

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

March 15, 2024
7 p.m.

A regular meeting of the New Jersey School Boards Association Board of Directors was held in-person and virtually on Friday, March 15, 2024. 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 Carl Tanksley, Esq., general counsel; Janet Bamford, chief public affairs officer; Vincent DeLucia, educator-in-residence/special assignments; Charlie Muller, business administrator-in-residence; John Faford, director of finance and operations; Ray Pinney, lead director of member training and engagement; Jonathan Pushman, director of governmental relations; Gwen Thornton, director of field services; Marcia Lavigne, director of professional learning; Kathleen Asher, director of legal and labor relations; Kim Gatti, director of policy; Lauren Cuervo, lead director of strategic development; Brian Green, network administrator; and Samantha Matias, executive assistant.

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

Atlantic	Louis Della Barca	Cumberland	Brent Daly
Bergen	Michael Sprague	Essex	Benjamin Morse
Burlington	Michael McClure (Alt.)		Kathryn Weller-Demming
Camden	Not Represented		(Alt.)
Cape May	Jacqueline McAlister	Gloucester	Not Represented

Hudson	Hector Gonzalez, Jr. Enrico Bolognino (Alt.)	Warren	Paul Williams Scott Nodes (Alt.)
Hunterdon	Laurie Markowski	County	Michael Jacobs
Mercer	Dana Krug Addie Lane (Alt.)	Association	
Middlesex	Liwu Hong	Leadership	
Monmouth	Mark Patterson (Alt.)	Urban Boards	Rita Martin Marsha Hershman (Alt.)
Morris	Paul Breda		Cynthia Atkins (Alt.)
Ocean	Jennifer Bacchione		Diane Johnson
Passaic	Alan Paris	Vocational	Elizabeth Martin Jon-Henry Barr (Alt.)
Salem	Eileen Miller		
Somerset	Robert Morrison Barry Walker (Alt.)		
Sussex	Ronald Hoffman (Alt.)		
Union	Not Represented		

ROLL CALL - President Cortellino called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. A roll call indicated 5 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: April Miller, Lisa Narcise, and Lorenzo Richardson.

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE – NJSBA’s county associations are holding their Unsung Hero and 8th grade student programs this month. President Cortellino asked for a moment of silence and reflection in gratitude for students and the educators and families that support and guide them.

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

OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comments.

OATH OF OFFICE – Select members and alternates who were not present at a previous Board of Directors meeting were asked to take the oath of office. The following members took their oath of office: Scott Nodes.

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.

The Boardroom Podcast – In January, Dr. Purnell announced he would be hosting a new monthly podcast series, “The Boardroom”, featuring live and transparent conversations with board members. Since then, two episodes have been broadcast. The first one on January 10 featured Marcia Lavigne, director of professional learning and the second one on February 14 featured Charlie Muller, business administrator-in-residence. Dr. Purnell answers questions that board members may have via call-in and chat room questions. The next podcast is scheduled for Wednesday, March 20 from noon to 1 p.m. and will feature members of the Legal and Policy

team for a discussion on the services offered to boards. The podcasts are broadcast on various social media platforms and are archived on the NJSBA YouTube channel.

Workshop 2024 - Workshop 2024 is taking place October 21-24 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. The theme for this year is “Quest for Student Success.” The Workshop website, registration, and housing open on April 1. Sponsorship sales through the First Right of Renewal are ongoing and exhibit floor booth and sponsorship opportunities will open to the public on April 1 as well. The call for student performance proposals is open now through April 19. The call for program proposals will be sent out in mid-April.

New features for this year’s conference include Learning Lab classrooms, an arcade, an information booth, digital signage, and a Dual Enrollment and Career Readiness Exposition.

Last year, Workshop debuted a new program, *Unsung Superheroes in Education*, that recognized school staff members who are typically overlooked but are undoubtedly important to the success of New Jersey’s school districts and their students. This year, NJSBA is expanding the program and adding two new categories: human resource professionals and technology professionals. Nominations are now open and are due by May 1.

NJSBA Personnel Update - NJSBA has added the following new staff members:

- Peter Castellano - Senior Policy Manager
- Caitlin Pletcher - Legal Counsel
- Lauren Liu - Administrative Assistant, Legal, Labor & Policy
- Jeanne Cleary - Field Service Representative for Essex, Hudson, and Union counties

ELFNJ – David Hespe has been named the new executive director for ELFNJ. David has served as the New Jersey Commissioner of Education twice and his credentials encompass experience in law, policy, government service, and both K-12 and higher education. David has prior experience with ELFNJ and was the first chairman of the board of trustees from 2009 to 2011. The ELFNJ board is planning a retreat on Saturday, March 23 and will be discussing the organization’s goals and direction.

Mandated Training/Governance I Revamp – Each year NJSBA is tasked with reporting to the School Ethics Commission the board members who have not completed their legally mandated

training. This year, NJSBA intensified their outreach efforts in November and December to contact members who hadn't taken their required course. Field service reps reached out and the Call Center monitored members who had begun an online course but hadn't completed it. Currently, there are only 55 people who are out of compliance, which is a drop of 72% from last year.

NJSBA is in the process of evaluating and refreshing their mandated training courses, starting with Governance I. Gwen Thornton, director of field services and Carl Tanksley, Esq. general counsel have convened a task force that includes staff members and small group leaders to see what needs to be updated, what should be included in the course, and how NJSBA can better present the information that new board members need.

Advocacy: Building Relationships – NJSBA officers and staff have been nurturing relationships with legislators. On January 30, the officers, Dr. Purnell, and the GR staff met with congressional representatives and their staff members in Washington. Dr. Tom Connors attended the governor's budget announcement a few weeks ago. Next week, Dr. Purnell along with other leaders of New Jersey's educational groups will be meeting with Governor Murphy.

Municipal Associate Membership Program - NJSBA maintains affiliate membership programs for school attorneys through AMSPA and school human resource professionals through PAA and will be testing a new affiliate program. The Municipal Associate Membership program will be open to municipalities interested in benefiting from NJSBA initiatives such as the ACES Cooperative Pricing program, the ACES PLUS Energy Savings and Improvement program, and other initiatives that mutually benefit municipalities and school districts.

Delegate Assembly Resources - In recent months, NJSBA has noticed confusion among some boards of education concerning the role of the Delegate Assembly and what an effective resolution submittal looks like. To help address these concerns, NJSBA has developed two new resources for members. The first was posted on the NJSBA website in advance of the resolution deadline. It is a question-and-answer document that addresses what boards should think about before drafting a resolution. The second resource is a new video explaining the DA that will be shared with the membership.

Real Leaders Transparency Award - NJSBA was honored for transparency by Real Leaders, which is a business magazine and community that focuses on leadership. Dr. Purnell applied for the Real Leaders Impact Awards and then the Association was compared to similar school board associations throughout the nation and was selected with a Real Leaders Impact Award in the Accountability category and was rated most transparent.

NJSBA 2024-2025 Budget - The budget for the next school year includes:

- An average increase in members' dues of 2%, or \$267. There will be a large degree of variability in the dues increase for each member, based primarily on the change in their local district's operating budget.
- An increasing contribution of non-dues revenues compared to the 2023 - 2024 budget, most notably Workshop and fee-based services (Strategic Plans, BoardDocs.)
- Higher-than-inflation increases expected for certain non-controllable expenses, such as health care costs, insurance, and the employer's contribution to the PERS retirement plan.
- The creation of two new positions and the re-establishment of the deputy executive director position.
- Funding of \$550,000 from the Association's free balance, though NJSBA management anticipates that this is a budgetary precaution and may not need to be utilized.

ACTION ITEMS

Roll Call Agenda Items:

President Cortellino asked for a motion to approve the proposed 2024-2025 NJSBA budget.

Michael Jacobs moved to APPROVE the 2024-2025 NJSBA budget. The motion was duly seconded and carried, with 27 members voting in the affirmative.

Consent Agenda Items:

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

- A. Open session minutes of the January 5, 2024 meeting
- B. Legislative Committee Appointments
- C. Resolution Subcommittee Appointments

Elizabeth Martin 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 unfinished 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, *Paul Williams moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was duly seconded and carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy J. Purnell, Ed.D.

Executive Director