



2024-2025 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AGENDA AND ACTION PLAN

NJSBA Bylaws state that the Association shall adopt positions consistent with its policy; encourage, promote and assist in the development of local, county, and statewide legislative networks; testify at meetings or hearings of the state Legislature and state Board of Education, and initiate policy recommendations for consideration by the Board of Directors.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- Advocate for policies that will close student achievement gaps and accelerate learning through intensive support, such as high impact tutoring and professional development for educators.
- Promote multiple pathways for post-secondary success for all students in both life and career, including the expansion of vocational programs in comprehensive schools.

SCHOOL FUNDING & FINANCE

- Advocate for full funding of the state's school finance formula (SFRA) to meet the needs of all students in a manner that is consistent, equitable, reliable, and sustainable.
- Mitigate the adverse impact on school districts experiencing reductions in state aid due to ensure all students continue to receive a thorough and efficient education.
- Push for a comprehensive review and study of the funding formula that facilitates public input and will result in findings and recommendations for improvement to the state's system of financing public education.
- Promote property tax levy cap flexibility to enable school districts to reach their local fair share, as determined by the funding formula, particularly for districts experiencing reductions in state aid.
- Increase state financial support for costs that are largely outside the control of boards of education, such as special education, pupil transportation, and health care.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Increase Extraordinary Special Education Aid, to fulfill the State's commitment to reimburse 100% of eligible costs.
- Increase federal support for special education by fully funding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

STAFFING & LABOR RELATIONS

- Combat the public-school staffing shortage crisis without sacrificing quality, including, but not limited to:
 - Enhancing the pipeline of qualified educators and highlighting the positive aspects of serving as a teacher or support professional.
 - Eliminate the state residency requirement (i.e., “NJ First Act”) for public school employees.
 - Strengthen teacher certification reciprocity between New Jersey and other states.
- Promote policies that will increase the diversity of the teaching workforce.
- Alleviate bus driver shortage through licensing flexibility without diminishing the safety of pupils.
- Oppose and mobilize against efforts to intrude into collective bargaining and local governance, including decisions regarding personnel and employee benefits.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Advocate for universal free school meals fully funded by the state and/or federal government.
- Counter the effects of social media and internet usage on student mental and behavioral health.
- Expand district capacity to develop and implement high-quality mental health supports, including supporting efforts that will expand the pipeline of qualified mental health professionals to provide school-based services.
- Preserve and expand high-quality school-based youth services programs.
- Promote social-emotional learning programs and improvements to the overall school climate.

FACILITIES AND CONSTRUCTION

- Advocate for state funding and reforms that will assist districts in modernizing aging school infrastructure.

Note: In all our endeavors, it’s explicit that we advocate for funding for all mandates.