

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

November 14, 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, November 14, 2025. Interim President Dr. Karen Cortellino presided over the meeting from the Association's headquarters in Trenton. Vice Presidents Barry Walker and Dr. Tom Connors 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, interim president; Barry Walker, vice president for county activities; Dr. Tom Connors, vice president for finance; and Dr. Timothy Purnell, executive director.

Association staff present were Carl Tanksley, Esq., general counsel; Gwen Thornton, senior director of content; Lauren Cuervo, senior director of connection; John Faford, director of finance and operations; Ray Pinney, chief membership engagement officer; Harrison Silver, legislative advocate; 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 Pashar (Alt.)		Elizabeth Fiore (Alt.)
Burlington	Michael McClure	Mercer	Dana Krug
	Carlye Lamarca (Alt.)		Addie Daniels-Lane (Alt.)
Camden	Not Represented	Middlesex	Liwu Hong
Cape May	Jacqueline McAlister	Monmouth	Kathy Winecoff
Cumberland	Cedric Holmes	Morris	Diane Morris
Essex	Not Represented		Irene LeFebvre (Alt.)
Gloucester	Crystal Greene (Alt.)	Ocean	Victoria Pakala

	Dana Weber (Alt.)	County	Michael Jacobs
Passaic	Maryann Capursi (Alt.)	Association	
Salem	Eillen Miller	Leadership	
Somerset	Jean Trujillo	Urban Boards	Rita Martin
Sussex	Ronald Hoffman		Cynthia Atkins (Alt.)
	Kaitlin Gagnon (Alt.)		Diane Johnson
Union	William Hulse	Vocational	Jon-Henry Barr
Warren	Jaclyn Rowbotham (Alt.)		Ruth Hands (Alt.)

Guest Presenters: Robert Butvilla, partner, Suplee, Clooney & Company (Auditor)

John Vivolo, Online Learning and AI Consultant

ROLL CALL – Interim President Cortellino called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call indicated 3 officers, county association leadership, urban boards, vocational boards and 18 counties were represented. Those present constituted a quorum.

NON-BOARD MEMBERS: The following non-board members were also present at the meeting: Barry Fitzgerald, Lisa Focaccia, Danielle Gyles-Zito, Juanita Hyman, Prashant Patel, JoAnn Schlindwein, Judy Bassford, and Vanessa Preston.

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE – Interim President Cortellino asked for a moment of silence for all the veterans and their families who have served our country, many of whom sacrificed their health and their lives to preserve freedom. And that a day may come when armies will no longer be necessary to establish and maintain peace in the world.

MISSION STATEMENT – Interim President Cortellino 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 member was recognized for their service to the New Jersey School Boards Association and the students of New Jersey: Enrico Bolognino, alternate for Hudson County.

The following new alternate was introduced:

- County Association Leadership Alternate – Julie Kozempel, Washington Township Board of Education

OATH OF OFFICE – New members and select members and alternates who were not present at the September 2025 reorganization meeting were asked to take the oath of office. The following members took their oath of office: Michael McClure, Jacqueline McAlister, Crystal Greene, Dana Krug, Kathy Winecoff, Eileen Miller.

NJSBA 2024-2025 AUDIT REPORT - Mr. Robert Butvilla, partner, Suplee, Clooney & Company provided a report on the NJSBA 2024-2025 annual audit report. The independent audit

for fiscal year 2024-2025 reflects positively on the Association's business and finance operations. There are no recommendations.

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.

Mercer County member, Dana Krug, left the meeting during the Executive Director's report and did not vote on any of the action items.

Governance I Training Enhancements - The Governance Training online curriculum is currently being redesigned. The following enhancements will be added to all four online Governance courses and will be launched in early 2026.

- **Interactive Modules:** Learners will engage through multimedia, scenarios, and activities such as drag-and-drop, flip cards, labeled graphics, timelines, and knowledge checks to promote active learning and real-world application.
- **Scenario Tool (non-real time interaction):** Learners will be immersed in real-world situations using branching dialogue, decision points, and feedback paths that build critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills.
- **Custom AI Persona (real time interaction):** Will guide new and prospective school board members through ethical dilemmas, fiscal decisions, and governance practices using reflective questions, realistic scenarios, and student-centered feedback—while also evaluating their reasoning using a governance-focused rubric.

Workshop 2025 - Workshop 2025 was an incredible success. Feedback received from member surveys has been overwhelmingly positive. On-site registration, the exhibit floor, and interaction with the Association's staff all scored 90 or above. The survey indicated that 93% of attendees would recommend Workshop to new school board members.

NJSBA's 3Rs: Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources - The 3 R's program will be coupled with the county meeting program during November and December. Newly elected board members can attend the 3Rs: Roles, Responsibilities, and Resources training session before an upcoming County SBA meeting. The County SBA dinner and meeting will immediately follow the training. The program qualifies for an NJSBA Statewide/Regional Credit toward Board Member Academy Certification.

Certification - Changes to board and individual member certification requirements were posted to the NJSBA website on November 1. Changes include expanded core areas to include special education, board members interested in master board member certification must be a certified member for one year to be eligible, and members interested in certified board leader certification must be a master board member for two years to be eligible. Certifications will be presented in person at county meetings in the Fall or Spring.

NJSBA Strategic Planning Refresh - NJSBA is launching a new Strategic Planning Dashboard. Districts that sign up for NJSBA's Strategic Planning service will have a dashboard that the district can update on their website to track progress and provide updates to their community.

Revamped Superintendent Search Initiative - NJSBA is adding a recruiting element to their search services where field service representatives are partnering with a recruiter to actively recruit candidates and have a larger pool of qualified candidates.

State Health Benefits Plan – Due to rising healthcare costs, NJSBA is considering leaving the State Health Benefits Plan. Rate increases take effect January 1, 2026, and the projected annual spend will rise to over \$2 million dollars, a 36.6% increase. This rate increase will have a direct financial impact on staff. Findings show that NJSBA has a very positive claims experience report. The NJSBA team spoke with a third party who confirmed those findings would assist in finding more affordable alternatives for health care coverage. If NJSBA exits the State Health Benefits Plan, they will no longer retain a seat on the SHBP Board. The board was provided with two resolutions for consideration. The first one, which did not require any action tonight, was to initiate the 60-day notice to leave the SHBP and the second was to appoint a health care broker through EUS.

ACTION ITEMS

Roll Call Agenda Items:

Interim President Cortellino asked for a motion to approve the 2024-2025 NJSBA Audit Report.

Michael Jacobs moved to APPROVE the 2024-2025 NJSBA Audit Report. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 22 members voting in the affirmative and 1 abstention.

Interim President Cortellino asked for a motion to authorize the appointment of Brown and Brown of New Jersey as the Association's broker of record for health insurance and related benefits, effective immediately and that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to execute the necessary agreements and file the required EUS certification and public notice to formalize this appointment.

Michael McClure moved to APPROVE the appointment of Brown and Brown of New Jersey as the Association's broker of record for health insurance and related benefits through the non-fair and open procurement method. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 24 members voting in the affirmative.

Consent Agenda Items:

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

- A. Open Session Minutes of the September 19, 2025 Meeting
- B. Open Session Minutes of the October 3, 2025 Meeting
- C. Closed Session Minutes of the October 3, 2025 Meeting
- D. Open Session Minutes of the October 10, 2025 Meeting
- E. Closed Session Minutes of the October 10, 2025 Meeting
- F. Legislative Committee Appointments

Michael Jacobs moved to APPROVE the consent agenda items. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Kathy Winecoff abstained from voting on the minutes of the September 19, 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 the immediate past president.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

RESOLUTION TO ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION

Interim President Cortellino asked for a motion to go into a closed session to discuss recent anonymous letters that have been received by the Association.

Jon-Henry Barr moved to APPROVE the body entering into closed session. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Members went into closed session at 9:35 p.m. Non-essential staff and non-Board of Directors members were excused from the meeting.

Interim President Cortellino asked for a motion to go back into open session.

Michael Jacobs moved to APPROVE the body entering into open session. The motion was duly seconded and carried. Members returned to open session at 10:10 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

Roll Call Agenda Item:

Michael McClure made a motion that the Board of Directors shall take no further investigation or action with respect to the anonymous letters of September 24, 2025 and October 10, 2025.

The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 22 members voting in the affirmative and 1 in the negative.

NEW BUSINESS – Addie Lane inquired if NJSBA has given any thought to rejoin NSBA. Dr. Purnell advised that the Association is continuing to assess.

Jean Trujillo mentioned the Nominating Committee's report on filling the vacancy for president and inquired whether any additional candidates for the position had been submitted and whether any petitions had been filed. She asked if the names of the additional candidates who applied for the position of president could be shared. Carl Tanskley addressed her inquiries.

SUMMARY

Interim 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, *Michael McClure moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy J. Purnell', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Timothy J. Purnell, Ed.D.

Executive Director