

SCHOOL BOARD notes

Research: Middle-Income Districts in a Jam

New Jersey's middle-income communities are caught in a bind, according to research presented to a legislative panel Oct. 24.

Overtaxed, yet too wealthy for larger shares of state aid, middle-income school districts fall \$500 million short of what they need to provide their students with an adequate education, according to the research.

Commissioner of Education Lucille Davy and Denver-based school finance consultant John Augenblick presented the data to the Joint Legislative Committee on Public School Funding Reform. The panel is one of four charged with recommending legislation to help New Jersey cut property taxes.

"Even after numerous court decisions and school funding statutes, our state has yet to adequately address school funding concerns and overburdening property taxes in these communities," said Kevin E. Ciak, NJSBA president.

Cost of Adequate Education Conducted by the state Department of Education in consultation with Augenblick, the research places the dollar amount of an adequate education at more than \$8,000 per student for regular programming, based on 2004-2005 data. The total amount that would have been needed to provide an adequate education statewide that year was \$15.3 billion. New Jersey spent approximately \$14.9 billion on education in 2004-2005.

The figures, however, do not include

cost drivers, such as special education, transportation and pensions.

Using the research, the *Star-Ledger* calculated that spending in both the 31 Abbott school districts and the state's 128 wealthiest communities exceeded the amounts deemed adequate by the study. Middle-income districts, meanwhile, fell half a billion dollars short of the adequate levels.

If the state could produce a financial definition of thorough and efficient, or adequate, education – and if the courts would accept the number as constitutionally valid – it could open the door to significant changes in how New Jersey allocates state aid for education.

NJSBA has requested additional information about the methodology and the data that the state used to arrive at the figures.

Joint Committees Schedule By Nov. 15, the four joint legislative committees on property tax reform will release recommendations in *continued on page 4*



Jazz Band Entertains at Workshop

Members of the Overbrook H.S. Jazz Band (Pine Hill Borough School District) play to a packed audience during the Workshop 2006 Opening General Session on Oct. 25. The performance preceded an address by Dr. Phillip Boyle, an expert on local school district governance. Boyle talked about connecting to public values while attempting to improve student achievement. Close to 10,000 school board members, administrators, educators and exhibitors attended the annual training event in Atlantic City.



To view photos from Workshop 2006, visit www.njsba.org. Next week's School Board Notes will feature news from the conference.

Menendez vs. Kean: Nov. 7

Find out where U.S. Senator Bob Menendez and New Jersey state Sen. Tom Kean Jr. stand on federal education issues involving the No Child Left Behind Act, vouchers, E-Rate and special education funding by visiting NJSBA's Web site, www.njsba.org before Election Day. The two candidates for U.S. Senate responded to a recent Association survey that is posted under the "What's New" section of the site.



Preview: Nov. 18 Delegate Assembly

NJSBA reminds all school boards that decisions made by each Delegate Assembly are followed by action that often results in the introduction of legislation, the stopping of undesirable legislation, or new state board of education policies.

The Delegate Assembly gives local school boards the opportunity for input before these far-reaching statewide policy decisions are made. Therefore, the Association urges members to review the proposed resolutions so their delegates are familiar with the issues. Policies adopted by the Delegate Assembly are codified in NJSBA's *Manual of Positions and Policies on Education* and can be viewed on the NJSBA Web site at www.njsba.org/policy.

Agenda

Resolution No. 1 from Berkeley Township, Ocean County, proposes new policy language. The resolution requests NJSBA to adopt a belief statement that the Legislature should establish financial and educational benchmarks that the state would apply to all school districts in providing state aid. The proposal also specifies that any Abbott district that does not meet the benchmarks should not receive increases in funding until progress is demonstrated.

Resolution No. 2 from the Pennsville Board of Education, Salem County, proposes policy language reflecting a belief that sufficient opportunities exist for board of education members to pursue training and education in the duties and responsibilities of their office on a voluntary basis. The resolution states that a compulsory program of continuing training and education could discourage potential board candidates from seeking office, and that establishing and maintaining such a program would represent a substantial financial burden for New Jersey taxpayers. Further, the resolution proposes that NJSBA oppose legislation that would require the Commissioner of Education to develop and maintain a program for the continuing training and education of school board members and to impose penalties on board members who do not complete the requirement.

Also on the agenda are *Bylaws* amendments and the sunset review of File Code 3000, *Business and Non-instructional Operations*, and File Code 4000, *Personnel*, of NJSBA's *Manual of Positions and Policies on Education*.

Notice of Meeting

Notice of the Delegate Assembly was e-mailed and/or faxed to school business administrators and county association presidents on Oct. 13. The notice advised them that local school boards could review the proposed Bylaws amendments, resolutions and background materials, and policies for sunset review by going to NJSBA's Web site, www.njsba.org and clicking on "Delegate Assembly."

In the Mail: DA Handbook

NJSBA has mailed the *Delegate Assembly Handbook* for the Nov. 18 semi-annual meeting to the homes of local school board delegates, alternate delegates or designees who have been pre-registered to represent their board at the meeting. For those boards that have not pre-registered their representatives, NJSBA has mailed a copy of the handbook to their respective school board secretaries to forward to the Delegate Assembly member who will represent their board.

The handbooks were sent by first-class mail on Oct. 31.

For more information, contact Barbara Deveney at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5256.

Registration

The Nov. 18 Delegate Assembly will be held at the National Conference Center/Holiday Inn, East Windsor, N.J. Directions are available on NJSBA's Web site and in the delegates handbook.

To register online, go to www.njsba.org and click the "Get Involved" icon in the left-hand column. Once on the Delegate Assembly page, click the "Online Registration" link on the left side of the page.

Delegates may also be registered by calling Cindy Stanhope toll free at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5254.

If the board's delegate or alternate is unable to attend, any member of the board may be certified to represent it at the meeting. To be certified, delegates must show documentation on district letterhead that they have been so designated.

Pallone Signs Pledge to Children

U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone, D-Monmouth, has joined a growing number of members of Congress who have signed the Pledge to America's School Children. An initiative of the National School Boards Association, the pledge signifies lawmakers' support for five education goals:

- Improve No Child Left Behind to give school districts better ways to measure student and school performance.
- Help districts meet the needs of students with disabilities by supporting full funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.
- Support school readiness programs for children entering kindergarten.
- Help districts attract, train and retain highly qualified teachers.
- Help districts provide their students with the math, science, and technology skills needed in the 21st Century.

For more information, visit www.pledge-to-america-schoolchildren.org.

Corzine Wants to Safeguard Schools

Gov. Jon S. Corzine last week rolled out a new initiative to make New Jersey schools more secure.

"SAVE: Strategic Actions for Violence" focuses on the need for stronger collaboration between law enforcement, schools and communities.

Corzine's plan calls for the state's School Security Task Force to develop guidelines for emergency school evacuations, bomb threats, building lockdowns and public information procedures.

Also planned are regular school security drills, training for resource and D.A.R.E. officers, and programs for bus drivers.

Advanced Bargaining

Put it all together—
a hands on experience



Advanced Bargaining

November 18-19 • Saturday, 8:30 a.m.— Sunday noon

The Sheraton Parsippany, Parsippany

This weekend workshop gives you a unique hands-on opportunity to plan your bargaining strategies and engage in face-to-face bargaining. The weekend includes:

- An **All-Day Bargaining Simulation** where, as a member of a bargaining team in a mock school district, you apply and practice your bargaining skills in a risk-free environment.
- An **Evaluation of Your Bargaining Effectiveness** where the professional negotiator assigned to your team evaluates your progress and provides constructive advice that will be invaluable in your real district's negotiations.

The agenda includes:

SATURDAY Preparing for the Bargaining Simulation

9:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

- Receive your specific role and assignment to a bargaining team.
- Work with team members who have varying perspectives and interests.
- Analyze the issues under negotiations.
- Develop your team's strategies.
- Resolve differences among team members.

The Bargaining Simulation: At-the-Table

1:30 p.m.—10:30 p.m.

- Apply and refine your bargaining skills.
- Become comfortable with the atmosphere of face-to-face negotiations.
- Practice making proposals and counterproposals.
- Test your sense of timing.
- Choose what to say and how to say it.

SUNDAY Evaluation of the Negotiations Simulation

9 a.m.—noon

- Receive individualized feed-back from the professional negotiator assigned to your team.
- Hear the experts' observations of team behaviors and their effect on outcomes.
- Link lessons learned to real issues encountered in your district.

Academy Credits: 5 • Core Areas for CBM: Labor Relations, Relationships • Core Areas for MBM: Group Dynamics, Labor Relations

Cancellation Policy: A \$50 fee will be charged for cancellations made within 10 working days of the program. Cancellations made within 72 hours and no-shows will be charged the full fee. For possible program cancellations due to inclement weather, call 609-392-2000.

To Register: Call NJSBA's Labor Relations Department at 609-278-5224, fax: 609-695-0413; or complete the coupon below.

Please register me for **Advanced Bargaining** November 18-19, 2006

Single occupancy @ \$395 each Double occupancy @ \$355 each Commuter @ \$315 each

Fees include hotel accommodations (if applicable), all meals, refreshments, and materials.

Payment enclosed Bill Board (P.O. must accompany registration form)

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____

DISTRICT: _____ COUNTY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: (h) _____ (b) _____

FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Return to: New Jersey School Boards Association, Labor Relations Department
413 W. State Street, P.O. Box 909, Trenton, New Jersey 08605-0909 or FAX: 609-695-0413

*If you wish to be billed and a voucher is required for your records, please send it with your registration to avoid duplication. Travel directions will be provided when your registration is confirmed.



NJSBA on the air...

Edwina M. Lee, NJSBA executive director, will appear on two segments of "Comcast Newsmakers," the network's public affairs program that profiles influential New Jerseyans. The program will begin airing this month.

Lee's interview about consolidation is slated to air from Nov. 22 through Nov. 28. A segment on school safety is scheduled for broadcast Dec. 6 to Dec. 12. "Newsmakers" generally airs at 24 minutes past the hour on Comcast outlets throughout the state.

For more information visit Comcast's Web site at <http://www.cn8.tv/>.

Reminder

Return special education cost survey. For information, contact Frank Belluscio at fbelluscio@njsba.org

Districts in a Jam

continued

their respective areas: consolidation/shared services, school funding reform, public employee benefits reform, and state constitutional reform/citizens convention.

The panel on government consolidation and shared services was slated to conduct a public hearing on several legislative proposals last night in Paramus. As of press time, no meetings were scheduled for the other panels.

Special Session Tools

- NJSBA Core Beliefs www.njsba.org (under "What's New")
- Special Session Resources www.njsba.org/govrel/specialsession

For more information about county school boards association activities, visit www.njsba.org and click on the name of the appropriate county association.

CALENDAR

Nov. 14

Cape May County SBA, Sand Barrens Golf Club, 6 p.m.

Nov. 15

Sussex County SBA General Membership Meeting, Sussex County Technical School, Sparta, 7 p.m.

Middlesex County SBA Leadership Roundtable, Embassy Suites, Piscataway, 6:30 p.m.

Cumberland County SBA President's Forum, Lucien's Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.

Nov. 16

Essex County SBA General Membership Dinner meeting, Nutley High School, 6 p.m. (Bergen SBA invited)

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