



# notes

## Voters Approve School Projects in 19 of 25 Districts

Voters in 19 New Jersey school districts approved more than \$166 million in construction in the Sept. 29 school referendums.

In all, 25 districts proposed school-construction questions. Energy-saving initiatives were common, as many of the bond questions sought approval for new and more efficient windows, heating systems, or solar panels. Eight of the 25 questions asked for funding to install solar panels; voters approved all eight.

Of the \$166.6 million in construction that was approved, \$67.2 million will be eligible for state aid through one-time school-construction grants, annual “debt service aid” payments to school districts, or rebates through the state’s Clean Energy program.

Including Tuesday’s vote, voters this year have approved school-construction

proposals in 37 of 51 communities, for a success rate of nearly 73 percent. The average success rate during the previous four years has hovered around 62 percent.

Last week’s bond referendums also continued the trend of voters approving projects with smaller dollar amounts. While the approval rate for the number of bond questions has remained relatively strong, the percentage of spending approved has decreased in recent years. So far this year, voters have approved 42 percent of the nearly \$800 million in proposed school construction – as compared to the record high of 84 percent of school construction spending that was approved in 2003.

Voters last week approved a total of \$166,638,544 in school construction proposals in Hamilton Township and Northfield (Atlantic County); Franklin Lakes, Leonia and Park Ridge (Bergen);

Hainesport and Shamong townships (Burlington); Stratford (Camden); Ocean City (Cape May); Lawrence Township (Cumberland); Clayton and Pitman (Gloucester); East Brunswick Township (Middlesex); Marlboro Township and Atlantic Highlands (Monmouth); Manchester Township (Ocean); Woodland Park (Passaic); Pittsgrove Township (Salem); and Rahway (Union).

School construction proposals were rejected in Mount Holly and Riverside townships (Burlington); Pennsauken (Camden); South Plainfield (Middlesex); Brick Township (Ocean); and Washington Borough (Warren).

School boards may hold special elections on five specific dates a year. The next date on which a school board may schedule a bond referendum is Dec. 8. 🗳️

## New Jersey to Receive \$532 million in Federal School Aid

New Jersey will receive more than \$532 million in federal grants to help improve teacher quality, career education, and programs to aid high-poverty students.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced Oct. 1 a total of \$21.8 billion in grants for teachers and student support nationwide. The “formula grant programs” are dispensed to states on July 1 and Oct. 1, and each state’s share is based on factors such as population, student

enrollments and poverty rates.

The grants come from the U.S. Department of Education’s annual appropriation from Congress, not from the recent \$100 billion in stimulus funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

New Jersey will receive \$208.54 million in funding for Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which is designed to help students living in poverty. Another \$270.84 million will go toward

the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, (IDEA), Part B; \$36.78 million is earmarked for Improving Teacher Quality State Grants; and \$16.31 million is for career technical education. The total earmarked for New Jersey is \$532.47 million.

The states receiving the most in formula grants included California, at \$2.44 billion, followed by Texas at \$1.98 billion, and New York at \$1.69 billion. Vermont received the least, with \$56.46 million. 🗳️

# Supreme Court Hears Case on Right to Speak at Board Meeting

On Sept. 29, the New Jersey Supreme Court conducted oral argument in a matter that will have serious freedom of speech implications for all boards of education in New Jersey. This case involved a \$100,000 jury award for an alleged violation of a parent's First Amendment constitutional rights during a public board meeting.

In *Besler v. West Windsor-Plainsboro Reg'l Board of Education*, parent Philip Besler attended several public board meetings to voice his displeasure over the conduct of the girls' high school basketball coach. The

coach's language was unduly harsh and abusive and was often directed at Besler's daughter, the parent contended. After speaking about the coach's conduct at seven board meetings, at an eighth public meeting, Besler was gavelled-down by the board president while attempting to speak out on the same issue. At the ensuing trial, a jury awarded over \$100,000 in damages and more than \$350,000 in attorneys' fees. The board appealed the matter to the Appellate Division and ultimately the state Supreme Court.

At the New Jersey Supreme Court, the

board's attorney argued that the gaveling was a legitimate time, place, and manner restriction. NJSBA argued that the Open Public Meetings Act granted the board the right to exclude the public from discussions involving personnel matters. Besler's attorney argued that both the state and the federal constitution gave his client the right to address matters of public importance during the public portion of a board meeting. A decision is expected by the end of the year. 🍏



## Welcome to Workshop Reception

Workshop 2009 attendees are cordially invited to the "Welcome to Workshop" Reception on Wednesday, Oct. 28. The reception, which is sponsored by MetLife, will be held in the Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel from 5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. It's an ideal time to network with old friends, NJSBA,

NJASA and NJASBO staff and the sponsors.

After picking up a badge holder and other registration materials on the second level of the Convention Center, and participating in Wednesday's training programs, you can get to the reception by crossing the street to the Sheraton and proceeding to the Sheraton Gallery on the first floor.

## Celebration of Urban Education

Tickets for the Celebration of Urban Education, which will be held on Thursday, Oct. 29 from 12 noon to 1 p.m. on Stage 2 of the Exhibit Floor, must be picked up at the second floor registration area at the Attendee Registration desk, by 11 a.m. on Thursday. A presentation will be held to honor "Best Practices in Urban Education."

A box lunch will be served. The celebration is open to all, but tickets are limited.

## NJSBA/NJASA/NJASBO 2009 Workshop Shuttle Schedule

During Workshop, shuttle buses will run between hotels and the Atlantic City Convention Center. The following is the shuttle schedule: Route 1 (Yellow) serving Tropicana, Hilton and Chelsea; Route 2 (Red) serving Trump Plaza and Caesars; Route 3 (Blue) serving Bally's; Route 4 (Purple) serving Resorts, Showboat, Taj Mahal and Courtyard by Marriott; Route 5 (Green) serving Borgata and Harrah's.

### Frequency of Departure

<b>Wednesday, October 28</b> 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.. 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Every 15 minutes Every 30 minutes Every 15 minutes
<b>Thursday, October 29</b> 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Every 15 minutes Every 30 minutes Every 15 minutes
<b>Friday, October 30</b> 7:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Every 15 minutes Every 30 minutes Every 15 minutes

## Waldwick Board Member/Pascack Valley Supervisor Honored

Joseph Orlak, a member of the Waldwick Board of Education, was named one of the National School Board Association's "20 to Watch" emerging leaders in educational technology for his work as supervisor of social studies in the Pascack Valley Regional High School district.

The list seeks to identify individuals who champion technology initiatives that make a difference for students, teachers, school districts, and the greater educational technology community.

Orlak was honored as a leader in the Pascack district's one-to-one laptop initiative, and was cited for helping students use laptops for activities such as video conferencing with peers in Asia. He now requires his students to create presentations on historical issues using technology, such as laptops for a virtual meeting with experts on their chosen topic.

"This year's '20 to Watch' represents educators who see the potential that technology brings to the learning environment, and know how to translate that knowledge in a way that excites and inspires their students and colleagues," said Ann Flynn, director of education technology for NSBA. "We hope their stories and experiences will influence policy-makers and encourage district leaders to develop and support programs that allow their successes to be replicated across the country."

For more information about the awards and honorees, go to [www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org), and select "NSBA Recognizes "20 to Watch" from the "News and Issues" section on the home page.

# 39<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SCHOOL LAW FORUM

Planning to Attend the Workshop in Atlantic City? Sign up for the School Law Forum!

*Designed for School Board Attorneys, Board Members Welcome*



Academy Credits: 1  
CBM Core Areas: School Law, Policy, Board Operations, Relationships  
MBM Core Areas: School Law, School/Community Relationships  
CBL Status: Not eligible for credit

**October 29, 2009**  
**9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**Sheraton Atlantic City Convention  
Center Hotel**

Learn about recent developments in existing law and emerging issues. Practicing school board attorneys will draw upon research and their own experiences in addressing the latest court decisions, administrative rulings, and statutes and code that affect public education and school district governance.

**COST:**

**Workshop Registrants:** \$75 per person

**AMPSA Members:** \$105 per person

**Other Non-AMPSA Attorneys:** \$190 per person

*Registration fee includes buffet lunch.*

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**



The "school district accountability" law places travel restrictions on school board members. Travel approval is required in advance. For information, visit [www.njsba.org/accountabilityact/](http://www.njsba.org/accountabilityact/)

For more information or to register, contact the call center at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5260, or complete the coupon below and fax to (609) 278-5280.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellations made up to 10 working days prior to the program date will result in a refund of the entire registration fee. Cancellations made between 10 working days and 72 hours of the program start will incur a \$25 charge. Cancellations made within 72 hours and no-shows will be charged full fee.

Please register me for the **39<sup>th</sup> Annual School Law Forum**, Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel, October 29, 2009, 9 a.m – 2:30 p.m.

**Registration Fee:** \$105 per AMPSA Member      \$190 per Non-AMPSA Member      \$75 per Workshop Registrant

Payment enclosed       Bill Board (Voucher enclosed)\*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT: \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:** New Jersey School Boards Association, Call Center  
413 W. State Street, P.O. Box 909, Trenton, New Jersey 08605-0909 or FAX: (609) 278-5280

\*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.



## Communications Competition Winners Announced

NJSBA is pleased to announce the winners of its 2009 School Communications Competition. The program recognizes exceptional publications and public relations programs in local school districts.

This year's competition was judged by representatives from the communications department of the Ohio School Boards Association, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities.

Recipients of Awards of Excellence will be recognized during a special ceremony at Workshop 2009. The ceremony will be held Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 11 a.m. in the roundtable area of the Exhibit Hall at the Atlantic City Convention Center.

### Annual Report

**Excellence:** Piscataway Township Schools, *The Journey to Success 2007-2008*,

### Audio-Visual Media

**Excellence:** Piscataway Township Schools, *2009-2010 Proposed Budget*

**Merit:** Cherry Hill Public Schools, *It's Elementary*; Passaic County Technical Institute, *School Communications Arts Video*; Point Pleasant Schools, *2008-2009 QAAR Presentation*; Washington Township Public School District (Gloucester), *40th Anniversary Bells Elementary*; Woodbridge Township School District, *09-10 School Budget Presentation*

**Honorable Mention:** Washington Township School District (Gloucester), *Math Anxiety*; Washington Township School District (Gloucester), *WTHS Forensic Course*; Readington Township Public Schools, *iMovie: Constructions Update*; Point Pleasant Schools, *Setting the Gold Standard: Efficient & Accountable Education*; Passaic County Technical Institute, *Seasons of PCTI - Welcome Back Video for Staff*

### Finance Publications

**Excellence:** Readington Township Public Schools, *iMovie: Proposed Budget 2009-2010*

**Merit:** Cherry Hill Public Schools, *Budget Information Resources*

### Calendars

**Excellence:** Bayonne Public Schools, *School Crises Response Handbook*

**Merit:** Freehold Borough School District, *District Information Packet*; Piscataway Township Schools, *2008-2009 District Calendar*; West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District, *Calendar*

### Magazines

**Excellence:** Point Pleasant Schools, *Imagine Literary Magazine*

### Newsletters/Tabloids

**Excellence:** Mount Olive School District, *Mount Olive Education Update*

**Merit:** Shore Regional High School, *The Shoreline*

### Public Relations Projects

**Excellence:** Middlesex County Vocational & Technical Schools, *Drive Safe for the Ride of Your Life Toolkit*

**Merit:** Middlesex County Vocational & Technical Schools, *Green Tech Expo 2009*

**Honorable Mention:** Hardyston Township School District, *50th Anniversary*; Ridgewood Public Schools, *Superintendent's Corner*

### Special Purpose Publication

**Excellence:** Middlesex Regional Educational Services, *CES Online*

**Merit:** Hopatcong Borough Schools, *Welcome to Hopatcong*

### Web site

**Excellence:** Lawrence Township Public Schools (Mercer), *LTPS Website*


**Merit:** Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District; Montclair Public Schools; Westwood Regional School District; Woodbridge Township School District

**Honorable Mention:** Freehold Township School District; Hopatcong Borough Schools; Livingston Public Schools; Passaic County Technical Institute; Piscataway Township Schools; Point Pleasant School

## Sample Board Resolution Marks National Principal's Month

October 2009 has been declared National Principal's Month, and is dedicated to recognizing the significant contributions of school principals and the enthusiasm

they have for providing quality educational experiences and guidance to their students.

In recognition of this first-time-ever event, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisor's Association invites local school boards to pass a resolution in support and appreciation of the principals in their local district. A sample resolution is posted at [www.njsba.org/PI/principal.pdf](http://www.njsba.org/PI/principal.pdf) to assist you in this endeavor. 

### Our Children/Our Schools Program Set for Oct. 17

The organization Our Children/ Our Schools is sponsoring a panel discussion program, "Are We There Yet? Moving All Children Forward in Public Education" on Saturday, Oct. 17.

The program will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Trenton Board of Education offices.

Panel members will include Dr. Ross Danis, associate dean of education, Drew University, Dr. Larry Leverett, executive director, The Panasonic Foundation; and Rosie Grant, program director, Paterson Education Fund.

More information and online registration is available at [www.ourchildrenourschools.org](http://www.ourchildrenourschools.org).

# Obituary: Bart Hawley, Henry Hudson Regional Board of Education

Bart Hawley, who served on the Henry Hudson Regional Board of Education for the past seven years, died on Sept. 27, after

a long battle with leukemia. He was 78. Mr. Hawley succeeded his wife Genevieve onto the Henry Hudson board after

her death in 2002. Mrs. Hawley had served for 27 years.

The patriarch of a community-minded family, Mr. Hawley once served as a fire chief, planning board member, deputy emergency management director and special police officer. His daughters Saranne Weimer and Annette Jordan both currently serve as presidents of boards of education – Atlantic Highlands and Freehold, respectively. His son-in-law Arthur Weimer, a former Atlantic Highlands councilman, now sits on the Henry Hudson Regional Board. Daughter Regina Hawley-Keelen served two terms on the regional board and is past president of the Henry Hudson school board, while son Joseph is a former member of both the Atlantic Highlands and Henry Hudson boards.

A funeral mass was celebrated on Saturday, Oct. 3 at St. Agnes Church in Atlantic Highlands. Donations may be made to the Genevieve M. Hawley Memorial Foundation, c/o Saranne Weimer, 34 E. Lincoln Ave., Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. 🍏



## STATE UPDATE

### Glucagon Bill Gets Gov's Signature

On Sept. 30, Gov. Jon S. Corzine signed A-267, which authorizes parents or guardians to request an individualized health care plan for their child with diabetes, and allows certain students to self-administer glucagon to regulate blood glucose levels. It also permits trained school personnel to administer glucagon in an emergency. The bill received final legislative approval from both houses of the Legislature in June. NJSBA supported the bill as a health and safety measure.

### School Ethics Commission Members Appointed

On Oct. 2, Gov. Jon S. Corzine filed the following direct appointments to the School Ethics Commission: Mary N. "Millie" Cooper, Summit; Christian Estevez, Plainfield; and Ellen Polaner, West Orange. Robert W. Bender, Woodstown; Mark J. Finkelstein, New Brunswick; and Jane Botsch Hutchison, Wayne, were re-appointed.

In addition, Lucille E. Davy, commissioner of education, and Joyce Powell, former president of the New Jersey Education Association, were appointed to the Education Commission of the States.

### Communicating During Difficult Labor Negotiations



*Dr. Charles Shaddow, superintendent of North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional School District*

More than 75 board members attended NJSBA's Fall Public Relations Forum on Sept. 29, held at Raritan Valley Community College. The program addressed effective communications strategies and collective bargaining law and practices. Presenters included NJSBA staff, a superintendent who discussed his district's negotiations and former reporters who are now education advocates.



*(Left to right) Alison Erwin, Jackson Township public schools; Mike Yaple, NJSBA public affairs officer, and Wendi Patella, a communications consultant and former deputy press secretary to the governor and member of the Cranbury school board*



*Curt Wary, NJSBA's director of Labor Relations*



### Policy Q & A

**Q.** What should our district policy be on faculty and staff wearing political buttons?

**A.** Relatively few districts have added text to their basic policy on teacher and staff conduct and dress on this topic (filed in a policy manual at #4119.22). However, it is management prerogative to do so. Below is possible text that any district could add to its basic policy on conduct and dress:

*District employees shall not wear tee shirts or other clothing or display any button, badge, or sticker relating to any candidate or ballot issue during working hours, nor shall district employees wear a uniform provided by the district during any campaign activities.*

For more information, contact NJSBA's Legal and Policy Services Department at (609) 278-5267.



**NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**  
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**Executive Committee Meeting Rescheduled**

The NJSBA Executive Committee meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 7, has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at NJSBA Headquarters, 850 Bear Tavern Road, Ewing. For further information, contact Nancy Fletcher at (609) 278-5214.

**Changes to Your NJSBA Login**

Each board member's e-mail address now serves as his or her user name for the password-protected area of the NJSBA Web site. If we do not have your e-mail address on file, you will not have access to valuable members-only content. This includes the *Critical Policy Reference Manual*, *Negotiations Data*, the *Manual for Development of Job Descriptions*, *School Leader* online and more.

If you have not provided an e-mail address or would like to change or review the e-mail address we have on file, please contact Maria Palomino at mpalomino@njsba.org. Include your district name and county if you are a board member.

**New Jersey's Next Governor Talks About Education**

NJSBA interviewed all three major candidates for governor about their views on major education issues. The full text of the interviews with Gov. Jon S. Corzine, Chris Christie and Chris Daggett is now available on the NJSBA Web site under the "What's New," section on the home page.

Check the online version of *School Board Notes* for important stories not included in the print version. Click on "School Board Notes" under the "In the News" heading of [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org).

**C A L E N D A R**



**Oct. 14**

Headquarters Review Committee, 850 Bear Tavern Road, Ewing, 3 p.m.

Executive Committee Meeting, 850 Bear Tavern Road, Ewing, 6 p.m.

**Oct. 22**

▶ Atlantic County School Boards Association, Alder Ave. Middle School, Egg Harbor Township, 7 p.m.

**Oct. 28-30**

▶ Workshop 2009, Atlantic City Convention Center

▶ Denotes pre-registration required

For more information about county school boards association activities, go online to [www.njsba.org](http://www.njsba.org) and select the name of the appropriate county association.