

# SCHOOL BOARD notes

## NJSBA Salutes NJ's Volunteer School Board Members

*"If you don't like the way the world is, you change it. You have an obligation to change it. You just do it one step at a time."*

—Marion Wright Edelman

Child Advocate and Director of the Children's Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.



School board members are among those tireless individuals who volunteer to change the world one step at a time. The New Jersey School Boards Association would like to extend a special thanks to the more than 4,800 local board of education members in New Jersey who willingly donate countless hours to oversee the operation of our schools. Your decisions affect the education, safety and well being of more than 1.4 million children. That role as decision maker requires diligence in studying reports, attending meetings and workshops, dealing with state and federal regulations, and coping with shrinking budgets that must provide for growing needs.

Public School Volunteer Week and National Volunteer Week are celebrated on April 17 through 23. It is our privilege during that time to remember and honor all of you who generously volunteer for the benefit of our children.

In addition, every district has parents, grandparents and students involved in school-based community organizations who devote their time to helping out in the schools. If you would like to remember those who volunteer in your districts, listed below are special dates during the year for doing so, along with Web site addresses of the sponsoring organizations.

Sincerely,

Edwina M. Lee  
NJSBA Executive Director

### APRIL

**15-17** National Youth Service Day—  
[www.ysa.org/nysd](http://www.ysa.org/nysd)

**17-23** Public School Volunteer Week—  
[www.projectappleseed.org](http://www.projectappleseed.org)

**17-23** National Volunteer Week—  
[www.pointsoflight.org/NVW](http://www.pointsoflight.org/NVW)

### MAY

**7** Join Hands Day—  
[www.joinhandsday.org](http://www.joinhandsday.org)

### OCTOBER

**16-22** Kids Care Week—  
[www.kidscare.org](http://www.kidscare.org)

### NOVEMBER

**19** National Family Volunteer Day—  
[www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nfvd](http://www.pointsoflight.org/programs/seasons/nfvd)

### April 19th School Election



James J.  
Dougherty, Jr.  
NJSBA President

When it comes to results in education, New Jersey can be very proud. Our public schools rank in the top five among the 50 states in numerous measures of academic success.

We are at the head of the class in terms of graduation rates; class size; the number of high schools offering advanced placement courses that allow students to earn college credit—as well as students' test scores on those courses; the percentage of students taking the SATs to get into college; and fourth-grade math and reading scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, often called the *Nation's Report Card*.

By and large, New Jersey's public school system works well. And it works best when citizens get involved.

On Tuesday, April 19, voters in more than 90 percent of New Jersey's school districts will have that opportunity during the 2005 Annual School Election. Voters will decide on their school district's annual budget and they will select the citizens to represent their interests on the school board.

Public education in New Jersey is a particularly democratic institution. While citizen elections of school board members is common nationwide, only seven other states hold elections to decide the school budget as well.

Clearly, communities need a strong voice for their schools. They need people who can ensure that the taxpayers' investment delivers a quality education that keeps New Jersey's schools among the strongest in the nation. That is why voting in the Annual School Election is so crucial. For information about the election, visit [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org).

# Three NJ Districts Selected for the 2005 Magna Awards

Three New Jersey school districts have recently been chosen for recognition in the *American School Board Journal's* 2005 Magna Awards program. The 11<sup>th</sup> annual Magna Awards honor districts across the country for outstanding programs that advance student learning and encourage community involvement in schools.

As one of 16 national winners, Bordentown Regional School District was selected for its Connections Mentoring Program, which is a partnership between the district's school board, the Clara Barton Elementary School and the Bordentown community. Begun in 1998, the program has led to a drop in discipline problems, as well as an increase in student achievement.

The South Plainfield School District was honored for its efforts to change state law in support of South Plainfield's Future Stars Preschool Program. Board members,

with the help of parent organizations and community leaders, successfully pushed the state Legislature to rewrite the law that would have forced the preschool to close due to a prohibition on fee-based programs in public schools.

The Passaic Valley Regional High School District received an honorable mention for its summer performing arts program. Run through the district's education foundation, the program promotes enrichment activities for students.

The 2005 winners will be highlighted in a special supplement to the April issue of *ASBJ* and formally recognized on April 18 at the School Leaders Luncheon in San Diego. The luncheon is part of the National School Boards Association's annual conference. The *ASBJ* and Sodexo School Services cosponsor the award program.

For more information on the Magna Awards, see [www.asbj.com/magna](http://www.asbj.com/magna).

## Competition Held to Honor School Programs on African-American History

The New Jersey Amistad Commission has created an award program that will identify and catalog up to 10 outstanding practices in schools that incorporate African-American history into the school's curriculum. The purpose of the Amistad Exemplary Practices Awards is to recognize the excellence of these programs in the state's public schools and to make the information available to educators throughout New Jersey.

Any New Jersey teacher, group of teachers, or school that serves students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 is eligible to participate. The practice must have been in place for at least one year prior to submission, with only one application allowed per applicant. Commercially

developed practices or those implemented around black history month will not be considered.

The deadline for application submission is April 21. The selected programs will each receive a grant award of \$5,000. Information describing the award is available at [www.state.nj.us/education/bp-ss/](http://www.state.nj.us/education/bp-ss/). For further information, contact Anthony Bland at 609-984-6755 or [bpss@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:bpss@doe.state.nj.us).



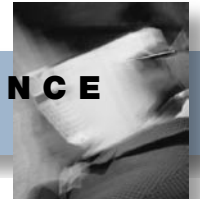
### NJSBA Seeks Entries for Communications Competition

NJSBA is currently seeking submissions for its annual School Communications Competition. The competition recognizes outstanding school district communications materials in various categories, including annual reports; audio-visual media; school calendars; finance publications; information guides and handbooks; magazines; newsletters; public relations projects; district Web sites; and school exhibits at the annual Workshop.

All entries submitted must have been published or produced for use between September 1, 2004 and July 31, 2005. A \$25 entry fee will be required with each entry, except for the Workshop exhibits. The deadline for submission is August 5.

To obtain an entry form, log on to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) and select *2005 Annual Communications Competition* under the *Awards Program* heading.

### CONFERENCE NOTES



#### Using Data to Guide Teaching

Dr. Willa Spicer from the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association will conduct a two-day workshop on April 12-13 about using data for instructional decision making. The workshop will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each day at the Passaic County Public Safety Academy. It is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education and the Passaic County Community College.

For more information, contact Meredith Coticchio at 973-655-2115 or [meredith.coticchio@doe.state.nj.us](mailto:meredith.coticchio@doe.state.nj.us), or by fax at 973-655-2119.

**CORRECTION** Judy Leidner from the Woodbridge Township Board of Education was inadvertently omitted from an article in last week's *School Board Notes* honoring those individuals who recently received their Certificated Board Member designation through NJSBA's Board Member Academy.

To learn more about the Academy, log on to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) and select *Training & Conferences*.

# Information

## At Your Fingertips



A unique collection  
of information resources  
to serve the needs of  
school board members  
and administrators.

### Questions & Answers from the Library

**Q** Our board is reviewing violence prevention policies and I want to learn more about the issues and programs available. Where do I go?

**A** Just call or e-mail us at the NJSBA library. We will provide a customized information packet with current articles, statistics, and program information based on your needs.

**Q** Where can I find sample job descriptions for the board secretary?

**A** Go to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) or call us and we will fax or send copies by mail.

**Q** I don't have time to personally pick up a book from the NJSBA library. Is there an easier way to borrow a book?

**A** Yes! You can call and request the book or go to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) and choose *Member Services—Library*. Establish a patron account, reserve the item, and we will mail it to your home.

**Q** How long can I keep a book from the NJSBA library?

**A** Most books check out for two weeks and may be renewed as long as no one else is waiting to borrow the publication.

Visit NJSBA's Virtual Online Library Or Call for Customized Research

Chenal Anglin 1-888-88NJSBA (ext. 5269) [canglin@njsba.org](mailto:canglin@njsba.org)  
Joan Campbell 1-888-88NJSBA (ext. 5285) [jcampbell@njsba.org](mailto:jcampbell@njsba.org)



## NJSBA ONLINE

**Frequently Asked Questions About Reorganization** NJSBA has recently posted answers to frequently asked questions concerning school board reorganization requirements. *2005 Reorganization FAQ* can be found under the *What's New* section of [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org), or by clicking on *Member Services—Legal—Frequently Asked Questions About Reorganization*. Some of the questions highlighted include:

- When does the 2005 reorganization take place?
- What actions may the outgoing board take between the election and reorganization?
- What happens if a newly elected board member cannot attend the reorganization meeting?
- What voting procedures should the board use for election of officers?
- Must a board of education elect a president and vice-president at the reorganization meeting?
- What happens if the election for officers results in a tie vote?
- What other business occurs at the reorganization meeting?

As an added convenience, hyperlinks to all of the reorganization statutes and pertinent cases cited have been included in the document.

## CALENDAR



### April 7


Atlantic & Cape May Joint General Membership Mtg., Atlantic County Institute of Technology, Mays Landing 6:30 p.m.

Student Recognition Program (Monmouth), Colts Neck High School Colts Neck, 7 p.m.

### April 9

- ✓ NJSBA Legislative Committee Mtg. Ramada Inn & National Conference Center, East Windsor, 9 a.m.

For more information on county school boards association activities, log on to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) and click on the appropriate county association.

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### SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

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### RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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