

SCHOOL BOARD notes

Lame Duck Post-Mortem: NJSBA Holds off Costly Bills; Challenges Ahead

The 213th session of the state Legislature ended Monday. Several proposals that could have proved extremely costly to local school districts saw no action, due to efforts by NJSBA.

Anti-Subcontracting A-4140 would have eliminated subcontracting of non-instructional services as a cost-saving strategy for school districts—a particularly troublesome proposal in difficult financial times. Among its provisions, the union-backed legislation would have prevented privatization of services, such as cafeteria operations, maintenance and transportation, in mid-contract. To stop the bill, NJSBA conducted a survey of school business administrators

which documented savings through recent subcontracting at \$38.8 million annually. Additional future savings would have been impossible if A-4140 had become law.

The bill was introduced on a Friday and rushed through Assembly Committee on the following Monday morning in June; it could have been voted on at any time during the lame duck session.

Prevailing Wage NJSBA's subcontracting data also helped stop legislation, S-2850/A-4251, that would have required school districts to pay privatized cafeteria staff the prevailing wage, which is significantly higher than the minimum wage. The bill would have wiped out much of the

millions of dollars in savings, attributable to subcontracted cafeteria operations, NJSBA told legislators. The Association worked with a coalition of business organizations in addressing the bill.

Arbitration Bill NJSBA successfully lobbied against another union-backed bill that was rushed through committee in June. The measure, A-4142, would have proved extremely costly to school boards, while removing critical education staffing decisions from school management.

A-4142 would have overturned well-established case law that gives boards of education an inherent right to terminate
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Legislative Update: Last Bills of the Session Passed, Signed

In the final days of the 2008-2009 session of the New Jersey Legislature, several bills of interest to the education community moved.

A bill to extend and expand a previous pilot program that required high school students to perform community service passed the Assembly on Monday. Under the measure (S-2898 / A-4279), the new pilot program would begin in the 2010-2011 school year and would apply to incoming freshman, who would have to complete a minimum of 20 hours of community service over their high school careers. The bill

passed 74-3, and now heads to the Governor for his signature.

Diploma Mill Bill Passes The Assembly also approved NJSBA-supported bill S-2127 (A-3671), which will crackdown on the use of phony degrees from so-called “diploma mills” by school teachers and administrators. The bill requires certain conditions to be met in order for school districts to provide employees with tuition assistance for coursework or additional compensation upon acquisition of a degree. It passed the Assembly 76-0; it had previously passed the Senate in October 2008.

Child Endangerment, Electrical Contracting Bills Move S-52, which permanently disqualifies certain persons convicted of child endangerment from working with children, passed the Assembly and the Senate on Monday.

A measure that would not allow schools to contract for electrical work except with a licensed journeyman who is a member of the electrical contractor's union, A-3317, also passed the Senate and the Assembly on Jan. 11. The bill provides an exception for any work with the potential of less than
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Lame Duck Post-Mortem

continued

non-tenured employees pursuant to the terms of individual contracts. Instead, it would have required arbitration over such non-renewals, as well as over increment withholding. Thus, these educational decisions would be made through the subjective interpretation of arbitrators,

who by the nature of their jobs have no understanding of the educational process. The bill's effect on school districts' legal costs would have been negative; its impact on the ability to make sound education decisions, devastating.

Administrative Structure Earlier in the legislative session, NJSBA's data-collection was

a major factor in stopping a bill, S-2425, that would have required superintendents to assume the responsibilities of principal in small school districts. Association research showed that 70 percent of one-school districts already combine the positions. The remaining 30 percent of one-school districts use other models to reduce administrative costs, such as principal-special education coordinator or superintendent-business administrator. "School boards need to retain flexibility so they can adopt the best solution," stated NJSBA.

Contrary to popular misperception, U.S. Department of Education statistics show that New Jersey's public schools allocate a smaller share of education dollars to administration than do 40 other states. The data, from the department's National Center for Education Statistics, also indicate that New Jersey spends below the nationwide average on administration and above the nationwide average on instruction and instruction-related functions.

Challenges Ahead For the new legislative session, NJSBA will stay on alert for policy decisions resulting from the \$8 billion state budget deficit, changes in curriculum and assessment, modifications to collective bargaining law, and proposals concerning regionalization. Governor-elect Christie will take office Jan. 19. Previously, he indicated that he will not cut state education aid. He is expected to deliver his first budget message and recommendations for 2010-2011 to the state Legislature in March.

"The state's financial status has the potential to put everything on the table, from the date of the Annual School Election to how school boards bargain with teacher unions, as well as their ability to make decisions that reflect the will of their communities," said Marie S. Bilik, NJSBA executive director.

"Let me assure you that, during these uncertain times, NJSBA is committed to continuing to represent the interests of local school boards and public education before state decision-makers." 🍏



NJSBA Audit Committee Meeting

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice is hereby provided of a meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association's Audit Committee. The meeting will be held at the Wyndham-Princeton Forrestal Hotel and Conference Center, 900 Scudders Mill Road, Plainsboro, Friday, January 22, 2010, at 6 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.

For further information, contact Joan Campbell at (609) 278-5211.

NJSBA Board of Directors Meeting

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, notice is hereby provided of a meeting of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey School Boards Association. The meeting will be held at the Wyndham-Princeton Forrestal Hotel and Conference Center, 900 Scudders Mill Road, in Plainsboro, on Friday, Jan. 22. The meeting will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting is open to the public.

The agenda, to the extent known at this time, will include discussion and/or action on: open session minutes of the Nov. 20 meeting; advocacy update; revisions to Governance and Operations manual policies; School Board Recognition Month; headquarters renovation update; 2010 Legislative Committee; 2010 Federal Relations Network; 2010 Resolutions Subcommittee; 2010 Emergency Resolutions Subcommittee; and reports of the president and executive director.

For further information, contact Nancy Fletcher at (609) 278-5214.

2010's NJSBA Training Outlook

NJSBA is making plans for its 2010 training programs.

In the works is a wide array of new programs and topics, as well as new formats for delivering training to our members. Online training opportunities will be expanded and the use of podcasts and webcasts will be used to provide new content in novel formats. In addition to the annual Workshop event, NJSBA will host "Weekend Workshops" that take place on a Saturday and focus on a specific topic, such as technology, school safety, building sustainable schools, and more.

"What I have heard over and over is that our members are looking for more training, more learning and they also want it to be more portable," said Erik Endress, director of NJSBA's Association and Business Development Department. "By creating programs that occur for a few hours on a Saturday or ones you can listen to on your iPod or from your desk, we are taking a step in a new direction. We can use technology like Livestream, which we used at Workshop 2009, to enable anyone to tune in from their home computer in the evening. And, if they miss the live event, they can watch it online after it has been recorded."

Endress wants to hear directly from NJSBA members who have suggestions or ideas about what training programs NJSBA should produce during 2010 and how that training should be delivered. Members with ideas and suggestions related to training should e-mail Endress at eendress@njsba.org.

2010 School Board Candidate Kit is Online

The Annual School Election is currently scheduled to take place April 20. This year, the deadline for school board candidates to file nominating petitions is March 1.

NJSBA has posted its Candidate Kit online, which provides resources for anyone considering running for their local school board. NJSBA will not be providing printed kits at this time. The kit can be found at www.njsba.org under the "What's New" section.

IS YOUR SALARY GUIDE SUFFERING FROM...

ANALYZING & CONSTRUCTING SALARY GUIDES

February 20, 2010 • RWJ Hamilton Conference Center

9 a.m.— 7:30 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)

If your guide suffers from these, or other such maladies, you should attend **Analyzing and Constructing Salary Guides**. Your district's salary guides directly affect your ability to attract, retain and equitably reward staff throughout the guide. Through hands-on activities learn how to analyze, develop and negotiate salary guides. Program topics include:

ANALYZING THE DISTRICT'S EXISTING GUIDE

- Understand guide structure
- Identify problem areas such as "balloons"
- Discover how much the guide is really costing

ESTABLISHING BOARD GOALS

- Understand how the guide affects personnel goals and staffing
- Set goals that address the district's specific needs



Academy Credits: 4

Core Areas for CBM & MBM: Labor Relations

DEVELOPING GUIDES

- Eliminate balloon steps
- Reduce increment costs
- Redirect money on the guide to make your district more competitive
- Develop guides that better meet the board's goals

NEGOTIATING SALARY GUIDES

- Discover negotiations techniques for achieving guide changes
- Learn how to respond to union negotiations strategies and tactics
- Hear success stories of other districts' achievements

A bad case of "balloon" or "bubble" steps?

Chronic noncompetitive starting salaries?

Acute inequitable distribution of salary increases?



Cancellation Policy: Cancellations made up to 10 working days prior to the program date will be refunded the entire registration fee. Cancellations made between 10 working days and 72 hours of the program start will be charged \$25. 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.

The school district accountability law places travel restrictions on school board members. Advanced travel approval is required. For details, visit www.njsba.org/accountabilityact/

Members \$207, Non-Members \$414 • For more information, contact the NJSBA Call Center at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5260.

PR Forum Prepares Districts for Bond and Budget Elections

Passing a school district budget or a bond issue can be difficult in any year. But this year's budget process is likely to be made even more challenging by the state's fiscal crisis. It is more important than ever for a board to be prepared to conduct an effective referendum campaign.

NJSBA's Winter School Public Relations Forum will help arm local education officials with strategies. The forum is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 23, 2010 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Brookdale Community College in Lincroft. It will be held in the Warner Student Life Center, Navesink rooms I & II.

Budget Campaigns The program will include three parts. The first, "Successful School Budget Campaigns" will feature NJSBA Field Service Representatives Gwen Thornton and Kathy Winecuff

discussing strategies for passing the budget and involving the community in a meaningful way.

New Media Methods Examined In "Using the New Media to Energize Get Out the Vote Efforts," Erik Endress, NJSBA's director of Association and Business Development, will demonstrate innovative ways to disseminate a message via social networking and other media. Participants will learn how to empower a district's key communicators, locate voters and build on a base of supporters.

Legalities Lowdown The third portion of the program. "Do's and Don'ts of Budget Campaigns," will feature Michael Kaelber, director of the Association's Legal and Policy Services Department. Kaelber will acquaint participants with the legal restrictions pertaining to school district

budget elections.

More information and a registration form for the 2010 School Public Relations Forum can be found online. Attendees can also register through NSJBA's Member Services department by calling (888) 886-5722, ext. 5260. 🍎

NJ Education By the Numbers

2009-2010

1.37	Public School enrollment projected (in millions)
2,041	Number of Elementary Schools
459	Number of Secondary Schools
112,933	Number of Full-Time Classroom Teachers

Source: New Jersey Department of Education



Nominating Committee Lists Applicants for NJSBA Office

January 6 was the deadline for candidates to submit applications to the NJSBA Nominating Committee for president and three Vice President positions (County Activities, Finance and Legislation/Resolutions). The Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates for election at the Association's Annual Meeting on May 15.

NJSBA policy (GO/8204) directs that all applicants seeking nomination as an officer by the Nominating Committee shall have their name, school district/county and position sought announced in *School Board Notes* following the deadline for submission of nominations.

As of the deadline, NJSBA had received applications from the following local school board members:

President: Eva M. Nagy, Franklin Township Board of Education, Somerset County; Raymond R. Wiss, Northern Valley Regional Board of Education, Bergen County

Vice President for County Activities: None

Vice President for Finance: Beth Politi, Pascack Valley Regional High School Board of Education, Bergen County; Karen B. Sorbello, Magnolia Board of Education, Camden County

Vice President for Legislation/Resolutions: John Bulina, Tabernacle Board of Education, Burlington County

No applications were received for the position of Vice President for County Activities. Therefore, pursuant to GO8462 and 8462R, the deadline to apply for the position of Vice President for County Activities shall be extended 14 days or until 5 p.m., Jan. 21. All applications must be received at NJSBA's temporary headquarters at 850 Bear Tavern Road, Ewing, New Jersey 08628 to the attention of Harry J. Delgado, Chair, by 5 p.m. on Jan. 21.

Nomination by Petition NJSBA *Bylaws* also provide for candidates to be nominated by petition, signed by at least ten members from at least five different district boards of education and filed with the Executive Director. On Feb. 25, petitions may be obtained by visiting NJSBA's Web site (www.njsba.org). Petitions may not be circulated prior to Feb. 25 and must be received by the Executive Director no later than March. 31.

Signatures need not all appear upon a single petition and any number of petitions may be filed on behalf of a candidate, but no petition shall contain the endorsement of more than one candidate.

Nominations by petition should be sent via Federal Express or registered/receipt-requested mail. The written consent of the candidate for nomination by petition must be filed with the Executive Director within the same time limit.

Information with Petition When submitting nominations by petition, candidates should include a "head and shoulders" photo and a resume that includes a 200-word statement explaining why they are seeking the position. Resumes should contain information under the following headings: Local Board Activities; County Activities; NJSBA Activities; Education; and Employment/Community Activities. (A sample resume may be obtained from Barbara Deveney by calling 1-888-886-5722, ext. 5256.) A report of all candidates by petition will be made no later than April 5. The report will appear in *School Board Notes* and on NJSBA's Web site.

Nominations from Floor NJSBA *Bylaws* also permit nominations to be made from the floor at the annual meeting. The nominator must have the written consent of the candidate for nomination and present it to the presiding officer at the time the nomination is made.

Nominating Committee Members of the 2010-2012 Nominating Committee include: Harry J. Delgado, Chair; Cherie L. Adams, Esq., Belmar, Monmouth County; William J. Barnaskas, Lyndhurst, Bergen County; Kevin E. Ciak, Sayreville, Middlesex County; Everett J. Jennings, East Orange, Essex; Christine Kane, Glassboro, Gloucester; John Kendall, Haddon Township, Camden County; Irene LeFebvre, Boonton Town, Morris County; Frances T. Little, Seaside Heights & Central Regional, Ocean County; Daniel Money, Middle Township, Cape May County; Jose Pantoja, Prospect Park, Passaic County; Mary Ellen Pilch, Kingwood, Hunterdon County; and Catherine Sucher-Greeley, Piscataway Township, Middlesex County.

NJSBA Building Renovation Progresses; Trenton Mayor Commends Commitment to the Capital City

NJSBA's decision to renovate its existing headquarters at 413 West State Street in Trenton has earned it praise from Trenton's mayor. "I commend...your decision to retain your building, enhance it and maintain your presence in the capital city," wrote Mayor Douglas H. Palmer in a recent letter to the Association.

In May 2009, the NJSBA Board of Directors voted to renovate the Association's headquarters. The 46-year-old building has been plagued in recent years with infrastructure problems such as extensive roof and window leaks, old plumbing and inefficient heating and cooling.

"Over the past five years, committees of local school board members explored various options: leasing space, purchasing a structure or building new," said Marie S. Bilik, executive director of NJSBA. "Since we have full ownership of 413 West State Street, taking on a long-term lease at another location is not prudent; renovating the building is the best financial option."

While the decision is based on finances, it also reflects a strong desire to maintain a presence in the state capital," Bilik emphasized. "As the Association considered where to locate its future operations, we determined that we wanted to stay in the city that's been our home for 95 years."

The project will result in a completely renovated building with "Silver Level" certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System.

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Passing Your Budget

Don't Miss NJSBA's Winter School Public Relations Forum!

Friday, January 29, 2010

Passing a school district budget or bond issue can be especially challenging during difficult economic times. That's why it is more important than ever for districts to be prepared to mount effective budget campaigns. NJSBA's Winter School Public Relations Forum is designed to help.

Program Date: Friday, Jan. 29, 2010

Registration: \$70 for members, \$140 for non-members

Program: 9 a.m. to 12 noon (registration 8 a.m.), Brookdale Community College, Lincroft; Warner Student Life Center, Navesink Rooms I & II

2010 Program Topics:



Successful School Budget Campaigns

NJSBA Field Service Representatives Gwen Thornton and Kathy Winecoff will focus on your role as a board member in the budget process, simple strategies to assist the board in passing the budget and involving your community in a meaningful way. Learn how and why community involvement is key to success.



Using the "New" Media to Energize Get Out The Vote Efforts

Erik Endress, director of NJSBA's Association and Business Development Department, will show you innovative ways to disseminate your message via social networking and other media. Learn how to empower your key communicators, locate your voters and build on your base of supporters.



Do's and Don'ts of Budget Campaigns

Michael Kaelber, director of NJSBA's Legal and Policy Services Department, will help you get acquainted with the legal restrictions pertaining to school budget elections. Learn about the impact of recent regulations on budget campaigns.



Credits: 1

Core Area for CBM: Relationships, School/Community Relations

Core Area for MBM: Relationships, School/Community Relations

Core Area for CBL: None

The School District Accountability Act places travel restrictions on school board members. Advance travel approval is required. For details, visit www.njsba.org/accountabilityact.

To register, fax your request to (609) 278-5280 or e-mail callcenter@njsba.org. For more information, please call Member Services at (888) 886-5722 ext. 5260.

NJSBA Building Renovation

continued

The upgrades will include solar panels and energy efficiency features. The renovated headquarters building will also incorporate a technology-communications center to expand online training and information services to board of education members, as required by state law.

The project is running on-time and on-budget. Interior demolition work is scheduled to be complete this week, and work on the roof will begin next. Bids for the general contracting work are due on Jan. 26.

"So far bids have been under the amount we have budgeted," said Francis Pullo, NJSBA's Director of Finance and Opera-

tional Services. "I think we have benefited from the fact that many contractors are looking for work. We had more than 25 general contractors at the mandatory pre-bid meeting that was held on Dec. 29."

The architect for the project is The Vaughn Collaborative of Trenton.

NJSBA had seriously considered building a new headquarters in Hamilton, complete with a conference center that could be used for member training. However recent laws require the Association to deliver a larger share of school board member training through regional programs and the Internet, rather than state-wide conferences. State regulations also restrict board member travel for training

purposes. These changes made previous plans to build a new office building and conference center near the N.J. Turnpike impractical, according to Bilik.

NJSBA's board of directors approved the allocation of \$7 million for the renovation project earlier this year. The appropriation is three times less costly than constructing a new building in the suburbs; the funds will come entirely from a capital reserve account created for the previously planned conference center with no impact on members' dues and no borrowing.

The Association is on track to complete the renovation, and move from its temporary offices at 850 Bear Tavern Road in Ewing by August 2010. 🍓



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SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

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Monmouth County SBA Hears Community Relations Discussion



Members of the Monmouth County School Boards Association heard a presentation and held discussion on community relations and communications plans at the recent Jan. 7 meeting at Colts Neck High School.

Left to right: Kathy Winecoff, NJSBA field service representative; Cherie Adams, vice-president, Belmar Board of Education and Monmouth County SBA president; and Barbara Horl, NJSBA lobbyist.

Legislative Update
 continued

10 volts, and exempts employees who have completed a federally approved electrical apprenticeship program.

A-371, an NJSBA-supported bill which lengthens the service life of school buses to 15 years, passed both houses of the Legislature on Monday, as did A-4377, which extends a pilot program to address the state's shortage of mathematics and science teachers by one year. A-420

grants tenure-like protection to education support personnel employed in districts that receive Title I funding. It passed the Assembly in 2008 and the Senate on Jan. 11. NJSBA opposed this bill.

Gov. Signs Laws Gov. Jon S. Corzine has recently signed several bills into law. A-1072 /S-480 requires prompt parental and staff notification of contaminated soil found on school property, while A-3002 /S-2518 requires school security drills to improve emergency preparedness.

C A L E N D A R

Jan. 22

Audit Committee, Wyndham Princeton Forrestal Hotel and Conference Center, Plainsboro, 6 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting, Wyndham Princeton Forrestal Hotel and Conference Center, Plainsboro, 6:30 p.m.

Jan. 23

Nominating Committee Training Meeting, RWJ Hamilton Conference Center, Mercerville, 8 a.m.

Legislative Committee and CAL Committee, RWJ Hamilton Conference Center, Mercerville, 8:30 a.m.

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.