

SCHOOL BOARD notes



Get Ready for Workshop 2010: 'Leadership, Training, Collaboration'

New dates, a new location and exciting new programs.

That's what's in store for participants at Workshop 2010, "Leadership, Training, Collaboration." The year's training event will take place Tuesday through Thursday, Oct. 19-21 in Somerset at the Garden State Exhibit Center, the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center and the Holiday Inn Conference Center.

The central New Jersey location was selected because of its proximity to major highways and mass transit. It is within commuting distance for two-thirds of the state's school districts.

"For local school officials, the new location will enable many of them to attend the event without the need for an overnight stay. Reasonably priced hotel accommodations are nearby," said Marie

S. Bilik, NJSBA executive director. "That's an important consideration in today's economy."

More than 10 hotels are located in the area.

Workshop 2010 will provide the same type of learning opportunities, including Accountability Act training, offered by previous year's programs. To better meet members' needs, the Workshop 2010 program will include exciting new features, including – for the first time – evening training sessions.

"The evening programs will provide training opportunities for many members who have not been able to attend Workshop in the past due to daytime commitments," explained Bilik. "They have been added in response to members' past concerns."

Workshop 2010 is co-sponsored by NJSBA, the New Jersey Association of School Administrators and the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials.

Information about the Workshop 2010 facility and program, including major speakers, training and information sessions and mandatory training schedule, will appear in *School Board Notes* periodically through mid-October. 🍏

Workshop: Changing to Meet the Times

A message from NJSBA's Executive Director

Dear NJSBA Member,

Several local school boards have written to express concern about NJSBA's recent decision to move Annual Workshop from Atlantic City after 57 years.

There is not a doubt in my mind that the vast majority of members would choose Atlantic City as the preferred site for Workshop 2010. However, certain economic realities will affect school districts next year. We have to plan accordingly.

The state's budget deficit will likely impact school district revenues and bring with it a change in state financial policy. Given these constraints, it is unlikely that local school boards will be able to pay for accommodations in Atlantic City casino hotels. It's also unlikely that citizens will look kindly on such expenditures.

Workshop training is important. In light of economic realities, we need to conduct an event that does not require overnight accommodations. The location in central New Jersey would provide that option for most of our members. For those who need to stay overnight, the new venue will offer hotel rooms at a lower cost than Atlantic City.

In December, Commissioner of Education Lucille Davy issued a waiver authorizing school districts to reimburse board members for overnight accommodations at Workshop 2010. But the *authorization* to reimburse – and the *financial capability* to reimburse – are two separate things. For many boards, that capability will not exist in the new financial

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Pension Reform Bills Introduced in Senate

New Jersey lawmakers on Tuesday introduced pension reform legislation that would affect the pensions and benefits of all public workers, including school district employees.

Four bills were introduced in the state Senate. Each bill has at least 23 sponsors; only 21 votes are needed for passage. According to media reports, the state Assembly was getting ready to introduce companion versions of the legislation later this week.

Among the proposals in the legislation: a requirement that workers and retirees at all levels of government and local school districts contribute 1.5 percent of their

annual salaries or base pension to their health benefits.

The proposal would also alter how pension payments are calculated. The measures would roll back a 9 percent increase in benefits put into place in 2001; average the highest five years of salary rather than three years to determine pension payments; and ban future part-time workers from participating in the pension system. Payments for unused sick leave would be capped at \$15,000 for all public employees, reflecting the limit already in effect for state employees.

A constitutional amendment, introduced Tuesday, would require the state to

fully fund its pension obligations in each year's budget.

NJSBA will thoroughly review the legislation. NJSBA believes that pension reform must be comprehensive, provide long-term stability for the program, and relieve overburdened taxpayers. The bills address many of the structural problems facing the pension and benefits system. Of note is an attempt to address the cost of post-retirement medical benefits, which makes up approximately \$1 billion of the state budget.

The pension proposals mirror several recommendations made during a 2006 special session on property tax reform. At that time, a bipartisan committee made 41 recommendations on remaking the pension system; 15 were enacted legislatively and others through collective bargaining. 🍏

Larkins Named SDA Chief

Gov. Chris Christie announced the nomination of Marc Larkins as executive director of the New Jersey Schools Development Authority on Jan. 27.

Larkins is the assistant United States attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey, and worked for Gov. Christie. Larkins also worked in a number of divisions within the U.S. Attorney's office, including serving as chief of the Government Fraud Unit. Prior

to serving in the U.S. Attorney's office, Larkins was a trial attorney in the U.S. Department of Justice's criminal division, and also served as special assistant United States attorney for the District of Columbia.

Larkins earned his undergraduate degree from Seton Hall University and his law degree from Seton Hall University School of Law. He currently resides in Irvington. 🍏

Workshop: Changing to Meet the Times continued

atmosphere.

As in previous years, the commissioner's waiver was based on the need for local school board members to receive the high quality training that is available at Workshop. We plan to provide the same valuable training opportunities at this year's conference. In addition, NJSBA will issue an electronic questionnaire shortly to determine the type of training and other programming our members want to see at Workshop 2010.

NJSBA aims to be responsive to our members' needs. We also plan to form an advisory panel of our members and those of Workshop's co-sponsors to help us design the event. NJSBA has not permanently shut the door on Atlantic City. We are leaving open the possibility of holding future years' Workshops in the city.

Let me assure you that those future decisions will be based on our members' training needs and the financial climate in which they must operate.

Sincerely,
Marie S. Bilik
Executive Director

A 'Day on the Hill'



School board members from New Jersey met with U.S. Rep. Rob Andrews during the Federal Relations Network's "Day on the Hill," the annual event that gives local school board members the opportunity to represent the interests of public education before their legislators in Washington, D.C.

From left are Russell Stoddard of Piscataway; Debbie Duffield of Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional; Wayne Marek of Morris Plains; Martha Wilson of Camden; Congressman Rob Andrews; Sharon Seyler, NJSBA legislative coordinator; Michael Grace of Stillwater Township; and Frank Gwalthney of Woodbury.

THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY'S SCHOOLS



NJSBA's Regional Town Hall Meetings

Join us for a live, interactive, open and honest conversation about the state of education in New Jersey. This is your opportunity to participate in public decision making.

Voice your opinion, and hear the responses from NJSBA staff and invited legislative leaders. For your convenience, we're offering two regional opportunities to attend this meeting.

LOCATIONS, DATES & TIMES:

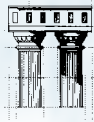
NORTHERN REGION

Harrison High School, Harrison, NJ
Saturday, March 6, 2010
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)

SOUTHERN REGION

Glassboro High School, Glassboro, NJ
Saturday, March 13, 2010
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)

Cost: Free
Academy Credits: 1
Core Area for CBM: Covers all areas



Would you like to ask our panelists a question? E-mail your questions to info@njsba.org. We'll take the best questions and answer them live during the Town Hall Meetings.

Please Note: We will not be serving a continental breakfast. Coffee, tea and water will be provided.

For more information, contact NJSBA's Call Center at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5260.

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/

Cancellation Policy: For possible program cancellations or postponements due to inclement weather, call (609) 392-2000.

Please register me for the following **NJSBA Regional Town Hall Meeting:**

NORTHERN REGION
Saturday, March 6, 2010
Harrison High School, Harrison, NJ
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)

SOUTHERN REGION
Saturday, March 13, 2010
Glassboro High School, Glassboro, NJ
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. (registration 8:30 a.m.)

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

Student Diabetes Law Takes Effect

A law requiring public schools to take measures in ensuring the management of students with diabetes within the school went into effect on Jan. 29.

One requirement of the law, enacted by the state Legislature in October, is that schools maintain an Individual Healthcare Plan as well as an Emergency Healthcare Plan in order to maintain the necessary balance of food, medication and physical activity for each student with diabetes.

The law also requires school nurses to educate all personnel about the signs and symptoms of diabetes so that they may be observed while in the classroom and at other activities throughout the day while in school.

To aid in this requirement, the New Jersey Department of Education has sent a presentation and a DVD supplied by the American Diabetes Association to all schools. The kit is an instructional tutorial for school nurses to use in educating school staff.

According to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, more than 15,000 children in the United States are diagnosed with Type I diabetes each year. Since these children are in the care of public schools for much of the week, it is essential that school district personnel are educated in the signs and symptoms of diabetes.

NJSBA recently updated its model Health Policy, 5141, to meet the new

requirements. The model policy can be found online in the Critical Policy Reference Manual by accessing the “Members Only” area of the Policy page of www.njsba.org.

For more information or to obtain a sample individual health care diabetes plan, contact Lou Schimenti of NJSBA’s Legal and Policy Services Department via e-mail at lschimenti@njsba.org or by calling (609) 278-5271. The state Department of Education also has a resource page on its Web site with additional information, such as frequently asked questions, presentations and quick reference guides. The information can be accessed at www.nj.gov/education/edsupport/diabetes.

Administration Calls for Increase in School Spending, NCLB Changes

The National School Boards Association is supporting the provision in the fiscal 2011 federal education budget that would increase discretionary funding by 7.5 percent, or \$3.5 billion.

U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan spoke about the budget proposal Feb. 1 during an address to school board members at the NSBA’s Federal Relations Network, a grassroots advocacy program where school board members throughout the nation

meet with legislators in Washington, D.C.

Duncan also said the administration seeks to rewrite the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, formerly known as No Child Left Behind, by replacing NCLB’s system of rating schools on student test scores.

“I’ll always give credit to NCLB for exposing the achievement gap and advancing standards-based reform,” Duncan said at the NSBA conference. “But you all know its problems. It has allowed, even encouraged,

states to lower their standards. It’s encouraged teachers to narrow the curriculum. It relies on simplistic tests that don’t accurately measure whether students are learning. It mislabels schools – even when they’re showing progress on important measures.”

Specifically, Duncan said the Department of Education wants to focus on progress in student growth, closing achievement gaps, raising high school graduation rates, and using includes \$173 billion in loans, grants and tax credits to increase the number of students attending college.

The budget includes \$49.7 billion for the Department of Education’s discretionary programs. Most of the \$3.5 billion increase from 2010 would be for competitive grants.

Anne L. Bryant, NSBA executive director, said the proposals are a good start “given the stark economic realities our nation’s schools are facing.” She added, “At the same time, out of concern for the needs of all school districts, we would like to see IDEA and Title I receive increases. It does concern us that the administration is placing such a large focus on competitive grants, which are the core of the additional funding sought by the president.”

Senate Committee Moves Substitute Teacher Bill

The Senate Education Committee on Monday approved a bill that would limit the amount of time that substitutes may serve in the classroom in any one district. The legislation, S-435, would limit the time a substitute can serve to 20 days, with an extension of another 20 days if the education commissioner approves.

NJSBA testified that it saw the need to limit the amount of time that a substitute could serve, but was concerned about preserving flexibility for districts, particularly where there may be unforeseen circumstances, or when the substitute’s assignment becomes longer because of unexpected changes for the teacher on leave. In addition, recruiting a teacher may take longer than expected, particularly for subject areas that are difficult to fill.

NJSBA called for amendments to allow the education commissioner to grant additional extensions under exceptional circumstances. By allowing greater discretion to the 20 school-day rule, districts would still have the ability to deliver quality educational services to students while meeting the challenges of classroom teachers on leave. NJSBA pledged to work with Sen. Shirley Turner, the sponsor of the bill, in crafting amendments to the bill.

The bill was released from committee and has yet to be scheduled for a vote by the full Senate.

CONVENIENT ONE-DAY FORMAT

IS YOUR SALARY GUIDE SUFFERING FROM...

ANALYZING & CONSTRUCTING SALARY GUIDES

February 20, 2010 • RWJ Hamilton Conference Center

9:00 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**. After all, your district's salary guides directly affect your ability to attract, retain and equitably reward staff throughout the guide (not just those at senior steps). This training program is full of hands-on activities to help your board 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

DEVELOPING GUIDES

- Eliminate balloon steps
- Reduce increment costs
- Redirect money on the guide to allow your district to be more competitive in attracting and retaining new teachers
- 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?



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

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



Academy Credits: 4
Core Areas for CBM & MBM: Labor Relations

To register or for more information, call the NJSBA Call Center at (888) 886-5722, ext. 5260, or direct line (609) 278-5260, or complete the coupon below and fax it to (609) 278-5280.

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.

Please register me for **NJSBA's Analyzing and Constructing Salary Guides**, Saturday, February 20, 2010, at the RWJ Hamilton Conference Center. The registration fee includes refreshment breaks, meals and materials.

- Bill Board (P.O. must accompany registration form)* Payment enclosed (Make check payable to NJSBA)
- Member \$207 per person Non-member \$414 per person

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

*In order to register, a purchase order number is required. Please send it with your coupon. Travel directions will be provided when your registration is confirmed.



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School Board Notes is published as a weekly supplement to *School Leader*, the official bimonthly journal of the New Jersey School Boards Association. It is mailed to board members, superintendents and school business administrators of affiliated school boards as part of membership dues. Non-members may purchase annual subscriptions at the following prices: *School Board Notes* – \$55; and *School Leader* – \$50.

School Board Notes is printed on recycled paper using vegetable ink.

February 11, 2010 **Volume XXXIII Number 24**

Tired of Too Much Paper?

Receive *School Board Notes* faster, save money, and give the environment a break by receiving NJSBA's weekly newsletter via e-mail.

The electronic version of *School Board Notes* typically arrives two to three days before the print version. On weeks that *School Board Notes* is not published due to holidays or because of the bi-weekly summer schedule, NJSBA can use the electronic version to update members of any breaking news.

Any school official who wants to opt out of receiving the print version of *School Board Notes* can contact NJSBA's Call Center at (888) 88-NJSBA – or (888) 886-5722, ext. 5296 – and provide an e-mail address for the electronic version of the newsletter.

Board members who prefer the print version of *School Board Notes* will continue to receive it on a regular basis.

C A L E N D A R

Feb. 24

- ▶ Special NJSBA Executive Committee meeting, Doubletree Hotel & Conference Center, Somerset, 3 p.m.
- ▶ Union County School Boards Association (SBA), Westlake School, Westfield (rescheduled) 7 p.m.

Feb. 25

- ▶ Morris County SBA, Madison High School, Madison, 7 p.m.

March 1

- ▶ Gloucester/Camden Counties SBA meeting, Gloucester County Institute of Technology, Sewell, 7 p.m.

March 2

- ▶ Cape May County SBA meeting, Cape May County Technical School, 7 p.m.

March 3

- ▶ NJSBA Executive Committee meeting, NJSBA offices, Ewing, 6 p.m.
- ▶ Middlesex County SBA student recognition meeting, Pines Manor, Edison, 6:30 p.m.
- ▶ Warren County SBA legislative update, Brass Castle Elementary School, Washington, 7 p.m.

March 4

- ▶ Atlantic County SBA meeting, Galloway Middle School, Galloway Township, 6:30 p.m.

March 6

- ✓ NJSBA Regional Town Hall meeting, "The State of School Boards in NJ," Harrison High School, Harrison, 8 a.m.