

MINUTES
of the
BOARD OF DIRECTORS VIRTUAL MEETING

October 1, 2021
7 p.m.

The New Jersey School Boards Association Headquarters
Trenton, NJ

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
TRENTON, NJ

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7 p.m.

A regular meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association Board of Directors was held virtually on Friday, October 1, 2021. President Irene M. LeFebvre presided over the meeting from the Association's headquarters in Trenton. Immediate Past President Michael R. McClure was also present at headquarters. Executive Director Lawrence S. Feinsod provided his report to the board from headquarters.

Executive Committee members present were Irene LeFebvre, president; Dr. Karen Cortellino, vice president for legislation/resolutions; Tammeisha Smith, vice president for finance, Michael McClure, immediate past president, and Dr. Lawrence Feinsod, executive director.

Association staff present were Patty Maillet, acting deputy executive director; Carl Tanksley, Esq., acting general counsel; Janet Bamford, chief public affairs officer; Maja Klysinski, director of human resources; Vincent DeLucia, educator-in-residence; John Faford, director of finance and operations; Joseph Hsieh, IT manager; Ray Pinney, director of member engagement; Jonathan Pushman, director of governmental relations; Kurt Rebovich, Jr., labor relations manager, and, Ann Marie Smith, assistant editor / communications program specialist.

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

Atlantic	Amy Hassa	Somerset	Robert Morrison
Bergen	Sheli Dansky	Sussex	Marie Bilik
	Joseph Steele (Alt.)		Ronald Hoffman
Burlington	Harry Litwack	Union	Brendan Galligan
Camden	Joseph Miller (Alt.)	Warren	Paul Williams
Cape May	Jacqueline McAlister		Scott Nodes (Alt.)
Cumberland	Not Represented		
Essex	Shannon Cuttle (Alt.)	County	Not Represented
Gloucester	Natalie Baker	Association	
Hudson	Not Represented	Leadership	
Hunterdon	Laurie Markowski		
Mercer	Dana Krug	Urban Board	Rita Martin
Middlesex	Joyce Mehta (Alt.)		Diane Johnson
Monmouth	Not Represented		Marsha Hershman (Alt.)
Morris	Paul Breda		
Ocean	Richard Casey	Vocational	Elizabeth Martin
	Stephanie Wohlrab (Atl.)		Jon-Henry Barr (Alt.)
Passaic	Nancy Schwartz		
Salem	Emily Cannon		

ROLL CALL - President LeFebvre called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call indicated 4 officers, urban boards committee, vocational boards and 18 counties were represented.

NON-BOARD MEMBERS: The following non-board members were also present at the meeting: Joseph Blumet, Naomi Davidson, and Lorenzo Richardson

MOMENT OF SILENCE - President LeFebvre asked for a moment of silence for all the communities affected by the historic flooding and tornados that hit our state in early September and those affected and their families.

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

MISSION STATEMENT - President LeFebvre 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: Naomi Davidson, alternate for Camden County; Charles Miller, alternate for Hunterdon County; and William Mink, member for the Urban Boards Committee.

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

New Members:

- Camden County Alternate – Joseph Miller, Audubon Board of Education
- Cape May County Alternate – Thomas Belasco, West Cape May Board of Education
- Hunterdon County Alternate – Robert Imhoff, High Bridge Board of Education
- Gloucester County Member – Natalie Baker, Swedesboro Woolwich Board of Education
- Gloucester County Alternate – Michele Giaquinto Clearview Regional Board of Education
- Monmouth County Member – Al Miller, Howell Township Board of Education
- Ocean County Alternate – Stephanie Wohlrab, Brick Township Board of Education
- Sussex County Alternate – Ronald Hoffman, Hardyston Board of Education
- Urban Boards Alternate – Marsha Hershman, Lindenwold Board of Education (Camden County)

Re-elected Members:

- Burlington County Member and Alternate – Harry Litwack and Erica Campbell
- Cape May County Member – Jacqueline McAlister
- Hunterdon County Member - Laurie Markowski
- Mercer County Member – Dana Krug
- Morris County Member – Paul Breda
- Ocean County Member - Richard Casey
- Somerset County Member and Alternate – Robert Morrison and Barry Walker
- Vocational Boards Member and Alternate – Elizabeth Martin and Jon-Henry Barr
- Warren County Member and Alternate – Paul Williams and Scott Nodes

OATH OF OFFICE – All members present were asked to take the oath of office.

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

Board of Education Meetings – There is a disturbing trend that boards throughout the country – including New Jersey – are dealing with at times; highly contentious school board meetings. The issues that are triggering this include the mask mandate, misconceptions about the teaching of critical race theory, and debates about the COVID-19 vaccine.

In response to this, the National School Boards Association sent a letter to President Biden this week asking the federal government for assistance in stopping threats and acts of violence against board members, schoolchildren, and public school district officials and educators. The assistance requested is for help monitoring threat levels.

NJSBA’s response included an Op-Ed in NJ.com, titled “Parents, Please Be Civil at School Board Meetings” by Dr. Feinsod, which made the case for the importance of restoring civility at board meetings; county school boards association meetings this fall have had presentations on dealing with board meetings in turbulent times – and more are on the schedule; and, NJSBA has provided resources to boards in the form of handouts on how to talk about education equity and critical race theory, and leadership tips on dealing with a divided community.

NJSBA’s Newest Pandemic Report – Last month, NJSBA released its latest study on education during the pandemic titled “Rebuilding Opportunities for Students,” its fifth since the panic began. The report looks at the challenges facing school districts and students in dealing with pandemic-related gaps in academic and social-emotional learning, and provides information on effective practices and programs, meeting the needs of special populations, the role of arts education in social-emotional learning, and directing coronavirus relief funding so that it has the optimal impact on growth and learning for students.

Labor management Collaborative – On Sept. 8, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona and the President of the National Education Association, Becky Pringle, visited the Delran school district in Burlington County to learn more about the New Jersey Public Schools Labor Management Collaborative, which NJSBA helped establish. The initiative encourages the collaboration between management and labor to positively impact student achievement.

Legislative Update – In Mid-August President LeFebvre, Executive Director Feinsod, and Director of Governmental Relations Jonathan Pushman attended a virtual meeting facilitated by the National School Boards Association with Secretary Cardona.

President LeFebvre and Dr. Feinsod also participated in a meeting with Senators Sweeney and Ruiz, along with the leadership of the other education associations and unions to discuss the federal stimulus money. The senators were interested in learning about the ways in which districts intended to spend these funds.

Two significant pieces of legislation have been enacted since the last Board of Directors meeting in May. The Special Education ‘Aging Out’ Bill (s-3434/A-5366) was signed in June. NJSBA originally had concerns about the funding for this bill, however, it successfully obtained amendments to provide for funding. Amendments to Chapter 44 (A-5825/A-3487) were enacted in early July. Among the provisions of this law is the requirement that boards and unions engage in negotiations to “substantially mitigate” any financial losses resulting from the implementation of Chapter 44, the law that addressed school employees’ health benefits coverage and payment obligations.

Hybrid County Meetings – NJSBA rolled out its hybrid county meetings this summer. These hybrid meetings are designed to accommodate members who would like to be present in-person at meetings, as well as those who prefer to attend virtually. Virtual county meetings will be held during the winter months of January and February, even without COVID, to allow the counties to gather without worrying about rescheduling due to weather issues.

Workshop 2021 – Workshop 2021 is fast approaching. The range of programs scheduled for this year will address such timely topics as social-emotional health, equity, and data security. Exciting keynote speakers are lined up who will motivate and educate all of us.

Member Engagement – Since March 2020, the NJSBA website has received more than 1.7M views; the Facebook page has more than 5,300 followers, which represents an increase of 67% since March 2020, and approximately 100 Facebook Live programs were presented. In the 18 months since the pandemic started, NJSBA has hosted 99 webinars, with 3,200 live attendees, and 2,200 attendees viewing the program recording later. NJSBA’s podcasts, *Conversations on New Jersey Education*, has had more than 300,000 views.

The NJSBA Strategic Plan – The first of two Virtual Strategic Planning session with board and staff members will be held on Saturday, March 2. The second planning session is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 16. The completed plan will be presented to the Board of Directors at its November 19 meeting.

Return to Headquarters – On Oct. 4, all staff will return to the NJSBA headquarters in Trenton. The Association will operate on a hybrid schedule with all employees in the building Monday through Wednesday for “Collaboration Days,” and most working remotely on Thursdays and Fridays. A small number of employees will be in the headquarters office five days a week.

Board members also received detailed reports from NJSBA staff on the following items: NJSBA advocacy initiatives; NJSBA Workshop 2021, and revisions to GO/ 6603.1R NJSBA Board Member Academy Revisions.

ACTION ITEMS

Roll Call Agenda Items:

President LeFebvre asked for a motion to approve the extension of payment of dues for BOD Members’ boards till the November 19, 2021 Board of Directors meeting?

Background: As of September 28, there are two (2) Board of Directors members who are members of a board of education from which NJSBA has not yet received the 2021-2022 dues. NJSBA received purchase orders or verbal commitment for 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.

Nancy Schwartz moved to APPROVE the extension of payment of dues for BOD Members’ boards till the Nov. 19, 2021 Board of Directors meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 25 members voting in the affirmative.

President McClure asked for a motion to approve the annual ACES grant request from ELFNJ.

Background: The Education Leadership Foundation of New Jersey (ELFNJ) is making application to the Board of Directors of the New Jersey School Boards Association for funding through the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services (ACES) for a grant for \$130,000 for fiscal

year 2021-22. These funds will be used to cover the costs for the 2021-22 county school boards associations' meetings.

Amy Hassa moved to APPROVE the grant request from ELFNJ to ACES as stated above. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 25 members voting in the affirmative.

Consent Agenda Items:

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

- A. Open session minutes of the May 7, 2021 meeting
- B. Closed session minutes of the May 7, 2021 meeting
- C. Legislative Committee Appointments
- D. Resolution Subcommittee Appointments

Brendon Galligan moved to APPROVE the consent agenda items. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The following member abstained from voting on the previous meeting open and closed minutes: Laurie Markowski.

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/resolutions, and immediate past president.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – No unfinished business

NEW BUSINESS – No new business

SUMMARY

President LeFebvre 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, *Shannon Cuttle moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Lawrence S. Feinsod, E.D.
Executive Director