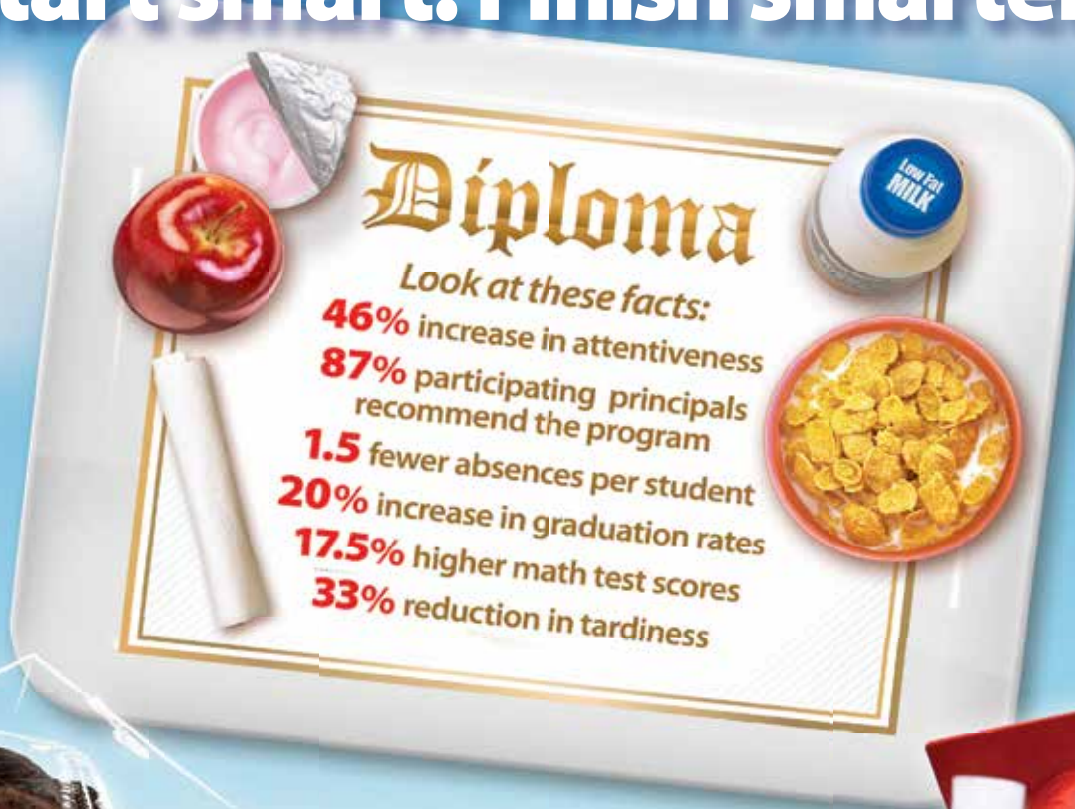
professionals (ESP) deserve job protections just like their certificated colleagues. Common sense job protections, such as due-process rights and the protection against privatization during an active collective bargaining agreement, protect more than public school employees. These protections ensure consistency for students. Protecting the rights of ESP members means protecting the safety of the school environment for everyone. When ESP members see their certificated colleagues wearing red, they know that their contributions to the school community are equally valued.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE IMPORTANT. Red for Ed means that schools should be properly funded. Parents, children, politicians and educators all agree: public schools are important, and they perform best when they are properly funded. Proper school funding means safe schools. It means appropriate materials for learning. Adequate school funding means all children have a fair shot at achieving their dreams. When you wear red to school on a Wednesday, you are sending a message to every parent and student that you work with that their education is important to you and you are ready to stand up for them.

WE ARE UNITED. Above all, we wear Red for Ed because we are not alone. Wearing red signals you are part of something bigger than yourself, you are part of a union that's working to improve public education in New Jersey. The more NJEA members that commit to taking one singular collective action, like wearing red in the name of public education, the stronger our movement becomes and the stronger our union becomes. 🇺🇸



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GET READY TO ROCK AND ROLL AT THE 2019 NJEA CONVENTION

Book your hotel room today for the 2019 NJEA Convention | Rates as low as \$62

Want to reserve a room in Atlantic City for the NJEA Convention at a great rate? Go to njea.org/hotelblocks. You'll need to log in as a member to continue. Use your member PIN (found on your membership card) or the email address you've previously given NJEA and your password (the last four digits of your Social Security number, unless you've changed it). Guaranteed shuttle service will be available to these hotels only.

Hotel	Wed-Thurs.	Fri.	Deadline	Group Code
Bally's	\$98	\$160	4-Oct	SB11NJ9
Borgata	\$125	\$125	7-Oct	GBNJE19
Caesars	\$105	N/A	4-Oct	SC11NJM
Golden Nugget	\$62	\$162	22-Oct	AED1119
Harrah's	\$76	\$166	4-Oct	SH11NJ9
Resorts	\$65	\$105	6-Oct	VNJE19
Tropicana	\$88	\$184	18-Oct	HNEA19

Rules and restrictions:

Membership verification required—one room reservation per member. A credit card will be required to hold your reservation. All room rates subject to 6.875 percent N.J. sales tax, \$3 Atlantic City occupancy tax, and up to \$20 resort fee per room, per night. Room type (double/single) subject to availability at check-in. Additional fees for third and fourth occupants of room may be applicable. No changes or cancellations after the registration deadline. For questions, email hotelblocks@njea.org.

 **2019**
convention

njea.org/hotelblocks