

SCHOOL BOARD notes

Christie Transition Team Looks at Changes

A moratorium on the Accountability Regulations and the NJQSAC monitoring system, major labor law changes, and reciprocity of teacher certification with other states, especially in high-demand disciplines, are among recommendations issued last week by the Christie transition team's Education Subcommittee.

The 25-page document highlights the issues discussed by the panel—the mem-

bership of which included Commissioner of Education-designee Bret Schundler. It recommended changes in law and regulation.

The panel's "priority action" recommendations include:

- Developing a more refined barometer of school performance that would go beyond the results of a single test by including school district efforts to

address socioeconomic factors and other considerations.

- Including school employees in any 2010-2011 salary freeze imposed on public workers due to the state's budget crisis.
- Opening five to 10 charter schools in low-performing districts by fall 2010.

The report also supports moving school board member elections to November, *continued on page 3*

New Legislative Session: Bills Resurface, Cuts Possible

Although the New Jersey legislative session is only two weeks old, NJSBA's Governmental Relations Department is currently tracking nearly 600 bills.

January 12 marked the beginning of the 214th Session of the New Jersey State Legislature. Lawmakers have already introduced more than 2,800 bills, including many "pre-filed" bills carried over from the previous session.

Once again pending in the Assembly are bills that would move board member elections to November, while eliminating the vote on school budgets at or below

cap. A-1306 (Wolfe/Voss) addresses both issues; A-1308 (Wolfe/Holzappel) simply addresses the school budget vote.

Subcontracting Bill Absent One notable bill, A-4140 (Oliver), which would have restricted local boards' ability to subcontract non-educational services, stalled in the Assembly in the previous session and has not been reintroduced. Another union-backed bill, A-4142 (Cryan), which would require binding arbitration for non-renewal of non-tenured employees, is alive and well in the new session, reintroduced as A-587.

The Senate Education Committee will

meet on Feb. 1 to hear testimony about the educational priorities of invited associations and organizations, including NJSBA. The Assembly Education Committee will likely meet for the first time on Feb. 4, but no agenda has been posted.

State Budget Outlook The Assembly Budget Committee heard testimony on Jan. 25 from David Rosen, the Legislative Budget and Finance Officer, who provided a mid-year state budget update. Rosen confirmed that state revenues from major taxes, including the income, sales, corporation business, motor fuels, insurance, estate and casino revenues, continued to decline in the second half of 2009. He said the state's two major revenues – income and sales taxes – had their worst years ever. Additionally, he confirmed that the current-year shortfall projected through June 30 is likely \$1.2 to \$1.3 billion. Rosen predicted that the 2010-2011 budget deficit could grow to nearly \$10 billion.

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A Visit from the Commissioner

Bret Schundler, center, New Jersey's new Commissioner of Education, visited NJSBA headquarters on Monday to meet with Association officials. Standing with the commissioner is Harry J. Delgado, NJSBA president, and Marie S. Bilik, NJSBA's executive director. Schundler and Association officials discussed concepts to improve student achievement, and ways in which NJSBA could work in cooperation with the new administration.



A Message about NJSBA's Officer Nominations

NJSBA has received 10 applications to fill various officer positions within the Association, according to Cynthia J. Jahn, general counsel/director of Member Services.

NJSBA serves as a voice for school boards across the state, and its officers assume a high-profile role within the Association and the state's education

community.

"Everything NJSBA does and stands for – from our goals to our policies, from our positions on education to our dues structure – is determined by local school board members who are involved in the Association," said Harry J. Delgado, NJSBA President. "To that end, I would

like to extend my sincere thanks to the 10 local board of education members who have applied to serve as Association officers."

The NJSBA Nominating Committee will select four of the 10 candidates as a slate to be presented at NJSBA's May 15 Delegate Assembly.

Delgado also noted that there are many other opportunities for local board members to get involved with NJSBA other than serving as officer of the Association. For instance, the Association is continually seeking involvement ranging from serving on NJSBA committees to participation in the Delegate Assembly, and through grassroots advocacy efforts at both the state and federal levels.

"NJSBA strives to serve as the leader in New Jersey's education arena, and I thank all of our members who have offered to serve as leaders of NJSBA," Delgado said. "You are what make NJSBA strong. The candidates should be commended for offering to serve in such difficult times and lead the Association in moving forward." 🍎

NJSBA Announces List of Applications for Officers

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). There were no applications received for the position of Vice President for County Activities. Pursuant to GO8462 and 8462R, the deadline to apply for the position of Vice President for County Activities was extended 14 days, or until 5 p.m., Jan. 21, 2010.

As of the deadline, NJSBA received 5 applications for the position of Vice President for County Activities. The full list of applications received for all officer positions are as follows:

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 Peter J. Calvo, Glassboro Board of Education, Gloucester County; Susan Cauldwell Carlsson, Bernards Board of Education, Somerset County; Jason Allen Jones, Neptune Board of Education, Monmouth County; Charles T. Miller, East Amwell Board of Education, Hunterdon County; Daniel T. Sinclair, Wanaque Borough Board of Education, Passaic County

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

Candidate Kits Available, But Online Only

Because of the possibility that the Legislature and new governor may change the 2010 school election date from April to November, NJSBA's Candidate Kit is available online only at www.njsba.org/candidacy. The Association will not mail the candidates' materials to school districts.

Currently, the March 1 deadline for filing nomination petitions and the April 20 date for the Annual School Election still stand. Local school board office personnel should download and print the following materials as needed for distribution to prospective candidates.

Candidate Kit The kit includes information and a nominating petition for prospective candidates, as well as a sample news release that school board secretaries can use to promote the availability of candidacy information.

Vote Poster NJSBA has also posted the Annual School Election "Vote" poster online. School officials can print the full-color poster, and display copies throughout the community.

These items, as well as other news about the Annual School Election, can be found under the "What's New" section of NJSBA's homepage.

NJSBA will notify school officials immediately by e-mail concerning any changes in the 2010 Annual School Election date. School board officials who have any questions about the Candidate Kit materials can contact the NJSBA Communications Department at (888) 886-5722, Ext. 5209.



Boardsmanship in Middlesex



The Middlesex County School Boards Association held a program, "How Do You Handle This One?" to discuss legal and practical perspectives of effective boardsmanship. Left to right, Cassie Greeley, Piscataway board; Kevin Ciak, NJSBA's immediate past president, and Sayreville board member; Gene Maeroff, Edison board; Rochelle Gray, Highland Park board; and Martin Abschutz, South Brunswick board.

Transition Team

continued


while eliminating the annual vote on the base budget. However, it places no time-line on the change.

Significantly, the paper calls for changes in labor law to strengthen school boards' position in bargaining – including the

restoration of a school board's ability to implement its last, best offer when negotiations are exhausted, an NJSBA goal.

The report recommends thorough review of unfunded state requirements, ranging from special education mandates that exceed federal standards and transporta-

tion efficiency measures, to paid time-off for teachers attending the NJEA convention. The review would also examine mandatory school board membership in NJSBA.

The report can be viewed in the "What's New" section of NJSBA's homepage, www.njsba.org. 



Announcing... Innovations *in* Special Education Awards

*Sponsored by the New Jersey School Boards Association and ASAH...
Serving the Private Special Education Community Since 1974*

As part of Special Education Week in New Jersey 2010, NJSBA and ASAH want New Jerseyans to know how their schools are preparing special education children for the future. If you have a successful, innovative program that has been in place for at least one school year, tell us about it.

ENTRY FORM Innovations in Special Education 2010

Program Title _____

Age Group Served _____

Contact Person _____

Title _____

School or District _____

County _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Superintendent/Executive Director _____

Entries must be postmarked by April 2, 2010.

Mail to: Innovations in Special Education, New Jersey School Boards Association,
413 West State Street, P.O. Box 909, Trenton, NJ 08605-0909
Attention: Communications

For information, contact Ann Marie Smith at 1-888-886-5722, ext. 5209.

In assessing entries, judges will consider the following components of each program:

- Content, including degree of innovation
- How well it addresses student needs
- Its integration into the curriculum
- Evaluation strategies
- Parent/community involvement

Presentation of the entry, including the written description of the program and its goals, will also be considered.

Each entry must include a typewritten description of the program, no longer than two pages. The description must:

- Provide a clear and concise goal statement indicating who is responsible for the program, when it began and how it is funded.
- Explain why the program is innovative.
- Indicate the student population served and their ages.

Entries may include printed supplemental material, such as brochures, photographs, flyers, letters and announcements.

A select number of programs will be recognized at a special event, held in conjunction with Special Education Week in New Jersey in May 2010. Award recipients will also be featured in NJSBA's *School Leader* and ASAH publications.

Youth is an Asset, Say New Jersey's Youngest Board Members



Surveys of school board members in New Jersey and throughout the nation tend to find some common traits.

School board members are typically well-educated (43 percent of New Jersey board members attend graduate school or have a graduate degree). They are fairly evenly split along gender lines – 51 percent of New Jersey board members are female.

But there's one thing you can't call most school board members: young. Fewer than 2 percent of New Jersey school board members are under the age of 30, according to NJSBA data (46 percent are between the ages of 41 and 51 years).

The under-30 group includes an even smaller sub-group: board members who have been elected while still teenagers. Three examples include Elizabeth Chang of the South Brunswick school board, Michael Collins of the Holmdel Township school board and Keith Rosso of the Saddle River school board.



Chang is 18 and a freshman at New York University, where she majors in finance and minors in education. She ran for her board

after the district made changes she disagreed with, such as changing Advanced Placement schedules and no longer paying for AP exam fees.



Collins, currently 20 years old and a senior at New York University, was elected at age 18, the year after he graduated from high school. He had been a regular attendee at board meetings and had spoken out on various issues, including student placement policies and curriculum inconsistencies. "When I was a student at Holmdel High School, I was very concerned about the direction of the school district, despite its high-achieving status," said Collins. "There was administrative upheaval so perverse that it severely affected student morale. I ran for the board to make sure the district was on solid footing."



Keith Rosso joined the Saddle River school board at age 18, during his senior year. His interest in school board affairs began when he was 12 when he periodically attended board meetings with his mother. "In my senior year in high school, I became the student representative to the board. In 2007, I was one of eight candidates to run for the three open seats," said Rosso, now 21 and a senior at Stevens

Institute of Technology in Hoboken.

Young board members are in good company. Kevin E. Ciak, president of NJSBA from 2006-2008, was first elected to the Sayreville board at age 19 while a student at Rutgers University. Now a 16 year board veteran, Ciak said these members provide a unique perspective to a board. "A student who just came through your district provides an outstanding insight – a customer perspective, if you will – of what works and doesn't work in your district," he said.

"Having recently been through the school system, I have a strong knowledge of the district's curriculum, buildings and grounds, student-related policies and personnel," said Collins. Rosso echoed that opinion. "As a recent graduate of the high school, I have a first-hand account of the strengths and weaknesses within the district from inside the classroom," he said.

The young board members believe they can also connect with a district's younger constituents. "I think a lot of members of the community, especially people my age, feel more comfortable in talking to me," Elizabeth Chang said.

Where the young board members are no different than their older colleagues is in the challenges they confront and in their hopes for their school district. Keith Rosso's district is currently conducting a superintendent search. "I hope that following the search, the new superintendent, the board, administration, faculty and staff, parents and community members can all work together for the benefit of the students in the district," he said.

Chang and her board share an overriding concern with most of the 4,800 board members in the state: "I just really hope that my district can continue to maintain or better its current quality of education," she said, "while not raising taxes or making too many cuts that will impact the students." 🍷

NJSBA Unveils Streamlined Superintendent Evaluations

NJSBA will hold three training programs to unveil its new, streamlined electronic superintendent evaluation system. The secure, online process compiles results more quickly and efficiently, and will allow school boards to evaluate the superintendent in a matter of days, not weeks.

NJSBA Field Service Representatives will demonstrate the new method and answer board member questions during three regional training programs, all of which will be held Monday, Feb. 8, at 7 p.m. (registration begins at 6:30 p.m.). School board members, superintendents, board secretaries, and other board designees are encouraged to attend.

Northern Region: Mountain Lakes High School, 96 Powerville Road, Mountain Lakes.

Central Region: Middlesex County Vocational & Technical School, 112 Rues Lane, East Brunswick.

Southern Region: Hammonton High School, 566 Old Forks Road, Hammonton.

For more information, contact NJSBA's Call Center at callcenter@njsba.org.

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?



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

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.

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

2010 Innovations in Special Education Awards Program Announced

Entries for the 2010 Innovations in Special Education Awards program are being sought by the program's organizers, the

New Jersey School Boards Association and ASAH, the Association of Schools and Agencies for the Handicapped, which rep-

resents private special education schools.

Entries must be postmarked by April 2. The awards program recognizes creative and exemplary programs for special education students. Selected programs will be honored at a special event held in conjunction with Special Education Week in New Jersey in May 2010.

Each program will be judged on its content, including degree of innovation, how well it addresses student needs, its integration into the curriculum, evaluation strategies, and parent/community involvement. Presentation of the entry, including the written description of the program and its goals, will also be considered.

More information can be found under the "What's New" section of NJSBA's Web site, www.njsba.org. School districts will also receive a notice through e-mail. 🍏



New Laws Lead to NJSBA Policy Updates

During the last few weeks of office, Gov. Jon S. Corzine signed legislation on a number of bills affecting public schools. NJSBA has, in turn, updated several model policies in its *Critical Policy Reference Manual*.

One bill, A-1072/S-480 (Wagner, Voss, Moriarty, Evans, Greenstein, Gordon, Bateman) requires prompt parental and staff notification of contaminated soil found on school property. To cover this requirement, a new section on this topic was added to model policy 3516 Safety.

Effective Jan. 29, districts will be required to address the health care needs of students with diabetes, which includes the development of individual health care plans in accordance with *N.J.S.A. 18A:40-12.11 et seq.* NJSBA inserted a section in its sample policy 5141 to cover those requirements.

Copies of both model policies on soil contamination and diabetes health care plan can be found in the *Critical Policy Reference Manual* through the "Members Only" area of the Policy page on NJSBA's Web site, www.njsba.org

For more information or to obtain a sample diabetes individual health care plan, contact Lou Schimenti of the Legal and Policy Services Department at (609) 278-5271 or via e-mail at lschimenti@njsba.org.

In coming weeks, NJSBA will provide policy updates stemming from other recent legislative changes.



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SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

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New Legislative Session




continued

With the governor’s budget address tentatively scheduled for March 12, a great deal of uncertainty remains about the proposed school district excess sur-


plus reduction proposed to help solve the 2009-2010 budget shortfall. In addition, the depth of the shortfall projected for the next budget cycle make cuts in school aid funding increasingly likely. 

C A L E N D A R

Feb. 8

-  New Superintendent Evaluation Training, Mountain Lakes High School, Mountain Lakes, 6:30 p.m.
-  New Superintendent Evaluation Training, Middlesex County Vocational & Technical School, East Brunswick, 6:30 p.m.
-  New Superintendent Evaluation Training, Hammonton High School, Hammonton, 6:30 p.m.

Feb. 10

-  Union County School Boards Association, Westlake School, Westfield, 7 p.m.

Feb. 18

-  Cumberland County SBA meeting, Cumberland County Technical Education Center, Bridgetown, 7 p.m.

Feb. 20

-  Analyzing & Constructing Salary Guides, Robert Wood Johnson Health and Wellness Center, Mercerville, 8:30 a.m.

New Leaders of Legislature’s Education Committees



Assemblyman Patrick J. Diegnan Jr., left, incoming chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, recently met with NJSBA lobbyist Barbara Horl and Michael Vrancik, NJSBA’s director of government relations.

The vice-chair of the Assembly Education Committee will be Joan M. Voss. Other committee members include Ralph R. Caputo; Eleese Evans; Mila M. Jasey; Paul D. Moriarty; Ruben J. Ramos; and Bonnie Watson Coleman.

In the Senate Education Committee, Sen. Teresa M. Ruiz will serve as chair; Jim Whelan will be vice-chair; and other committee members include Diane B. Allen; Thomas H. Kean, Jr.; and Shirley K. Turner.

Text of ‘Race to the Top’ Online

The New Jersey Department of Education has posted on its Web site the full text of its application for Race to the Top grants. The full document can be found online at www.njsba.org under the “What’s New” heading.