



New Jersey School Boards Association

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MEMORANDUM

TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FROM: DR. LAWRENCE S. FEINSOD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: JANUARY 8, 2019

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

LSF:dm

Attachment



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DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS TO NJSBA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

January 8, 2018

Business Development

Workshop 2019

The art and theme have been selected. The request for program proposals will be issued on February 9. The Workshop website will go live on March 1. (See below.) Registration and housing will open on April 2. I will provide an update during the January 8 meeting.

Cyber Security Meeting

On December 13, NJSBA hosted our first Cyber Security event. Fifty people attended the program here at NJSBA.

Future Ready Schools–NJ

The 2019 certification program will begin in February. To help school districts submit for certification, NJSBA will host four “Are You Future Ready?” sessions throughout the school year.

Marketing

- The marketing team continues to hold bi-monthly **coordination meetings** to identify the best channels to inform our members of programs, products and services through the Association’s various communications means, including website, email marketing, video, podcasts, and publications.
- The **Workshop website** will be redesigned for 2019. This year, we are rolling out two Workshop websites—one dedicated to school leaders/potential attendees, and a second for exhibitors and sponsors. This redesign enables us to create a greater focus on our target markets by providing better organized and more relevant content, and allowing us to speak directly to each group.
- The 2019 **Workshop Prospectus** is undergoing a redesign to include more visual elements, exciting new opportunities, and more facts and about the conference and its attendees.
- The marketing team has been involved in a committee to improve the Association’s **website and access to web-based information**.
 - We have worked with IT and communications on a **spam-prevention** plan to avoid instances of NJSBA email addresses being used by hackers. The plan will involve removal of individual email addresses from the website and their replacement with sophisticated forms. The change will take place in early January.
 - We have worked with the General Counsel, Human Resources director and IT director on migrating NJSBA’s **Governance and Operations (GO) Manual** from our internal archived site to the public site (www.njsba.org) to increase transparency to our members. The GO manual will be publicly accessible by February.
 - In addition, we are working with IT and Human Resources on an internal **Human Resources website**, to be launched in June.

Departmental Reports/January 8, 2018

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- The marketing manager represents NJSBA on the **NJ Public Colleges Branding/Marketing Task Force**, led by Dr. Joel Bloom, president of NJIT. The goal of the committee is to develop a campaign to help retain and attract New Jersey students to New Jersey's public colleges.

Call Center

- The 2019 Association Census project is beginning. The goal is to have the all school district census updated by March 1.
- The Call Center continues to ensure that all members are taking their mandated training.
- All Workshop training credits have been manually updated to member transcripts.

Policy Unit

Steve and Jean continue to provide policy services to our members. They have provided 17 Wellness Checks, six policy manuals, and five Policy Webinars. In addition, Steve has assisted the General Counsel with the review of the bylaws

Finding, Buying and Saving Technology

The next meeting will be held on February 6. The goal of the committee is to identify opportunities to streamline, and make more efficient, the technology procurement process for school districts.

NJSBA TEC

We continue to market our 21st century classroom products, services, and school security products to school districts. We are working with NJEdge to add new products and services for 2019.

Business Development Conference Schedule

- Finance Conference – February 21
- Technology Conference – March 8
- Charter School Conference – March 15
- Special Education Symposium – May 13
- School Security Conference – June 1

All programs will be held at Mercer County College from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Communications

School Board Recognition Month

January 2019 marks the 17th annual celebration of School Board Recognition Month in New Jersey. The January 2 State Board of Education meeting will include a ceremony and presentation of a resolution recognizing the contributions of New Jersey's 5,000 local board of education members and charter trustees who govern the state's public schools and advance public education, while serving at no compensation. In addition, Governor Murphy is expected to issue a proclamation designating January 2019 as School Board Recognition Month.

The January issues of *School Board Notes* will profile the community service of local board of education members. We have created a special webpage (www.njsba.org/recognition/2019), where boards of education, parent organizations and community groups can access sample resolutions and news releases to recognize the work of their local school board members.

Publications

The January-February issue of *School Leader* will feature an interview with the 2018-2019 School Board Member of the Year, Sister Carol Adams of Salem City. The magazine will also

include a special section on Future Ready Schools–NJ, along with an article about the experience of school boards associations in the state’s where recreational marijuana use has been legalized.

For November-December, *School Leader* included an article, “The 13 Things School Board Members Wished People Knew about Them,” and a special section on school finance.

Research/Data Collection

The Communications Department collected information on the November 6 and December 11 construction bond referendums, provided the information to the news media, and compiled special school election results for 2018. Statewide, 40 districts placed construction proposals on the ballot this year. Voters approved plans in 26 districts, for a total of more than \$697.4 million. Last year, voters approved bond issues in 20 of the 30 districts that placed proposals on the ballot, for a total of \$216.8 million.

Staff also drafted the final report of the School Security Committee and coordinated its release at Workshop 2018. We also arranged a special group session on school security, which was presented at Workshop and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities annual conference.

Media Relations

Since October, the Communications Department has handled a variety of news media inquiries. Topics included the following: conflicts of interest (*Jersey Journal*); November General Election, including the Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act, local tax levy questions, bond referendums and school board member elections (NPR, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *NJ Spotlight*, *NJ.com*, *CBS3*, *Burlington County Times*, *Record*, *Chalkbeat*); teacher contract negotiations (*NJ Spotlight*); Halloween celebrations (*Bergen Record*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*); school funding lawsuits (*NJ 101.5*); temperature control standards (*NJ 101.5*); Rice Notice procedures (*Northjersey.com*); superintendent salary cap (NPR); December 11 school bond elections (*NJ Spotlight*, *Star-Ledger*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, NPR); S-1569/A-1335, contributions of LGBTQ individuals, (*Star-Ledger*).

Graphics/Editorial/Website Support

The Communications Department is providing editorial support for *Basic School Law*, a project of the Legal & Labor Relations Services Department and a major Association goal for 2018-2019. Our graphics team developed artwork for Workshop 2019 and has designed program books for the upcoming New Board Member Orientation, Governance IV and labor relations programs. We have also been involved in the creation of the Workshop 2019 websites and other web improvement projects.

County Activities and Member Engagement

County Activities

We are close to selecting a new County Activities Coordinator for the southern region. In the meantime, I will be covering the southern region. I will continue to provide support when the new person comes on board in January to ensure a smooth transition.

In addition, the department is currently planning a “Best Practices in Urban Education” training conference in April.

BlogTalkRadio/Education Matters:

In late December, we received training on the new broadcast studio equipment. Part of the Association’s IT strategic plan, the new equipment represents a major upgrade from our current production capabilities. It includes a “green screen” to enable us to have a virtual studio. We are scheduling some informative videos and School Law podcasts for January.

Field Services

- Superintendent Searches and 3D Strategic Plans are going strong and there are indications that that will continue. This is very encouraging. We are looking forward to more and more searches and strategic plans as the year progresses.
- January is school board re-organization month. Because many districts schedule their annual ethics presentations during the re-organization meetings, the FSRs are completing a revised ethics program for delivery.
- Field Services is delivering the fourth program in the Leadership Series on Saturday, February 9, titled “Making Meetings Matter.” With this program, we will have presented two years of leadership programs – two in the summer and two in the winter. This does not factor in the Leadership Weekend, which we will be repeating again this May.
- Programs have been presented to and accepted by National School Boards Association for their upcoming conference in April. It is being held in Philadelphia, which allows more FSRs to attend. Everyone is looking forward to that.
- We are continuing to participate and present in the Future Ready programs (four) to be held this winter and spring at headquarters.

Finance

Fiscal year 2018-2019: November Year-To-Date

- We are ahead of pace *versus* budget through November, due to:
 - Wages (several vacancies that have just recently been filled), benefits and temporary Help, and
 - Workshop 2018 – driven by higher registration and sponsorship fees
- All general members have now paid their annual dues.

2019 – 2020 Budget Cycle

- Next year’s budget cycle has started. Meetings have been set up with department heads individually to review their revenue projections and funding needs.
- Next steps:
 - Meetings with directors through mid-January.
 - Internal review and approval of combined budgets by Executive Director by the end of January.
 - Budget reviewed with Finance Committee by late February.
 - Board or Directors review and approval sought at the March 15 meeting.

AMS (Association Management System) Evaluation

- Executive Director accepted AMS Task Force’s recommendation to select Cobalt for its next AMS system.
 - Cobalt’s base solution - designed to meet the needs of associations.
 - Cobalt has over 150 association clients and has been in business over 20 years.
 - 99% approval rating from customers.

- Cobalt will capture NJSBA’s activities relating to:
 - Census Data
 - Event Registrations
 - Board Certifications
 - Member Contact Tracking
 - Superintendent Evaluations
 - Integrated marketing initiatives
 - Expansion of on-line training offerings
- Benefits of Cobalt:
 - More integrated work flows
 - Increased automation – faster and more accurate data tracking
 - Enhanced marketing capabilities
 - “In The Cloud” Data retention
 - Based on Microsoft platform – supported by multiple vendors for system modifications and fixes.
- Funding:
 - Funding was not a part of the Future Ready IT funding approved by the Board in November ’17.
 - Board approval for Cobalt implementation costs will be requested at the January 18th Board meeting.
 - \$234,688 being requested to fund this strategic initiative.
 - Annual support costs will be part of the annual operating budget.
- AMS Task Force close to recommending AMS system to Executive Director. (The Board of Directors approved funding at the November 2017 meeting.
- Once Executive Director approval is obtained, we will enter detailed contract negotiations with the preferred vendor. Timeline for implementation of a new AMS will not be known until a fully executed contract is in place.

General Counsel

DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

- Former Commissioner of Education Lucille Davy and Associate Director of the Senate Majority Office Mark Magyar presented on the Path to Progress during the November DA.
- Resolutions for the May DA are due March 5. Bylaw revisions will also be presented for action at the May meeting.

MANDATED TRAINING

- Approximately 500 board members have not completed their training; the requirement must be met by December 31.

AMICUS

- A new matter from the Princeton BOE concerns using an electronic platform to record members’ votes. NJSBA will file a motion to participate as *amicus curiae*. NJSBA will participate in a matter from Englewood challenging *Neptune* and imposing *County of Atlantic*, ordering the board of education to pay an increment after the contract expired.

- The OPRA consolidated cases are still pending before the Supreme Court.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- Applications were due December 21 for officer positions, an announcement will appear in SBN on January 2. Applications received: two for president; four for vice president for county activities; one for vice president for finance; and four for vice president for legislation and resolutions. Nominating Committee training will take place in January and interviews will take place on the second weekend in February.

ACES

- Completed and awarded new contracts for gas and electric commencing in December.

Human Resources

- Participate in NJSBA's Future Ready initiative
- Participate on internal technology team; roll out of cyber security training
- Recruiting efforts: County Activities Coordinator
- 2FA test group – roll out completed in September; all staff have been configured
- Prepare 2019 Open Enrollment communication
- Coordinate book review assignments for *Leaders Eat Last*
- Facilitate and assign administrative responsibility for GO Manual and P&P Manual revisions
- Completed and approved for PHR recertification (60 hrs. of training)
- Human resources and support services budget prepared and submitted
- Implement part-time earned paid sick leave according to new law
- Lead committee to revise the human resources website for staff
- Coordinate and communicate the holiday luncheon for staff

Information Technology

- Completed the re-write of online Self Evaluation to align with online CSA Evaluation process. Setup both 2019 Self and CSA Evaluation processes and reports to be available on January 1, 2019.
- Worked with AMS Taskforce Team to identify the best Association Management System solution and vendor; submit the recommendation to Executive Director.
- Re-wrote the "My Account" web portal to provide better interface and accurate information for board members and business administrators. The new interface will provide board members with comprehensive transcript records and enable both board members and business administrators to view and print NJSBA official transcript reports online. The new

portal also enables business administrators to view mandatory training records of their board members in a nutshell.

- Working with the Communications Department and HR to migrate NJSBA workshop website and the ELFNJ website to the cloud. Re-wrote the internal HR portal with WordPress and moved hosting in the cloud.
- Working with Field Services to refine the process of adding board certification transcript records in AMS. The new process will reduce the need for the FSRs to manually input transcript records.
- Replaced the switch in the server room with a managed one to minimize internet service down time.
- Refined board member mandatory training compliance status report for the School Ethics Commission.

Governmental Relations

Legislature

- Path to Progress – Legislation is still pending from earlier working group discussions. Senate President has been meeting with local mayor and freeholder groups around the state to discuss the urgency of the preliminary findings
- Minimum Wage A-15 (Coughlin) – A bill is unlikely to be voted on until early 2019. The current proposal gradually increases the rate for seasonal workers, teenagers and some farmers. Other key provisions include:
 - For employees of any employer with fewer than 10 employees, for employees under 18 years of age, for farm laborers, and for seasonal employees other than those whose employers are provided credits for tips under the bill, the minimum wage will be increased to \$10.10 per hour on January 1, 2020, reaching a level of \$15 per hour on January 1, 2029.
 - Commencing January 1, 2020, a training wage of not less than 90 percent of the minimum wage may be paid to an employee enrolled in a qualified training program. The training wage may be paid during first 80 hours after hiring the employee for employment in an occupation in which the employee has no previous similar or related experience. The employer may not utilize employees paid the training wage in a way that contributes to any displacement of current employees or existing apprenticeship programs. The employer is required to make a good faith effort to continue to employ the employee after the training wage expires and may not hire an employee at the training wage without a reasonable expectation of subsequent regular employment.
- Legalized Marijuana (A-4497 Quijano/S-2703 Scutari) – Proposed legalization bills were released from a Joint Assembly and Senate budget committee meeting, but have not yet been posted for a vote in either house. The Governor wants a higher tax than the Legislature proposes. He also wants expedited expungement, stressing the social justice issue.

Executive Branch

- Governor's State of the State Address – scheduled for January 15th
- State Budget Address – February 19th or 26th tentative dates.

Miscellaneous

- NSBA Equity Symposium January 26
- NSBA Advocacy Institute January 27-29
 - Both events to be held at a week earlier than usual this year; also different location than recent years: Hilton Washington Hotel – Connecticut Ave.
- Chamber of Commerce Trip to Washington, February 28-March 1

Training & Professional Development/Educator-in-Residence

NBMO Weekends

With appreciation to NJSBA staff from literally every department, plans for the two NBMO weekends have been successfully implemented. In addition to revising the small group curriculum this fall with the goal of re-emphasizing the pertinent information that a newly seated member needs, a cadre of newly selected group leaders joined experienced group leaders for a full day of reviewing the new curricula on a December Saturday. The January weekend was filled in early December, and 90 have registered for the February weekend (as of December 18). Since we expect 5 to 7 cancellations the week prior to the orientations, waiting lists have been established for both weekends.

Educational Opportunities for the Career Focused Learner

Interest in this topic continues to grow. We've had discussions with the NJ State Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the leadership of the NJBIA, the Executive Director ("Skip" Cimino) of the NJ General Assembly Majority Office, and are scheduled to meet with the U.S. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Director in early January. Matt Lee has planned a January joint meeting of the River Dell, Ramsey, Ridgewood and Saddle River Boards where I will give a presentation on meeting the needs of students currently in elementary school when they graduate. These boards and the leaderships of those districts already recognize that currently as a society, we are not effectively preparing a significant percentage of students to lead independent, productive lives with the inaccurate belief that to be successful, one must have a college degree.

NJSBA Equity Council

The Equity Council chose to increase its meeting schedule from 2 to 4 annual meetings. The topic discussed at the December meeting was the lack of teachers of color who instruct AP and Honors classes plus a review of the efforts made by some NJ superintendents to address that challenge. The link to the Ted Talk that the Council reviewed prior to the discussion is: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kibLwLEMexY>.

Arts Ed NJ – Steering Committee

Due to challenged registration, the November Arts Ed Professional Development program where I was scheduled to present was postponed to February.

NJDOE Advisory on the Future of Assessments

The Commissioner and his staff continue to meet approximately every 6-8 weeks with the education associations to provide updates and seek feedback. At the December meeting it was affirmed that the DOE is preparing RFPs for a March release for the next assessments that will probably implemented in the 2020-2021 school year.

Technology Teacher Certification Endorsement

NJSBA discussions with the Regional Training Center, Randolph, NJ regarding developing a program for currently certified teachers to earn a license endorsement to teach STEAM based tech courses including overseeing Makerspaces continues. The endorsement will be offered through TCNJ. It will be modeled after the physics endorsement that enables any certified teacher in NJ to become certified in physics within one school year. RTC/TCNJ have developed a 12 -15 credit series that will provide a technology certificate enabling current

NJ Labor Management Collaborative

Union Beach and Woodlynne districts are the latest districts that have expressed an interest in joining the collaborative. The DOE has taken a renewed interest in this project due to the CAR (Connected Action Roadmap) project that has been undertaken by the Partnership for Collaborative Professional Learning and will assist in the implementation of that project.

Partnership for Collaborative Professional Learning

There will be four Commissioner's meetings in January and February throughout the state to present the Connected Action Roadmap (CAR) model and invite district participation. The goal is for the majority of the districts to be trained in this model within 5 years. Due to the belief that CAR should be a part of a district's instructional plan and not be dependent on the district leadership, to participate in the project local boards of education must adopt a resolution endorsing participation. The partnership includes the PTA, Garden State Coalition of Schools, PSA, ASA, AFT, St. Elizabeth's College, NJEA and NJSBA, as well as the DOE. The DOE has endorsed the simplified and strategic lesson planning process of CAR. It has asked the Partnership to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of this planning framework.

STEAM Tank Challenge

The 2019 STEAM Tank Challenge was announced in mid-December. Applications will be due by January 31, 2019. As in past years, in order to encourage participation, there are no fees for the first round. Due to increasing interest and the quality of entrants, capacity at the regional level has been increased, but there will not be an increase in the number of teams who can qualify for the finals at Workshop; we simply do not have the capacity to increase that number. To meet the needs of teams who do qualify for regionals, the U.S. Army will provide a mentor to each team who will meet with them and be available to help them with their projects. In the past, John Henry and the Army Steam Specialist would briefly consult with teams – usually via Skype, but were not able to truly mentor the teams. The additional assistance of Army personnel will address that.

DOE Armistead Advisory Council

The council continues to review social studies curricula and recommend modifications. The legislation indicates that this group should review all social studies curricula to ensure it is inclusive of the struggles of groups of people. Additionally, as a result of our partnership with the *Rock and Roll Forever Foundation*, two of their staff who are also curriculum writers will be joining the council as the result of our recommendation.

Mental Health Task Force

Interest in the work of this task force by boards, superintendents, and families has been extraordinary. Colleagues who have had to address the suicides of staff and students have contacted Dr. Feinsod and me regarding the value of this work and their desire to be a part of it. At the December meeting, Dr. Maurice Elias shared his expertise which will help guide the work of the group.

SEL4NJ

Marcia Lavigne and I attended the November meeting of this state affiliate of the national SEL4USA organization. Dr. Elias, Liz Warner (United Way), Mark Biedron, and Christy Tighe are the leadership team organizing this work that will affect school climate, learning and safety.

DOE CTE Advisory Committee: P-Tech

The DOE presented its P-tech apprenticeship pilot initiative as a first step in their plans to support more CTE programs. This initiative is aligned with the Non-College Bound Task Force Report.

Legal and Labor Relations

Direct/Onsite Dues-Based Services

- Salary Guides – L/R staff received 23 requests to review salary guides during the above period.
- Contract Analysis –L/R Staff have received 14 requests for critical analysis of district collective negotiations agreements. To date, 17 requests have been completed, which include three requests from fiscal 17-18. Staff members also assisted in two district face-to-face negotiation sessions.
- Consultation Services – to date, Legal and L/R staff have responded to 80 requests for comparative data, 39 for the dates in question. In addition, the department has responded to in excess of 381 telephone and email requests for information. Staff members were able to provide information pertinent to the resolution of legal and labor relations matters.

Fee-Based Services

- Negotiations – L/R staff are currently assisting two districts with direct and ongoing collective negotiations services.
- Salary Guides - In addition to the dues-based salary guides noted above, L/R staff provided fee-based billable services for fiscal year 2018-2019 to several districts over the period in question. October billing \$4,225.00 and November billing \$2,862.50 bring our current fiscal year total to \$17,230.83.

Training and Programming

- Legal and L/R staff participated in twenty-two training presentations during Workshop18. Between October 31 and the date of this report, Legal and L/R staff have completed two additional PAA trainings and a bargaining training session for board members as well as a cybersecurity training for district information technology directors. All trainings were well attended and well received.

Internal Services

- PAA – Staff members convened the second of four annual meetings of the Personnel Administrators Association. Due to the popularity of the program, the meetings have moved off-site to the Mercer County Vocational and Technical School’s Culinary Arts program. During our December meeting, attendees were welcomed with a fabulous breakfast buffet

prepared by the students. All attendees were duly impressed. NJSBA's collaboration with PAA has led to the development of substantial lines of inquiry and identified best practices as the *NJ Paid Sick Leave Act* and related issues have arisen. The service provides a valuable collaborative source for personnel administrators throughout the state, as evidenced by increasing participation and the need for increased meeting space.

- **Publications** - Departmental services to the Association during this period include the publication of thirteen articles for *School Board Notes* and two articles for *School Leader* and two for *Asked & Answered*. The department continues to collect and assess programmatic data in order to better anticipate and address the needs of members.
- **Non-College Bound Task Force** – has successfully concluded its charge and completed a report for publication.
- **NJSBA Equity Council** – Staff members have been assigned to assist the Council in promoting equity for student populations around the state. The Council has begun the important task of assembling best practices for dissemination at an appropriate time. Work of the Council is ongoing.
- **Mental Health Task Force** – Staff members have been assigned to assist in the development of a report on mental health issues and concerns amongst student of the state.
- **Basic School Law** - Staff members continue the challenging task of completely re-writing the premiere legal volume in New Jersey school law, “Basic School Law”. This volume was last updated in 2007 and work on the 2019 edition is more than half-complete with the addition of a digital version, which contains active hyperlinks to statutes, regulations and court and administrative decisions.
- **Amicus Curiae** –
 - *Ridgefield Park Bd. of Educ. v. Ridgefield Park Ed. Assn.* Staff members are currently advocating on behalf of local boards by filing an *amicus curiae* brief in the *Ridgefield Park Bd. of Educ. v. Ridgefield Park Ed. Assn.* The central issue in this litigation involves the question of whether at the conclusion of the full phase in of employee Chapter 78 contributions, the parties may negotiate away from the mandated tier IV contribution levels during the agreement or whether they must wait until a successor agreement to negotiate employee contribution levels. Clearly, this is an important issue for board of education across the state as funding levels remain restricted.
 - *Schwartz v. Princeton Bd. of Educ.* is a second matter in which the legal department is involved as *amicus*. The dispute involves the board's use of electronic media during board meeting to record actions taken by the board. Statewide implications exist in clarifying the board's control in the conduct of public meetings.