

SCHOOL BOARD notes

Voters Reject Most School Budgets

For the first time since 1976, New Jersey voters rejected a majority of proposed school budgets. Only 41.3 percent of the 537 proposed budgets received voter approval in yesterday's Annual School Election, according to unofficial results released on Wednesday by NJSBA. That figure compares with a 73.3 percent approval rate last year.

"This has been a year unlike any we've seen before," said Marie S. Bilik, NJSBA executive director. "Local boards of education did their best with the hand they were dealt. The election results should not be viewed as a rejection of public education or school programs. It's clear that voters were reacting to many concerns, including the poor economy and high property taxes."

Local school boards had to develop budgets in the wake of two unexpected and large cuts in state aid, according to Bilik. NJSBA surveys showed that 93 percent of school budgets included staff layoffs, with 85 percent involving cuts to teaching staff. Even with staff and program reductions, many school districts had to propose tax increases to make up for some of the lost aid.

Next Steps Defeated school district budgets will now be reviewed by municipal governing bodies in consultation with the school board. The municipality must reach a decision on the 2010-2011 school tax levy by May 19. The process is a complicated one, influenced by state law and regulation, as well as current levels of taxation and spending, according to Bilik.

"Many school boards and municipal governments will be going through the

review process for the first time," she said. "It's going to be a difficult job, since the budgets presented to voters already reflected layoffs, program cuts and service reductions. That's why communication and cooperation between municipalities and school districts will be crucial over the next few weeks."

Not only did voters decide 537 local school budgets on Tuesday, but they also selected candidates to fill 1,619 school board seats.

"The election results should not be viewed as a rejection of public education or school programs."

Second Questions In addition to the 537 budget questions, six school boards presented voters with second ballot questions to spend above state-imposed tax caps. All six were rejected. The questions requested items that the state may not consider part of a core education, but which the community may feel is important. The combined cost of all six districts' additional ballot budget proposals was \$2,075,048.

Second budget questions were rejected in Medford Lakes (Burlington County); Brielle (Monmouth County); Boonton Township (Morris County); Madison (Morris County); Stanhope (Sussex County); and Sparta Township (Sussex County), which had two questions that

were both rejected.

A 2008 law requires a 60-percent supermajority of participating voters to approve a second ballot question. No other public question in New Jersey, not even a Constitutional amendment, requires approval of a supermajority of voters.

Bond Referendums The April school election is one of five dates that school boards can use to ask voters to approve a school construction question. Seven school boards had bond proposals totaling \$69.9 million for new schools, additions and renovations.

Voters in four of the seven districts with bond referendums approved nearly \$38.26 million in school construction. Unlike second questions, bond referendums require only approval by a simple majority of voters. The districts with construction questions include: Springfield Township in Burlington County – two questions, both rejected; Lawnside in Camden County – approved; Bloomfield in Essex County – approved; North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional in Hunterdon County – rejected; Tewksbury Township in Hunterdon County – approved; Brick Township in Ocean County – rejected; and Union Township in Union County – approved

Non-Monetary Questions Voters in three school districts decided whether to reduce the size of their school board from nine members to seven members. Weymouth Township in Atlantic County rejected the question; Woodlynne in Camden County and High Bridge in Hunterdon County both approved the question.

NJSBA to Task Force: Keep Subcontracting Option Available

School boards must retain the ability to subcontract non-educational services if they choose, NJSBA told the New Jersey Privatization Task Force last week.

“The New Jersey School Boards Association has long been a proponent of giving school boards discretion to privatize services for one simple reason: It saves money for local property taxpayers who, along with the state, support the educational services,” said Barbara Horl, a member of NJSBA’s Government Relations Department, in her testimony April 14 before the New Jersey Privatization Task Force.

“For more than 15 years, NJSBA has successfully resisted legislation that would prohibit subcontracting during the term of the negotiated agreement and, therefore, prevent future privatization by school boards,” she said. “At all times, but in the current economic climate in particular, local school boards need to retain this option.”

NJSBA Fights Bills A bill introduced in the last legislative session, A-4140, would have made it virtually impossible for school districts to pursue privatization. It

was released by the Assembly Education Committee, but never posted for a vote by the full house.

NJSBA has used member surveys to demonstrate to lawmakers the cost savings achieved through privatization. NJSBA’s survey in the fall of 2009 found more than 84 percent of the responding school districts fully subcontract one or more services, such as cafeteria management; buildings and grounds or custodial crews; pupil transportation; business operations or child study teams.

The 238 responding districts reporting cumulative yearly savings ranging from \$34.3 million to \$38.8 million – equivalent to hiring approximately 865 teachers at the average statewide starting salary of \$44,826.

The five-member Privatization Task Force, chaired by former Congressman Dick Zimmer, is slated to issue a report by the end of May. Although the committee’s final public hearing was held recently, the task force established an e-mail address to receive additional input from citizens: NJPrivatization.TaskForce@gov.state.nj.us. 🍌

BUDGET WATCH



NJSBA Testifies at Assembly Budget Hearing

On April 19, NJSBA testified before the Assembly Budget Committee hearing, recommending the Legislature consider several strategies to help local school boards preserve their educational programs, while not overburdening property taxpayers.

Michael Vrancik, director of governmental relations at NJSBA, urged lawmakers to extend the so-called “millionaires’ tax” for one more year. Vrancik urged lawmakers to use a portion of the additional revenue the state would see to restore some of the aid cuts made for the coming school year, giving priority for restored funding to districts whose employees have agreed to a wage freeze or other wage concessions.

Extending the revenue source for one additional year would also allow time for the governor’s proposed negotiations and management tools – aimed at helping boards control costs – to go into effect.

In the complete testimony, which is posted under “What’s New,” on the NJSBA website, the Association discussed the need for school district employees to agree to wage concessions in order to help save jobs and educational programs in districts, and expressed the hope that more districts would attain concessions.

NJSBA also suggested the Legislature consider enacting further pension and benefit reforms, noting that the reform package recently signed into law requires new hires to contribute to post-retirement medical benefits when they retire. “That’s a move in the right direction, but it will not start having an impact for at least 25 to 30 years from now,” stated Vrancik’s testimony. “We need action much sooner.”

In addition, the Association reported to the lawmakers on the extraordinary measures that school boards around the state are taking to deal with the current financial crisis and the cuts in state aid they have seen. According to an NJSBA survey, more than 92 percent of districts are proposing layoffs in their 2010-2011 budgets, while a majority of districts are also making program cuts and cutbacks in extracurricular activities.

Galloway Township Honors NJSBA’s Kershner

Jane Kershner, NJSBA Field Services Director, was recently honored by the Galloway Township Education Foundation as that organization’s 2010 Government Advocate for Education.

Kershner, who has been with NJSBA for more than 14 years, was the field service representative for Galloway Township for several years. In nominating Kershner, the district noted some of her significant contributions to the district over the years, including her assistance in setting up a “key communicators” program, guiding the district in its successful effort to pass a referendum, assisting in a superintendent search, and conducting annual training for the board. “Through her work and her life, Jane is a true advocate for education and has proven it through her involvement with our district,” read a proclamation from Galloway Township.

Pictured from left are Jane Kershner and Vicki Hood, who represents Galloway Township on the Greater Egg Harbor Regional School Board.





The New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA), in partnership with the New Jersey Parent Teacher Association (NJPTA), presents:

The NJSBA and NJPTA Legislative Event

Now, more than ever, you are needed in Trenton to advocate on behalf of your public school district. Get started by networking with legislators and members of the NJPTA. You may even have an opportunity to interact with your NJPTA counterpart from your own district!

The day will include a panel discussion, lunch and visits with legislators. More information is coming soon.

Thursday, May 13, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (Registration and coffee begins at 9:15 a.m.)
War Memorial Building*, Trenton

This opportunity is free to members, but pre-registration is required by May 11. For more information, contact Sharon Seyler at (609) 278-5282 or e-mail sseyler@njsba.org.

*Parking is available in the Marriott Garage adjacent to the building.

NAME: _____ TITLE: _____
DISTRICT: _____ COUNTY: _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE: (h) _____ (b) _____
FAX: _____ E-MAIL: _____

Please fax the registration form to (609) 278-5280.

Officer Application Guidelines for NJSBA Vice President of Finance

School board members interested in serving as Vice President for Finance for 2010-2012 can find an application under the “What’s New” section at www.njsba.org. Applications must be received at NJSBA headquarters via certified mail by 5 p.m. on April 28. The Nominating Committee will conduct interviews on Friday, April 30 at approximately 6 p.m. at a location to be determined.

The Vice President for Finance will:

- Serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee;
- Cause to be kept an account of all Association moneys received and disbursed;
- Cause to be made and published an annual audit of the Association’s accounts and financial records;
- Render a detailed report of the financial condition of the Association at each annual meeting of the delegates;
- Sign and issue all checks covered by vouchers pursuant to the bylaws;
- Serve as a member of the Audit Committee;
- Serve as an ex-officio member of the School Finance Committee, as specified in Article X, Section 9 of the *Bylaws*;
- Be bonded by the Association on such amount as shall be approved by the Board of Directors;
- Participate at Workshop as assigned;
- Work as a team member and share responsibilities of the Executive Committee;
- Provide leadership and vision for the Association;
- Attend and give greetings at county school boards association meetings and dinners as assigned;
- Testify before legislative committees when asked;
- Evaluate the executive director;
- Attend NJSBA/NSBA functions, including: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings, Delegate Assemblies, Annual Workshop, Annual Legislative Conference, New Board Member Orientation Conferences, NJSBA Leadership Conference, NJASA/NJSBA Annual Spring Conference, NSBA Leadership Conference, NSBA Federal Relations Network, NSBA Annual Conference, and the NSBA Northeast Region Meeting; and
- Perform other duties as may be prescribed in the bylaws or assigned by the president.



Candidates Seek Positions

In accordance with Article VII, Sections 5 & 6 of the Bylaws of the New Jersey School Boards Association, a proposed slate of officers selected by the Nominating Committee, as well as candidates nominated by petition, will be presented to the delegates for their vote at the annual meeting on May 15, 2010.

According to guidelines set by the Board of Directors, candidates

for NJSBA officer positions, selected by the Nominating Committee or nominated by petition, are to receive publicity in this special section of *School Board Notes*. All information is provided by the candidates.

The Nominating Committee has selected the following school board members for election by the delegates to serve as NJSBA officers during 2010-2012: *President*— Raymond R. Wiss, Northern Valley Regional,

Raymond R. Wiss, *President* Selected by Nominating Committee



I am privileged to receive the endorsement of the Nominating Committee to be NJSBA's next president. While prior experience is important in determining who should lead our Association, even more critical is the ability of our

next president to provide leadership and articulate our aspirations for public education and the children we represent.

As evidenced by devastating reductions in state aid, public education is being directly impacted by events which are reshaping the educational landscape. NJSBA must proactively speak with a unified voice, as the only organization whose singular purpose is to advocate for our children and public education. We should endorse those systemic changes that promote the greater good, while vigorously opposing those changes that compromise quality education.

I believe that my (1) extensive involvement in board activities during the past two decades; (2) educational/personal background, including my tenure as mayor; and (3) professional experience as an attorney and advocate, uniquely provide me with the qualifications to effectively serve as our next president and to advance the interests of our children and public education in these challenging times.

I look forward to working with you on these critical matters, and welcome your support at the May 15th Delegate Assembly.

Local Board Activities:

- Northern Valley Regional BOE (2001 – Present); past president and vice president;
- Negotiations Chairman; member, Personnel, Curriculum and Technology committees
- Old Tappan Board of Education (1988 – 1995); board president (1988-1995)

County Activities:

- Bergen County SBA Executive Committee (since 2002)
- BCSBA Executive Committee, member (1991-1995)
- Recipient 2007 Archie F. Hay Award for Distinguished Service

NJSBA Activities:

- Board of Directors (2007 – Present)
- Headquarters Redevelopment Committee (2009 – Present), chairman
- Ad Hoc Facilities Committee, chairman

- Construction Review Committee, chairman
- Group leader at NJSBA Orientation, Advanced and Leadership Training Sessions presenter at NJSBA Workshops, including programs on board/municipal cooperation, passing budgets, and passing referenda

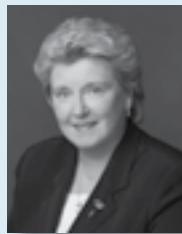
Education:

- J.D., Seton Hall University School of Law
- B.A. in Political Science, Rutgers University, Henry Rutgers Scholar (thesis on New Jersey Legislative Effectiveness at State Senate and State Assembly Level)

Employment/Community Affairs

- Managing member Wiss & Bouregy, P.C., attorneys at law
- Former mayor, Borough of Old Tappan (1996-2000)
- Active in many local volunteer and charitable organizations and undertakings

Eva M. Nagy, *President* Nominated by Petition



Public education is facing a serious crisis. We are under serious challenges while preparing our students for the 21st Century for a competitive worldwide economy. While many of our enrollments and services are growing, our funding is disappearing. Our govern-

ance structure and boards are being challenged and in some cases, forced to change. Even NJSBA is under attack! It is most imperative that NJSBA be in the forefront protecting and advocating for public education as the strong voice and recognized leader for New Jersey's children and their education.

NJSBA needs an experienced officer as president who will be able to lead, anticipate and recognize the demands and changes that are at our very doorstep. NJSBA needs a president who has extensive leadership experience and is a recognized leader in the state and national levels. This is not the time to have an inexperienced executive team leading NJSBA. A strong, experienced and consistent leadership team is needed to help steer NJSBA successfully through these challenging times and transitions.

I offer to be at the forefront as president, a visible presence, leading NJSBA and my fellow board members to be strong and steadfast in this time of major and sweeping changes and challenges.

Local Board Activities

- Franklin Twp. BOE, 17 years; president, 14 years
- Ex-officio: Curriculum, Personnel (chair), Facilities,

Policy and Negotiations committees

- District of 8,000 + students, 9 schools with \$136.6 million budget
- Legislative liaison
- Design, planning, construction and opening of new 2000-student high school
- Hunterdon County Ed Services Board representing Franklin BOE
- Ex-officio of BOE Ad Hoc Committees: Special Ed, Charter School, Technology, Enrollment Growth, Advisory Task Force-School Athletics, Uniforms, RFP Process, BOE Meeting Optimization Review
- NJSBA Delegate, 15 years
- NJSBA Certified Board

County Activities

- Somerset Co. SBA, president, 2 years; vice president, 1 year; delegate, 2 years
- County Alliance of Educational Associations, convener
- County Professional Development Board, chairperson, 8 years
- Somerset County Governor's Teacher Recognition Committee

NJSBA Activities

- Vice President for Legislation/Resolutions, Executive Committee, 4 years
- Executive Committee, 4 years
- Legislative Committee and Resolutions and Emergency Resolutions Subcommittees, chair, 4 years
- Construction/Renovations Review Task Forces, 4 years
- Liaison to Urban Boards, 3 years; member, 3 years
- Executive Director Search Committee
- Board of Directors, 8 years, alternate, 4 years
- Ad Hoc Committee on Board Member Recognition, chair
- Workshop Coordinating Committee, chair, 3 years
- Committees: Standards & Assessment, Nominating, Legislative (alternate)
- NJQSAC Transition Working Group
- New Jersey School Boards Insurance Group, member and vice chair
- Participant in panels on violence, assessment and legislation
- Master Board Member

NSBA Activities

- NSBA National Delegate Meeting, delegate
- Nominating Committee & Credential Committee
- Northeast Regional Delegate Meeting, delegate
- Northeast Regional Nominating Committee
- Federal Relations Network conference participant, 5 years

as NJSBA Officers

Bergen County; *Vice President for County Activities* – Charles T. Miller, East Amwell, Hunterdon County; *Vice President for Legislation/Resolutions* – John Bulina, Tabernacle Township, Burlington County.

NJSBA *Bylaws* also provide a process for candidates to be nominated by petition. The following candidate has submitted a petition that qualifies her for nomination to the following office: *President*—Eva M. Nagy,

Franklin Township, Somerset.

Nominations from the floor are also accepted at the Annual Meeting (Bylaws Article VII, Section 7).

NJSBA is seeking new candidates for the office of Vice President of Finance. The Nominating Committee's candidate was not reelected to his local school board on April 20 and is ineligible to serve. See page 3 for details.

- NSBA Workshop Presenter (Formulas for Success—Prevention of Student Violence)

Education

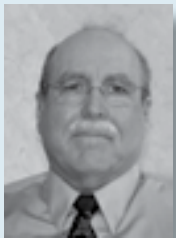
- B.A., The College of New Jersey
- Certificate, Secondary Teacher of Social Studies

Employment/Community Activities

- Chamber of Commerce, Board of Directors
- Franklin Foundation For Educational Excellence, Board of Trustees & founder
- Dr. M.L. King Community Breakfast Committee (providing scholarships), founder
- Municipal Alliance Against Drug & Alcohol Abuse Youth Service Commission
- Franklin Advisory Board – Raritan Valley Community, member

Charles T. Miller,

Vice President for County Activities



I think that the New Jersey School Boards Association and New Jersey education face many challenges over the next couple of years. I believe that my experience as a board member and business person, along with my personal training, can be useful in meeting these challenges.

I see the county organizations as being positioned to play a vital role in supporting the local districts, being a conduit for information and education for board members, supporting advocacy efforts at the local, state and national level, and supporting efforts to communicate with the local stakeholders in education. I would like to be in a position to help provide leadership and direction in these efforts.

Local Board Activities:

- East Amwell BOE, 21 years
- President of board, 17 years
- NJSBA delegate

County Activities:

- Hunterdon County SBA Board of Directors, 12 years; president, 2 years
- Hunterdon County Board Member of the Year
- Recipient, Maud Dahme Award, 2009
- Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission, Representative Assembly and Board of Directors, 17 years; president, 6 years

NJSBA Activities:

- Delegate Assembly representative
- Group leader for New Board Member Orientation,

Advanced Boardmanship, and Leadership training sessions.

- Presenter at several conferences.

Education:

- B.A., Speech and Theater, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas
- M.A., Speech and Theater, Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas; postgraduate study, 4 years, Educational Theater, New York University, NYC

Employment/Community Activities

- As a trained theater technician/designer/arts administrator I have worked in New York City and New Jersey as a set and lighting designer.
- Coordinator of the Performing Arts Center, Brookdale Community College, 8 years
- Director of the Theatre at Raritan Valley Community College, 12 years
- Artists' agent/manager with VNI Artists, 5 years
- Arts consultant and programmer at the Community Theatre in Morristown, 9 years.
- Manage the art gallery at the theater
- Have served on several arts organization boards as well as on the State Teen Arts Board of Directors.
- Currently working to become an art photographer; have shown in numerous exhibits in north and central New Jersey

John Bulina,

Vice President for Legislation/Resolutions



"These are the times that try men's souls." These words, written by Thomas Paine in 1776, might have been written about the tumultuous events in New Jersey in 2010. Today more than ever New Jersey needs a strong voice in Trenton to speak for those without a voice, our

students! With all the legislative changes and proposed changes in Trenton, it is imperative that our legislators keep the education of our students paramount, while maintaining their fiscal responsibilities to the taxpayers of New Jersey. The leadership skills that I have demonstrated at the local, county, state and national levels will allow me to be part of a strong, effective team to guide NJSBA in advocating for all of New Jersey's children. I am honored and humbled to be nominated by the Nominating Committee for the position of Vice President of Legislation/Resolutions.

Local Board Activities:

- Tabernacle Twp. BOE, 21 years; president, 4 years; vice president, 5 years
- Committees: Personnel, Finance, Budget, Strategic Planning, Negotiations, Community Relations, Education, Transportation, Buildings & Grounds, Shared Services, Technology—chaired numerous committees
- Delegate, NJSBA and Burlington Co. SBA
- Testified before the N.J. Legislature's Education Committee

County Activities

- Burlington SBA, vice president for legislation, 1 year; executive vice president, 3 years
- Vice chair, Burlington Co. EMTC
- Burlington County Regionalization/Consolidation Task Force
- Board Member of the Year, 2006-2007

NJSBA Activities

- Vice President for Finance, 4 years
- Representative to Developing Safe and Civil Schools Initiative (K-12) (Higher Ed)
- Standards and Assessment Committee, Chair; Ad-Hoc Committee for Long Range Planning & Focus Group Facilitator
- Representative to NJSIAA
- Workshop presenter
- Group leader, New Board Member Orientation, Leadership, Parliamentary Procedure
- Master Board Member

NSBA Activities

- Federal Relations Network participant
- Northeast Region Leadership Meeting participant
- Northeast Region Nominating Committee, 4 years
- Leadership Conference participant
- NSBA Delegate Assembly, delegate
- National Nominating Committee

Education

- B.S., State University of New York, Oswego
- M.A.T.L., ED., Nova Southeastern University

Employment/Community Activities

- Technology Education Teacher (retired), Haddon Township
- Senior Adjunct Professor, Burlington Co. College
- Professional ski instructor, PSIA—Mountain Creek, NJ
- Soccer Coach: Tabernacle A.A., JCC Maccabi Games, S.J. Girls Select Soccer—Technical Director, N.J. Olympic Development Program—State Coach
- St. Nicholas Parish



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SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

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**Teen Drivers, School Construction
 Featured in *School Leader***



A teenager's most dangerous time behind the wheel is the first 18 to 24 months he or she has a driver's license. But the state Division of Highway Traffic Safety is working to reduce that risk by partnering with some school districts to bring innovative programs to new drivers. The March/April issue of *School Leader* explores these initiatives.

The magazine also features a special section on school construction, with articles on what districts should consider before starting a building program; the New Jersey Clean Energy Program; and Neptune Township's Summerfield Elementary School, the state's first school to earn the gold level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) award.

School Leader is mailed to members six times a year; the contents are also posted at www.njsba.org/school-leader.

C A L E N D A R

May 10

- ▶ Passaic County School Boards Association (SBA) Spring Meeting, Wanaque Elementary School media center, Wanaque, 6:30 p.m.

May 11

- ▶ Cape May County SBA Spring Meeting, Cape May County Vocational Technical School Café, Cape May, 6:30 p.m.

May 12

- ▶ Learn@Lunch: "Online Student Registration," online, <http://www.njsba.org/learnatlunch>, scroll down to May 12, click on the link to register for the program, 12 – 12:45 p.m.
- ▶ Union County SBA Student Recognition Program, David Brearley High School, Kenilworth, 6:30 p.m.

▶ Denotes pre-registration required

May 13

- ▶ NJSBA and New Jersey Parent Teacher Association (NJPTA) Legislative Event, War Memorial building, Trenton, 10 a.m.
- ▶ Atlantic County SBA, Spring Meeting, Egg Harbor Township-Alder Avenue Middle School conference room, Egg Harbor Township, 6:30 p.m.
- ▶ Morris County SBA, Spring Meeting, Memorial Junior School, Whippany, 6:30 p.m.

May 14

- ▶ NJSBA Audit Committee, Wyndham Conference Center, Plainsboro, Noon
- ▶ NJSBA Board of Directors meeting, Wyndham Conference Center, Plainsboro, 6:30 p.m.

May 15

- ▶ NJSBA Delegate Assembly meeting, Wyndham Conference Center, Plainsboro, 8:30 a.m.