

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
TRENTON, NJ**

May 2, 2025
7 p.m.

A regular meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association Board of Directors was held in-person and virtually on Friday, May 2, 2025. President Dr. Karen Cortellino presided over the meeting from the Association's headquarters in Trenton. Immediate Past President Irene M. LeFebvre and Vice Presidents Barry Fitzgerald, Dr. Tom Connors and Chanta L. Jackson were also present at headquarters. Executive Director Timothy J. Purnell provided his report to the board from headquarters.

Executive Committee members present were Dr. Karen Cortellino, president; Barry Fitzgerald, vice president for county activities; Dr. Tom Connors, vice president for finance; Chanta L. Jackson, vice president for legislation/resolutions; Irene LeFebvre, immediate past president, and Dr. Timothy Purnell, executive director.

Association staff present were Dr. Nicholas Diaz, deputy director; Carl Tanksley, Esq., general counsel; Lori Perlow, interim chief public affairs officer; Gwen Thornton, senior director of content; Lauren Cuervo, senior director of connection; Jonathan Pushman, senior director of advocacy; John Faford, director of finance and operations; Ray Pinney, chief membership engagement officer; Robert Acerra, county activities coordinator; Najah Haskins, county activities coordinator; Kathleen Asher, director of legal and labor relations; Brian Green, network administrator; and Samantha Matias, special projects assistant.

The following members and alternates of the Board of Directors were present:

Atlantic	Louis Della Barca	Cape May	Not Represented
Bergen	Michael Sprague	Cumberland	Not Represented
	Behrooz Pasdar (Alt.)	Essex	Benjamin Morse
Burlington	Michael McClure	Gloucester	Dr. Rena' Morrow
	Carlye Lamarca (Alt.)		Crystal Greene (Alt.)
Camden	Karen Sorbello	Hudson	Not Represented

Hunterdon	Robert Imhoff	Warren	Jaclyn Rowbotham (Alt.)
Mercer	Dana Krug		
	Addie Daniels-Lane (Alt.)	County	Michael Jacobs
Middlesex	Liwu Hong	Association	Tammeisha Smith (Alt.)
Monmouth	Kathy Winecoff	Leadership	
Morris	Diane Morris	Urban Boards	Marsha Hershman (Alt.)
	Joseph Daughtry (Alt.)		Cynthia Atkins (Alt.)
Ocean	Victoria Pakala (Alt.)		Diane Johnson
Passaic	Not Represented	Vocational	Jon-Henry Barr
Salem	Not Represented		Ruth Hands (Alt.)
Somerset	Barry Walker		
	Jean Trujillo (Alt.)		
Sussex	Ronald Hoffman (Alt.)		
Union	Brendan Galligan		

ROLL CALL - President Cortellino called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. A roll call indicated 5 officers, county association leadership, urban boards, vocational boards and 16 counties were represented. Those present constituted a quorum.

NON-BOARD MEMBERS: The following non-board members were also present at the meeting: Lisa Focaccia, Elizabeth Fiore, Anna Braun, Jennifer Tevis, and Renee Cherfane.

FLAG SALUTE - President Cortellino led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE – President Cortellino asked for a moment of silence to honor and give thanks to the boards of education and board of education members receiving their NJSBA board member academy certifications and service awards this past school year. And to all of New Jersey’s school board members who serve long hours with passion and dedication to advance the achievement of all students in the state.

MISSION STATEMENT - President Cortellino led the members in reciting the Association’s Mission Statement.

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comments.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT - Dr. Purnell addressed NJSBA activities, and the progress made in enabling school districts to meet the challenges presented to them ensuring that members continue to benefit from essential training, advocacy, and direct service.

Spring Training Programs – NJSBA’s annual School Public Relations Forum was held on April 4 at NJSBA headquarters in Trenton. The theme was “Communication, Collaboration, and AI for a Stronger Future” and was sponsored by Porzio, Bromberg & Newman, P.C. The forum provided school leaders with timely and practical strategies for enhancing communication within public schools.

NJSBA’s inaugural Equity Expo was held on April 11 at Mercer County Community College and was a success.

NJSBA's Virtual Spring Conference: Fulfilling the Promise of Public Education will be held on Friday, May 30 and will offer concurrent training sessions featuring the most requested topics and popular sessions from Workshop 2024.

NJSBA is also introducing a brand-new event, the inaugural AI Conference: Preparing for Today and Tomorrow scheduled for Friday, June 6 at the Conference Center at Mercer. The conference will explore the rapidly evolving world of artificial intelligence and its increasing relevance to education.

The Spring School Law Forum will take place on Thursday, June 26 at the Double Tree By Hilton in Monroe Township.

Special Education Week - The winners of the Innovations in Special Education Awards were notified. This year, three programs were recognized for helping special education students achieve their full potential. The honorees included two programs from public school districts and one private school:

- Lebanon Township – Caught Being Kind
- South Bergen Jointure Commission – Yoga and Mindfulness Program
- The Center for Education (Lakewood) – Agricultural Training Program

NJSBA Financial Update – Workshop 2024 exceeded its budgeted profit by \$653,000. The strong performance demonstrates the value of the conference. The Women's Leadership Conference generated over \$44,000 in revenues compared to the budget of \$14,900 indicating strong interest and support for this event. NJSBA is currently maintaining a strong cash position with a balance of \$10.9 million at the end of March with favorable investment rates that should enable the Association to double investment income by the end of the fiscal year.

Workshop 2025 - NJSBA announced the keynote speaker for Workshop 2025. World champion quarterback, accomplished broadcaster, and successful entrepreneur, Joe Theismann will be taking the stage on Wednesday, October 22 in the Keynote Theater at the Atlantic City Convention Center. Joe is the former star quarterback for the Washington Redskins. Most recently, he spent the last 2 decades working for ESPN and the NFL Network as an NFL analyst. There is incredible momentum with district registration for Workshop 2025 with a 59% increase in registrations as compared to this time last year. Exhibit sales are also very strong with nearly

70% of the exhibit floor already sold. NJSBA was recently recognized as one of Trade Show Executive magazine's "Next Fastest 50" for being one of the top 100 shows for exhibitor growth.

Executive Director's Goals 2024-2025 - Dr. Purnell provided the Board of Directors with an update on the three goals that he set for himself and the Association revolving around content, connection, and advocacy.

- Content – Revamp Governance II training curriculum

Gwen Thornton discussed the changes that were made to Gov II. The changes will roll out beginning in September.

- Connection – Launch new and improved NJSBA *Connections* platform

Ray Pinney and Rob Acerra provided the board with an overview and demo of the updates made to the *Connections* platform.

- Advocacy – Issue quarterly NJSBA *Capitol Watch* newsletters

The NJSBA *Capitol Watch* Newsletter was launched and sent directly to members. The newsletter will provide concise summaries of pending bills, updates on their progress and NJSBA's official positions to keep members informed about key legislative developments.

The Board was also provided with the Executive Director's goals for 2025-2026.

- Content – Revamp New Board Member Orientation Governance 1 online curricula
- Connection – Examine the NJSBA Urban Boards Committee to ensure that it is operating to best serve its members
- Advocacy – NJSBA will survey effectiveness and evaluate quarterly NJSBA *Capitol Watch* newsletters

Delegate Assembly - The Delegate Assembly will take place on Saturday, May 10 at the Conference Center at Mercer County Community College. Members will be voting on new NJSBA officers and considering three resolutions.

ACTION ITEMS

Roll Call Agenda Items:

Consent Agenda Items:

President Cortellino asked for a motion to approve the following consent agenda items:

- A. Open Session Minutes of the March 28, 2025 Meeting
- B. Legislative Committee Appointments

Barry Walker moved to APPROVE the consent agenda items. The motion was duly seconded and carried.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT AND OFFICERS

The Board of Directors also received both written and verbal reports from the president, vice president for county activities, vice president for finance, vice president for legislation and immediate past president.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS – No new business.

SUMMARY

President Cortellino reminded members they will receive “take-away” points from this meeting, which can be used in making reports to the county associations.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, *VP Connors moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy J. Purnell, Ed.D.
Executive Director