

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

September 19, 2025

7 p.m.

A regular meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association Board of Directors was held virtually on Friday, September 19, 2025. President Tammeisha D. Smith presided over the meeting virtually. Immediate Past President Dr. Karen Cortellino and Vice Presidents Barry Walker and Dr. Tom Connors also participated virtually. Executive Director Timothy J. Purnell provided his report to the board from headquarters.

Executive Committee members present were Tammeisha D. Smith, president; Barry Walker, vice president for county activities; Dr. Tom Connors, vice president for finance; Dr. Karen Cortellino, immediate past president, and Dr. Timothy Purnell, executive director.

Association staff present were Dr. Nicholas Diaz, deputy director; Carl Tanksley, Esq., general counsel; 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; Michael Kvidahl, quality controls; 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	Hudson	Not Represented
Bergen	Michael Sprague	Hunterdon	Robert Imhoff
	Behrooz Pasdar (Alt.)		Elizabeth Fiore (Alt.)
Burlington	Carlye Lamarca (Alt.)	Mercer	Addie Daniels-Lane (Alt.)
Camden	Not Represented	Middlesex	Liwu Hong
Cape May	Not Represented	Monmouth	Kenneth Cook (Alt.)
Cumberland	Cedric Holmes	Morris	Diane Morris
Essex	Benjamin Morse		Irene LeFebvre (Alt.)
	Kasey Dudley (Alt.)	Ocean	Victoria Pakala
Gloucester	Not Represented		Dana Weber (Alt.)

Passaic	Alan Paris	Leadership	
	Maryann Capursi (Alt.)	Urban Boards	Rita Martin
Salem	Not Represented		Marsha Hershman (Alt.)
Somerset	Jean Trujillo		Cynthia Atkins (Alt.)
	Jennifer Agugliaro (Alt.)		Diane Johnson
Sussex	Ronald Hoffman	Vocational	Jon-Henry Barr
	Kaitlin Gagnon (Alt.)		Ruth Hands (Alt.)
Union	William Hulse		
Warren	Jaclyn Rowbotham (Alt.)		
County	Michael Jacobs		
Association			

ROLL CALL - President Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call indicated 4 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: Barry Fitzgerald, Michele Leach, Prashant Patel, Divon Pender, and Nickolas Moustakas.

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE – President Smith asked for a moment of silence for all those who suffer from violence of any kind and to hope for a more tolerant and peaceful society.

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

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comments.

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING AND NEW MEMBERS - The following retiring members were recognized for their service to the New Jersey School Boards Association and the students of New Jersey: Nickolas Moustakas, alternate for Hunterdon County, Mark Patterson, alternate for Monmouth County, Joseph Daugherty, alternate for Morris County, Valdo Panzera Jr., alternate for Passaic County, Timothy Hack, alternate for Salem County, J. Brendan Galligan, member for Union County, Dr. Brittany Kirkland, alternate for Union County

The following new members and alternates and re-elected members and alternates were introduced.

New Members:

- Hunterdon County Alternate - Elizabeth Fiore, Readington Board of Education
- Monmouth County Alternate - Kenneth Cook, Keansburg Board of Education
- Morris County Alternate - Irene LeFebvre, Boonton Town Board of Education
- Ocean County Alternate - Dana Weber, Island Heights Board of Education
- Passaic County Alternate - Maryann Capursi, Passaic City Board of Education
- Salem County Alternate - John Ashcraft, Penns Grove-Carneys Point Board of Education

- Somerset County Alternate - Jennifer Agugliaro, Watchung Board of Education
- Sussex County Alternate - Kaitlin Gagnon, Sparta Township Board of Education
- Union County Member - William Hulse, Cranford Board of Education
- Union County Alternate - Dixiana Carbonell, Union Township Board of Education

Re-elected Members:

- Morris County Member - Diane Morris
- Ocean County - Victoria Pakala (elected to member from alternate position)
- Salem County Member - Eileen Miller
- Somerset County - Jean Trujillo (elected to member from alternate position)
- Sussex County - Ronald Hoffman (elected to member from alternate position)

OATH OF OFFICE – As it was the NJSBA Board of Directors re-organization meeting the annual oath of office was administered to all members in attendance.

CODE OF CONDUCT – President Smith reviewed the requirement of NJSBA’s Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policies. The Conflict of Interest and Code of Conduct policies ensure the avoidance of actual or potential conflicts, or the appearance of a conflict of interest in any action involving an Association contractor, consultant, or vendor with which the member has a personal interest, or a direct or indirect financial interest.

Accordingly, NJSBA requires each member to review these policies and fill out the conflict of interest questionnaire (GO/8250E) annually. Members will be emailed a form, GO/8250E, including Board of Directors Code of Conduct and the Board of Directors Conflict of Interest Certification, as well as copies of the relevant policies and regulation (GO/8250, GO/8312 and GO/8318R). Members were asked to complete the form and return it to NJSBA. The statement certifies that the NJSBA Executive Committee and Board of Director members have received, have read and will adhere to the Board of Directors Code of Conduct.

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.

NJSBA Financial Update - NJSBA’s financial performance for the new year has started strong. Dues collection is on target; 86% of dues have been collected for the fiscal year and payments continue to arrive regularly.

Each summer NJSBA's auditors conduct a thorough review of the Association's finances for the fiscal year that ends June 30. The auditors have completed their work, and the draft audit report was presented to the NJSBA Audit Committee. The auditors issued an unmodified or "clean" opinion of NJSBA's financial statements. The Board of Directors will receive the final audit report and will vote on it at the November 14 meeting.

NJSBA HR Updates – NJSBA recently welcomed the following new employees:

- Angele Hughes – Senior Executive Assistant to the CEO/ED
- Anil Madan – Web Programmer Analyst
- Catherine Pouria – Field Service Representative
- Laura Geltch – Associate Director, Marketing
- Paul Pineiro – Field Service Representative

The following NJSBA employees have been promoted:

- Lauren Liu – Executive Assistant/Legal Researcher
- Kathy Whalen – Director of Legal
- John Burns – Senior Legislative and Policy Counsel
- Lani Perruso – Acting Director of HR

NJSBA is working with the following consultants:

- Lois Levine – School Leader Writer/Editor
- Laura Bishop – Media Inquires
- Kimberley Harrington Markus – Coaching Consultant
- Larry Cocco – EdTech Consultant

Workshop 2025 - Workshop will feature over 200 training sessions, as well as an expansive exhibit floor, student performances and special events. The full agenda can be found on the NJSBA Workshop website as well as on the mobile app. The mobile app is available for download in the Apple and Google Play store by searching NJSBA Workshop 2025. Some new features for this year's conference as a result of member feedback include later session start times on Monday, more lunch options including food trucks, closed captioning and -more seating for keynote theater events, more interactive features in the Midway, bingo, more dedicated time on the exhibit floor, larger rooms for popular sessions, and jitneys running through the end of the School Law Forum.

County Association Leadership – Dr. Purnell attended the County Association Leadership meeting this past Saturday. Almost every county was represented. The meeting topic was “What can we do to help increase member’s participation in county meetings?” Some of the suggestions included:

- Have the county officers go to local district board meetings to encourage participation.
- Have an officer who is charged with membership engagement.
- Involve more members besides the officers in the planning meeting discussion.
- Leave time at the end of the meeting for networking.

NJSBA LEAD - To support the leadership growth of New Jersey’s school board presidents and vice presidents, NJSBA is proud to offer NJSBA LEAD: Leadership Excellence and Development – an executive coaching program. This new fee-based program offers one-on-one and group coaching opportunities to help bolster key leadership skills, including decision-making, effective communication, conflict resolution, fostering a collaborative environment, and more. Many leaders step into these roles without formal training—this program fills that gap with professional coaching tailored to the unique challenges of school board governance. Participants in NJSBA LEAD will be coached by Dr. Kimberley Harrington Markus, ICF-certified coach and former NJ Commissioner of Education.

Facilities Update - NJSBA plans to renovate the first-floor conference room at headquarters. The RFP Notice for the renovations was published on July 25, and packets were emailed to prospective bidders beginning the week of July 28. Twelve inquiries were received from general contractors who expressed interest in the RFP notice and requested all necessary documents. A pre-bid meeting was held August 5, which included the architect, Alfredo Trevino Architects. An alternate collapsible wall door was suggested. Due to the Addendum proposed for an alternate door and a few questions from bidders, the opening of bids date was moved from August 26 to September 3 and then to September 10 in order to allow for proper notification to all prospective bidders. The bid opening was successfully completed on September 10 with two responsive bids being filed, one by Global Connections Contractors Inc., and the other by Scozzari Builders Inc., both based in Trenton. Immediately following the bid opening, NJSBA received a letter from Scozzari protesting certain technical aspects of the response from Global Construction. General Counsel Carl Tanksley is reviewing, while Charles Muller and Bill Cobb evaluate both bids for compliance.

ACTION ITEMS

Roll Call Agenda Items:

President Smith asked for a motion to approve the extension of payment of dues for BOD Members' boards until the November 14, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.

Background: As of September 19, there are five (5) Board of Directors members who are members of a board of education from which NJSBA has not yet received the 2025-2026 dues. NJSBA has received purchase orders or verbal commitments from these districts that the dues payments have been or will shortly be processed. However, the NJSBA Bylaws require that the Board of Directors vote to extend the timeline since the payment has not yet been received.

Diane Morris moved to APPROVE the extension of payment of dues for a BOD Members' board until the Nov. 14, 2025 Board of Directors meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 21 members voting in the affirmative. The following member abstained from voting: Addie Lane.

President Smith asked for a motion to approve the appropriation of \$200,000, from the free balance account, for future facility upgrades.

Lou Della Barca moved to APPROVE the appropriation of \$200,000, from the free balance account, for future facility upgrades. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 22 members voting in the affirmative.

President Smith asked for a motion to approve the award of contract to Suplee, Clooney & Company, LLC to perform an audit of NJSBA financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.

Victoria Pakala moved to APPROVE the award of contract to Suplee, Clooney & Company, LLC to perform an audit of NJSBA financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 22 members voting in the affirmative.

President Smith asked for a motion to approve the increase to the bid threshold amount of \$39,000.

Liwu Hong moved to APPROVE the increase to the bid threshold amount of \$39,000. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 22 members voting in the affirmative.

Consent Agenda Items:

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

- A. Open Session Minutes of the May 2, 2025 Meeting
- B. Legislative Committee Appointments
- C. Resolutions Subcommittee Appointments

Liwu Hong moved to APPROVE the consent agenda items. The motion was duly seconded and carried. William Hulse abstained from voting on the minutes of the May 2, 2025 meeting.

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, and immediate past president.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS – No new business.

SUMMARY

President Smith 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, *Victoria Pakala moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy J. Purnell, Ed.D.
Executive Director