



TIMOTHY J. PURNELL ED.D
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

 @drpurnell
 @drpurnell

MEMORANDUM

TO: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

FROM: DR. TIMOTHY J. PURNELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2024

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Each department director provided an update on activities that have taken place since the September 20, 2024, Executive Committee meeting. Time will be provided at the November 15, 2024, meeting for any questions or clarification.

TJP: pb
Attachment



Deputy Director's Report

Executive Committee Meeting

Dr. Nicholas Diaz, Deputy Director

November 15, 2024

Background

I come from a family of educators, which instilled in me a deep respect for the work of teachers and school leaders. I began my career as an elementary teacher, where I developed a strong appreciation for the impact educators have on students' lives and the importance of effective, supportive instruction. This foundation led me into a building-based administrative role, where I gained a deeper understanding of school operations and the critical role of leadership in fostering productive learning environments. Most recently, I served as a superintendent for nearly a decade, gaining valuable insights into district-wide strategy and community engagement. Now, as Deputy Director at NJSBA, I am thrilled to bring these experiences together to support New Jersey's education community on a broader scale.

The past month and a half in this role has been incredibly rewarding, and I'm especially grateful for the warm welcome from the team. I want to compliment the team on their outstanding work in making Workshop 2024 such a success. It's inspiring to see so much dedication in action, and I look forward to building on this momentum together.

100-Day Entry Plan

As Deputy Director, I am committed to supporting NJSBA's mission. As part of my 100-day entry plan, I am meeting one-on-one with each employee to gain a comprehensive understanding of their roles and determine how I can best support them and the organization. These conversations have been invaluable, revealing the depth of talent across our team and highlighting both strengths and areas for growth. My goal through this plan is to foster a collaborative environment where each member's contributions are valued, and we collectively work toward advancing NJSBA's mission. Additionally, I am working with Dr. Purnell on a plan to meet our community; I hope to see you at an event or meeting in the upcoming days.



Goals for 2024-2025

#TeamNJSBA has submitted their goals for the 2024-2025 school year. These goals align closely with our organizational objectives, ensuring that we are collectively working toward advancing NJSBA's mission and achieving key initiatives. Some of our primary goals include:

- **Revamping the Governance II Training Curriculum:** Enhancing this curriculum to increase member value and engagement.
- **Implementing a Refreshed "Connections" Platform (version 2.0):** Introducing a refreshed platform to improve member interaction.
- **Launching the Quarterly "Capitol Watch" Newsletters:** Increasing member engagement in advocacy by providing regular updates on policy and advocacy efforts.

Equity Expo 2025

We are in the planning stages for Equity Expo 2025, a symposium scheduled for Spring 2025. This event will offer participants the chance to engage with expert speakers, explore equity-focused resources, and participate in an interactive lunchtime flea market featuring hands-on sessions. Our objectives for the Expo are to provide practical strategies for fostering equitable learning environments and to serve as a valuable resource for school board members, superintendents, principals, and teachers. The event will also include Equity Champions Awards to recognize school community members demonstrating exemplary work in promoting equity. With a goal of approximately 100 participants, we are committed to making this event both impactful and inspiring.



MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Timothy Purnell

From: Gwen Thornton

Cc: Dr. Nicholas Diaz

Date: November 6, 2024

Re: Notes for Exec. Committee Meeting from Content

1. Workshop: 203 programs carrying board member academy credit were offered along with the following for Certified educational facilities managers, tech. directors, BA/BS- 13 credit bearing programs, Qualified purchasing agents-4 offerings ethics, green purchasing 3 offerings, IT 6 offerings, office administration 29 offerings and procurement 4 offerings. The Law Forum also offered CEU credit for board attorneys.

Field Services/PL presented 26 different programs -action labs and group sessions

Mandatory training: 378 board members attended gov. 2,3, or 4 at the workshop. All attendees, in addition to registering online, were also required to sign in to ensure greater accuracy in our reporting to the SEC.

2. All Field Service Representatives attended training provided by our General Counsel on resolution writing and are currently shadowing the writers for our December DA. This will expand the number of staff able to fully participate in the resolution process from inception to completion.
3. The 3 R' program for New and Not so New Members has been revised and updated and will be presented at every county meeting in November and December.
4. Currently in the process of interviewing to fill the two vacancies in the Southern region of the state as Terri Lewis is retiring after sixteen years of service, effective Dec. 31, 2024.
5. Preliminary planning for the Second Women's Conference to be held in mid-March has begun.
6. Conferences were held with all staff to finalize individual/department goals for 2024-2025.
7. Work continues on NBMO weekends for January and February 2025.



CONNECTION - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

NOVEMBER 2024

Workshop

Wrap-Up 2024

- Debriefings with staff, vendors, and partner companies.
- Surveys and survey analysis of staff, attendees, and exhibitors.
- Workshop Sponsor wrap-up –session data and directory analytics

Ongoing

- Review of sponsorship offerings, floor layout, session schedules, etc.
- Release of RFPs for the onsite decorator company and the exhibit management platform
- Workshop 2025 theme development.
- Workshop 2025 budget development.

Surveys, financials, and data are still being evaluated, but some early information includes:

- 10% increase in booth sales over 2023
- A net increase of 12 sponsors = \$139,500
- 99% of attendees ranked NJSBA staff as excellent/good
- 95% of attendees ranked the Workshop exhibit floor as excellent/good
- 97% of attendees are likely to recommend Workshop to new board members

Revenue Programs

- Follow-up with Workshop exhibitors and sponsors who are not currently Partners in Education members.
- Start sponsorship development and promotion for spring conferences.
- Develop online advertising initiatives for the new website.
- Ongoing promotion of paid initiatives and fee-based services.
- Ongoing promotion and education geared toward high-interest/high-value co-op offerings.

IT Projects

- Working with Cobalt to prevent school business administrators from entering duplicate email addresses.
- High-level plans for an organizational transition to Windows 11 in light of the upcoming support termination of Windows 10 in 2025.
- Scoping out new board-self evaluation applications for both districts and charter schools.
- Work with legal, training, and Call Center on out-of-compliance reporting.



- Custom reports for all departments.
- Roll out of the new remote server environment on Liquid Web, including initial server setup, backup configurations, firewall configurations, accounts and policy creation, security rules and permissions, switch configurations, DNS configuration, IIS setup, and SSL certificate generation and binding.

Member Services

- Updated all member transcripts with credits from Workshop sessions and all other training programs.
- Call Center inbox processing of emails and calls
- Assistance with all program registrations.
- Assisting school business administrators with census entries, training issues, Mandated Training requirements, etc.
- Assisting with out-of-compliance reporting.

Other Projects

- Connection department budget development.
- Webinars continue to be scheduled through the winter.
- Promotion of all association programs and initiatives.
- Assistance with the BOD and ELFNJ meetings (Sam)
- Graphics support for the entire association.
- Develop training documents for staff website edits.



**New Jersey School Boards Association
Executive Committee Meeting
ADVOCACY**

Jonathan Pushman, Senior Director of Advocacy

November 15, 2024

Governmental Relations

Legislative Activity – Please refer to Vice-President of Legislation/Resolutions report to the Board of Director for a rundown of recent education-related enactments and other legislative activity, , since the September 2024 Executive Committee meeting. The department continues to consistently report on any action taken by the Legislature or Governor through *School Board Notes* articles.

NJSBA Legislative Committee – The Legislative Committee has met once since the September 2024 Board of Directors meeting. The committee met in-person at the NJSBA headquarters on Saturday, October 5. The following state legislators served as the meeting’s guest speakers:

- Assemblyman Roy Freiman (D-16)
- Assemblywoman Michelle Drulis (D-16)

The meeting also included a detailed update on recent legislative activity by the NJSBA governmental relations department. The next committee meeting is scheduled for Saturday, December 14 and will be held virtually.

NJSBA Workshop – The department led coordinate the following Workshop 2024 programs involving key state-level policymakers:

1. **Legislative Panel Discussion.** To date, the following legislators are expected to participate:
 - Senator Teresa Ruiz (D-29) – Senate Majority Leader
 - Senator Vin Gopal (D-11) – Chair, Senate Education Committee
 - Senator Jon Bramnick (R-21) – Former Assembly Republic Leader
 - Assemblywoman Pamela Lampitt (D-6) – Chair, Assembly Education Committee
 - Assemblyman Erik Simonsen (R-1) – Member of the Assembly Education Committee and the Joint Committee on the Public Schools
2. **State Board of Education.** Six members of the Board participated in the panel discussion. For the first time, the Student Representative of the State Board participated in the session. Panelists included:
 - Kathy Goldenberg, President

- Dr. Nedd James Johnson, Vice President
- Mary G. Bennett
- Dr. Ronald K. Butcher
- Dr. Claudine Keenan
- Ahmed Shehata
- Anna Paszkiewicz, Student Representative

Other Governmental Relations Activity

- **Webinar** – The department will be leading a webinar presentation on recent State House activity on Wednesday, November 27.
- **NJ Educator Evaluation Review Task Force** – On September 30, the task force transmitted its final report to the Governor and Legislature. The report contains 15 different recommendations for potential changes to the educator evaluation process. Upon receipt of the report, the governor announced he would act quickly on one of the recommendations by developing an implementation working group, which will help review the report, identify priority implementation strategies, and collaborate with the NJDOE on guidance to enhance educator evaluation and reduce unnecessary administrative burdens. Jonathan Pushman, Senior Director of Advocacy, served as the NJSBA’s representative to the Task Force.

The NJSBA joined with the other education associations represented on the task force (e.g., NJ Principals and Supervisors Association, NJEA, Garden State Coalition of Schools, NJ Association of School Administrators, and American Federation of Teachers) in issuing a joint statement expressing support for its recommendations.

- **NJSBA Labor Summit** – The governmental relations team presented at the NJSBA Labor Summit and provided an update on recent legislative activity on staffing shortages and other labor-related measures.
- **Public Notices** – With the recent announcement that the Star Ledger and several other media outlets will be dissolving or discontinuing publication of paper editions, the NJSBA is joining with the NJ State League of Municipalities and NJ Association of Counties (NJAC) to advocate for statutory changes that will permit local governing bodies to comply with public notices requirements through electronic means. A joint letter signed by Dr. Purnell and the executive directors of the League and NJAC was sent to legislative leadership urging them to take swift action to address this issue.
- **County Meetings** – Beginning in mid-November, the governmental relations staff will be presenting legislative updates at each of the NJSBA county meetings through the end of the calendar year.
- **Advocacy in the Press**
 - Jonathan Pushman was quoted in a recent NJ Spotlight article on legislation that would prohibit schools and other food services businesses from using plastic utensils. NJSBA is opposing the bill (S-3195).

County Activities and NJSBA Connection

County Associations

As of the writing of this update every county has had their meeting before Workshop. The hot issue was AI which was addressed numerous times by the county associations. After Workshop every county will have a regular meeting but also do a reach out to the newly elected board members to attend the 3R's. With the 3R's we are looking to get the new board members involved in training, the county associations, and NJSBA early.

On October 28th the CAL members met virtually and discussed their experience at Workshop. Here are some highlights:

Positive Experiences

- Registration
- Jitney's
- Keynote speakers especially John Quinones
- Legislative Panel

Areas that Could be improved

- Lunch lines were extremely long waited for 40 minutes to get lunch
- Not all speakers put up their presentations.
- Would be nice to have paper to write notes during training sessions.
- The overflow for keynote had no sound.

The County Leadership will meet on Saturday November 23rd to select their members to the Nominating Committee.

Connection and Podcasts

NJSBA's podcast program Education Matters has had several successful programs. They have had the Speaker of the Assembly Craig Coughlin give a legislative overview, Dr. Tracey Severns speak on her book about lessons learned from mistakes, and Maren Smagala speak on communication tips for school districts.

Future programs will focus on AI and bringing wellness to a school district, as well as other topics.

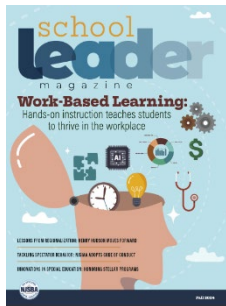
As for the Connection platform we have started a blog on the platform. The first two were on AI and the teacher shortage. We are also looking to possibly add one on school finance. We will be making more changes in January.

Business Administrator-in-Residence

Activities since the September 2024 Executive Committee meeting:

- October 1, dry run for the Legislative meeting on October 5th
- October 5th Legislative meeting
- October 7 Delegate assembly meeting, to discuss resolutions
- October 16th attended the Burlington County school boards dinner
- October presented at the NJSBA workshop.
- October 21-24 NJSBA Workshop
- October 29 virtual meeting with the Ramsey BOE.
- All month working on Delegate Assembly resolutions.
- Held discussions with Board members and administrators on school finance issues.

**NJSBA Executive Committee Meeting
Communications/ Public Affairs Department Update
Janet Bamford
November 15, 2024**



School Leader

The fall issue of *School Leader* came out in early October. The cover story, by a retired superintendent, discusses work-based learning programs, which provide high school students with real-life work experiences.

The issue also examines NJSIAA's new Spectator Code of Conduct, chronicles how the new Henry Hudson Regional School District recently navigated the process of regionalizing 3 districts into one; and spotlights award-winning special education programs in the state. *School Leader* also includes a Policy Update column on best practices for the use of social media by school board members, a Legally Speaking column on the requirements of the new OPRA legislation, a Labor Lookout column that discusses trends in teacher contract negotiations for this year and looks at two *School Leader* Award-winning curricular programs in Lawrence Township (Mercer) and Mendham Borough school districts.

We are hard at work on the Winter 2025 edition of *School Leader*.

School Board Notes

Fall is always a busy time for School Board Notes. NJSBA activities, including county meetings and training programs, pick up. Workshop promotional materials and coverage are in full swing, and news from the NJDOE always increases once districts are back in school.

Both late September and November bring elections—the annual school election and a special election. Our compilation of statistics and factual information on referenda (the only sources in the state for this information) continues, as does our statistical analysis of school board candidates.

Videos

We have released several videos since the Executive Committee was last updated. Robin produced a promotional video for ELFNJ that included interviews with Tim, Dave Hespe, Maria Alamo and Tammy Smith and also several board members talking about the value of ELFNJ sponsored programs. She also did Workshop promotional videos (“10 Reasons to Attend Workshop”) as well as a post-Workshop “sizzle reel” that was sent out. She also put together a video celebrating the Board Member of the Year, Charles Caraballo.

Robin also produced Education Matters videos, in which Ray Pinney hosts conversations with experts on timely topics.

Workshop

As is the case with all NJSBA departments, Communications is deeply involved in Workshop. We produce videos, help write and edit the At a Glance publication, write all the scripts for the stage, organize and conduct presentations. Robin is integral to the Student Film Festival section of Workshop. All of this takes planning and coordination. This year, for the first time, we turned around a recap of Workshop- both in written and video forms and sent them out to all board members on the Friday and the Monday after Workshop to reinforce with our members what a successful Workshop we had!

Special Projects

- Drafting officer remarks for October and November county meetings
- Ann Marie coordinated the Board Member of the Year program, announcements, press release
- Tom and Janet presented a program on “Communications During Negotiations” at Fall Labor Summit
- Extensive work on new website
- Updating current website
- Updating statistical data on school construction proposals and school board candidates
- Managing School Leader awards; announcing winners, SBN article
- News releases
- Extensive work with the Career-Focused Learner Task Force, which is busy meeting, researching and writing the update report.

Press, Public and Member Queries

Recent inquiries have come from the Star Ledger/NJ.com, the Bergen Record/northjersey.com, WHYY, the public television station in Philadelphia, the Asbury Park Press, Chalkbeat, the Philadelphia Inquirer/Philly.com, Patch and more. Topics addressed include the school elections, referenda, school ethics matters, filling a board vacancy, board member travel restrictions, who is the youngest board member in the state, and more. We also often answer questions from the public. Ann Marie continues to build our “Library” of standardized responses to similar questions, so the answers do not have to be newly created each time we provide information to members of the public.

Thank you for your continued support of NJSBA’s communications efforts.



FINANCE, OPERATIONS + LOGISTICS' SUPPORT SERVICES

DEPARTMENTAL UPDATE

November 15, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting

- **2024 – 2025 Year-To-Date Financial Summary**
 - NJSBA's financial performance for the new fiscal year has started strong for the first fiscal quarter.
 - The revenue streams contributing the most to this favorable performance include charter school memberships, superintendent searches, strategic planning services and NJSBA Cooperative Purchasing Program commissions.
 - Through the end of September, we have collected \$1.9M of Workshop '24 sponsorship and exhibitor revenues and have \$998K of registration orders. These revenues will not be recognized until Workshop is over and the books for October have been closed.
 - Lower-than-budgeted health care costs and travel expenses are contributing to this favorable financial performance, though the large increase in health care costs for calendar 2025 will likely erode some of this positive variance.

- **2023 – 2024 Audit**

- Robert Butvilla, our audit partner from Suplee Clooney + Company, will present the audit report to the board at tonight's meeting.
- The audit report notes that the auditors issued an unmodified ("clean") opinion on the accuracy of the Association's financial statements and did not find any deficiencies in our internal controls that they considered to be material weaknesses.
- This audit report also notes that NJSBA posted a profit for the year when the non-cash items of depreciation and amortization expense and the pension and post-retirement account adjustments are excluded from the income statement.

- **Other Items:**

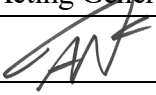
- Through the end of October, we have collected \$7.6 million of members' dues for the current fiscal year. These collections represent 97.8% of the total dues assessed (of \$7.7 million) and compare favorably to last year at this same time.
- The RFP (Request for Proposal) process for a 2nd boiler has been completed. A contract draft is being developed with the successful bidder.



MEMORANDUM

To: Timothy J. Purnell, Executive Director

From: Carl Tanksley, Jr., Esq., Acting General Counsel

Date: November 6, 2024 

Re: Executive Committee –September to November 2024 Update

I. School Ethics Reporting

- a. During the above reporting period, the General Counsel’s office reviewed internal processes relating to reporting board members that have failed to complete governance training in a timely fashion to the individual board members, their districts, and the School Ethics Commission to achieve greater efficiency in reporting. The office also identified and resolved a number of alleged reporting issues pertaining to individual board members.

II. Delegate Assembly

- a. The Association received nineteen resolutions from local districts, eighteen seeking to revise the *Manual of Positions and Policies on Education* and one resolution that proposed a bylaw change regarding the Resolution Subcommittee Report to ensure that boards receive the results of the Resolution Subcommittee 30 days in advance of the Delegate Assembly.
- b. NJSBA has again engaged the parliamentarian, David White for the December Delegate Assembly and has provided additional information to him regarding procedural issues.
- c. NJSBA was advised that our long-time court reporter, Elisabeth A. Landi Reporting, LLC, has decided to retire and will no longer be available for court reporting services during the DA. NJSBA has engaged Veritext reporting services as a replacement at a lower cost than offered by Landi Reporting. Since this is a new service for NJSBA, out of an abundance of caution, NJSBA has re-confirmed their participation.



- d. The Resolution Subcommittee convened on November 2 and November 4 and is scheduled to meet again on November 6 to discuss the filed resolutions. The Warren Hills and Monroe resolutions were voluntarily withdrawn by the respective districts.
 - i. B01 - Lopatcong - Notice of Resolutions
 - ii. R01 - Lopatcong - Notification for Budget Hearings
 - iii. R02 - Lopatcong - Notification for Public Meetings
 - iv. R03 - Kittatinny - Excused Student Absence for Military Enlistment
 - v. R04 - Verona - PILOT Funds
 - vi. R05 - South Orange-Maplewood - Fully Fund ABR
 - vii. R06 - Toms River - PILOTS
 - viii. R07 - Toms River - Fair Share Calculation
 - ix. R08 - Toms River - Property Reassessments
 - x. R09 - Plainfield - SIFE
 - xi. R10 - Plainfield - Charter Transportation
 - xii. R11 - Plainfield - Free NJ Transit
 - xiii. R12 - Plainfield - PILOTS
 - xiv. R13 - Plainfield - Neuroscience Assessments
 - xv. R14 - Plainfield - Financial Wealth Education
 - xvi. R15 - Plainfield - Renaming Public Schools
 - xvii. R16 - Plainfield - State-Funded Reparative Education
 - xviii. R17 - Monroe (Middlesex) - Impact Fees
 - xix. R18 - Warren Hills - Intent of Aggressor in HIB

III. Amicus Curiae

- a. The General Counsel's office has been requested to participate in an appeal from an adverse advisory opinion provided to one of our board members by the School Ethics Commission. The Advisory Opinion, A 05-23, advised that board members with relatives working in the district were prohibited from engaging in certain activities. In this matter, the board president could not choose members, chairs, and/or serve as ex-officio member of any committee that "even remotely touched upon or directly related to her family members' employment, including, but not limited to, the personnel committee, the negotiations committee, the instructional committee, and the finance committee." While the prohibition seems overbroad, the General Counsel's office continues to review and assess NJSBA's participation. The matter is currently in the preliminary stages of appeal.

IV. Procurement



- a. The General Counsel's office is in the process of negotiating a contract with Unitemp LLC to replacement boiler RFP at the 413 West State Street facility. Unitemp was the successful bidder with a bid of \$82,500.
- b. The parties must now negotiate the contract terms before work on the project can start.
- c. The General Counsel's office, along with Finance and Operations, is currently negotiating a new contract with Allied Security for the provision of security services at 413 West State.

V. ELFNJ

- a. The General Counsel's office is currently involved in advising ELFNJ as to the proper execution of an election of officers, and re-appointment of trustees after a substantial bylaws revision regarding the appointment and term lengths of officers and trustees. During the September meeting, materials regarding offices and terms were provided to ELFNJ.

VI. OPRA

- a. The General Counsel's office is currently reviewing the impact of the decision by the Start Ledger to terminate the print version of its daily publication in favor of a digital edition. This decision will impact the vast majority of school boards with respect to the publication of mandated notices. NJSBA is actively consulting with NJASBO and other local entities.

VII. School Employees Health Benefits Commission

- a. The General Counsel sits as a commissioner on the Commission. The SEHBP has recently considered rate increases recommended by AEON, the benefits administrator. The Commission is currently seeking additional information and methods to mitigate the increases in health care costs. The SEHBP has anticipated significant increases in the cost of benefits for 2025 of approximately 14%.