

Volume XLVI No. 4

April 2017 - Election Issue

Calendar of Events Spring 2017

April 6, 2017

MLR Workshop:

“English Language Learners”

Zeris Inn 4:30 PM

April 23 - 30, 2017

Mall Project

Rockaway Mall 4:30 PM

April 25, 2017

IPD Workshop:

“Understanding by Design”

Zeris Inn 4:30 PM

May 9, 2017

LAT Reception

Meadow Wood Manor 4:30 PM

May 16, 2017

Early Career CLAMBAKE!

Black River Barn 4:30 PM

May 24, 2017

Rep Council

Retirement Dinner 4:30 PM

Meadow Wood Manor

6 PM

June 1, 2017

LAT End-of-Year “Thank You”

Embassy Suites 4:30 PM

**always check mccea.com for events!*

Pictured below are 10 of your county colleagues who represented MCCEA at the recent Legislative Conference. They attended workshops and heard NJ legislators' positions on important topics.



Mount Arlington Community Celebrates Read Across America with PRIDE!

Mount Arlington Public School students in grades Pre-K - Grade 3 enjoyed the fourth annual Dr. Seuss Family Fun Night. The event was created by the district's Climate and Safety Team Chair, Jennifer Ochoa, as a way to further enhance positive relationships between home and school in the community. Teachers from the Mount Arlington Education Association Pride Committee were in attendance to lead families through stations centered around many Dr. Seuss themed crafts and activities.



Parents and children were able to relax and read, experiment with 'Oobleck', have a 'Green Eggs and Ham' relay race, make crafts such as a 'Truffala Tree' scene, a 'Thing One and Thing Two' painting, 'Cat in the Hat' magnets, and many more fun-filled, educational experiences. The culminating event was the drawing of grade level raffle winners and the announcement of the individual who made the closest estimate in the 'One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish' estimation contest. This popular evening continues to grow each year.



Above, Miss Scarmozzino watches as students estimate goldfish to celebrate "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish," and at top right Misty Nelson enjoys a book with son Shane.

**MCCEA Mall Project is April 23 - 30.
Please Contribute... & Support this Effort!**



Jefferson's World Language Supervisor (l) and Superintendent (r) celebrate with MCCEA member Val Ciaburri at the district Christmas Party, a fun event for ALL employees!

President's Perspective • Laurie Schorno

Fredrichs Part Deux

Well, elections have consequences. Regardless of your personal views regarding the new president, it cannot be denied that the future of public education is in doubt. First came the confirmation of DeVos, a woman with no public school experience whatsoever and a fierce proponent of Charter Schools and Vouchers. Then came the pending confirmation (at the time of print) of Justice Gorsuch. Although he is extremely bright and accomplished, he is an ultra-conservative with a record of being anti-IDEA and anti-employee. For the next 30 years, he will be a driving force behind decisions on school equity, school integration, interpretation of ESSA, support

services eligibility, federal funding of schools, and other matters that govern who we teach, how we teach and with what resources.

For about the past two years we've heard over and over about the Fredrichs case and how it would impact our association and, in effect, our profession and our students. The case was overturned last summer. This was a big victory for New Jersey, albeit one with no celebration. Why? Because we know that NJ Public Schools, which are among the best school systems in the world and that consistently rank in the top 3 in the country, are at risk.

If you remember, we've also reported that there were several cases following just behind that would have similar effects. One of them is an exact replica of the Fredrichs case, filed by the same attorneys. This is expected to be expedited much in the same manner as Fredrichs, but with more caution. These are Union busting attempts aimed at interfering with the associations' rights to represent our members. As cases are won, more will follow.

Here are just some of the other cases currently filed:

Potts vs. Gobles Public Schools- provides that no notice or hearing is required for an unpaid suspension of up to 15 days.

Johnson vs. School District #1- allows a district to place any teacher on unpaid leave.

Doe vs. Atlanta Independent Schools- would allow GA school districts to privatize and dismiss all tenured teachers.

Trinity Lutheran Decision- could decide the future of state school voucher systems to include religious education. Remember - voucher systems draw money from local public school district funds.

Unions and their members are not the only ones in jeopardy of being stripped of their rights. There are several cases that are intended to deny our students the services they need and to which they are entitled. Among them:

Gloucester Decision- will decide the validity of guidance support for transgender students.

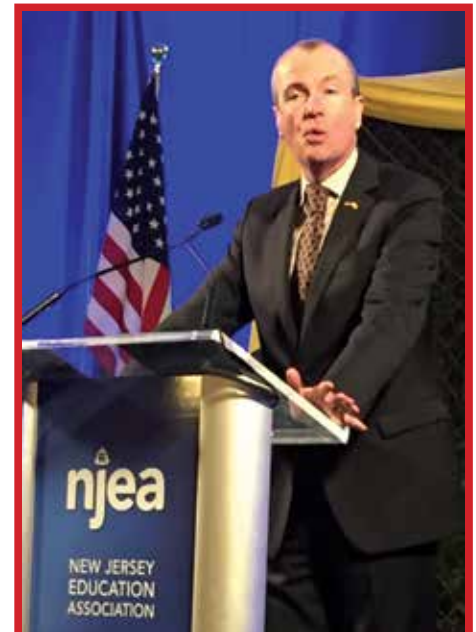
Andrew Decision- will decide what level of education benefit is required under IDEA. This could seriously impede the funding for services to our special needs population.

What can you do?

If it's not too late, continue to contact your Senators and Congressmen. Tell them that a Gorsuch confirmation is not good for our students or our great public schools.

If it's too late - hold on to your hats. And the next time you are asked to make a phone call or send an email in support of our great public schools, do it!

**Elections have consequences -
so does apathy.**



***Ambassador Phil Murphy is NJEA's
Endorsed Candidate for Governor.
He supports Public Education!***

MCCEA

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Blogger *Jersey Jazzman* Speaks at Embassy Suites Overnight Weekend

This year's annual Overnight weekend was a mix of member benefit vendors, topical workshops, food and even... a pool!

Keynote speaker was "Jersey Jazzman," the pseudonym for Mark Weber, a New Jersey public school teacher, public school parent, taxpayer, and NJEA member. His no-holds-barred blogs bring attention to education/political concerns across our state.

jerseyjazzman.blogspot.com



President Laurie Schorno (l) and IPD Chair Kathy Wood (r) welcome "Jersey Jazzman."



Pictured left with "Jersey Jazzman" are some members of the IPD Committee that planned this year's "Overnight" weekend: (l - r) Shirley Chamberlin, Patti Ressler, Kathy Wood, Joan Jensen, Anne Simon and Amal Hussein.

New ESSA Draft Not Far From NCLB

From Sean W. Hadley, Esq.

Associate Director of NJEA Government Relations

The NJDOE just released its proposed state ESSA plan - and it's not good. ESSA is the long-anticipated replacement for NCLB. ESSA's promise was to move away from NCLB, including its focus on high-stakes testing.

Unfortunately, the NJDOE draft fails to live up to that promise. Instead, it would make high-stakes testing the top measure for school accountability. In some cases, this could serve upwards of 85% for a school's "score" in its first full year of implementation. This is a combination of SGPs and proficiency, both based on PARCC. A low score would put a school on the "priority" or "focus" list, subjecting it to as-yet-unknown state interventions.

This overemphasis on testing is unacceptable. The promise of ESSA is to move away from high-stakes testing and towards what really matters for student learning. The current draft fails to live up to that promise.

- NJDOE should embrace multiple measures for success, not just testing.
- PARCC has way too many known issues - and is likely to be radically overhauled in the coming years. It is wrong to build an entire accountability system around this single, flawed tool.
- A focus on standardized testing gives the impression to parents, students, educators, & other school employees that this is "the same old, same old" - when the promise of ESSA offers so many other potential benefits to New Jersey's public education system.
- Standardized testing fails to capture all aspects of student learning and development. ESSA should reflect what truly matters for students—access to resources, safe and healthy schools, and authentic and varied learning opportunities, among others.

ESP Update Mark Eckert, ESP Chair

Over the weekend of February 3-5th, Houston, Texas hosted the Super Bowl. Here in New Jersey, NJEA hosted their very own Super Bowl: the NJEA ESP Conference, held at the East Brunswick Hilton.

The weekend kicked off Friday night with dinner and guest speaker Phil Murphy, NJEA's own MVP endorsed candidate for governor. The ball kept moving on Saturday where over 430 ESPs from the state attended workshops ranging from professional development to advocacy.

Saturday night we scored a touchdown with over 525 guests attending the ESP awards dinner. Lois Yuka of Middlesex County won the prestigious award. MCCEA's own Steve Aitchenson from Morris Plains was there to accept his award for Morris County ESP of the Year.

Sunday was capped off with workshops in the morning and ended with lunch and giveaways. The post-game show will be held on May 11th at Zeris Inn at 4:30 pm. There will be a roundtable discussion about issues concerning ESPs. Come out and be a part of the big game!



Above, at the NJEA ESP Conference (February 2017), Morris County members celebrated with our ESP of the Year, Mr. Steven Aitchenson, a custodian with the Morris Plains Education Association. Steve is seated (center) with his 2 daughters. The annual event took place at the East Brunswick Hilton.

Your 2 Candidates for MCCEA Treasurer - Two Year Term



**Sara
Kozlowski**

\$\$ A Vote for Kozlowski is a Great Investment! \$\$

The position of County Treasurer is one of tremendous responsibility, dedication and fiscal integrity. I believe that I will be able to keep the association in high financial regard with the NJEA and keep our membership informed and updated on our fiscal status and budgetary issues while maintaining the excellent record keeping and expenditure voucher system already in place.

I have been a public school educator, active union member and leader for the past 23 years. Currently I am President of the Chester Education Association. As president of my local I work closely with the treasurer and CPA, executive team, committee chairs and our budget to ensure our union is in excellent financial standing and current on all local, county, state and national issues.

Prior to entering a career in public school education, I had a 15-year career in the financial services industry. During the span of that career I had extensive experience meeting and maintaining government financial regulations, ensuring proper licensing, interpretation and application of tax codes, monitoring and maintaining financial expenditures and records as well as establishing, evaluating and implementing financial goals.

Fiscal competence, accountability, responsibility and dependability are attributes I hold. These attributes, with the combination of financial, educational and union leadership, make me the ideal candidate for MCCEA treasurer.

It would be an honor to serve our union as county treasurer and I believe I will be an invaluable asset to this important MCCEA position.

Thank you for your vote!

UNION DEDICATION & EXPERIENCE:

- Chester Education Association (CEA) President, former Vice-President & Negotiations Committee
- Membership Chair, Building Rep. & DEAC
- School Improvement Plan Committee (SciP)
- PRIDE Committee - District & County levels
- Membership Committee & District & County levels
- Minority Leadership Relations Committee



**Lisa
Lamendola**

As a candidate for MCCEA Treasurer, my years of dedication to my local, county, state, and national associations have given me the experience necessary to be successful in this position.

I have been an active participant in my local association since my first year as an educator, 16 years ago. I began as an Association Rep, heading to my first Summer Leadership Conference to be trained in my responsibilities. Soon, I found myself attending my first NEA RA in Washington, DC in 2004. There I met many fellow MCCEA members, as well as members from across the country. It was there, at my first NEA RA, that I was inspired to become an active and educated advocate for public education. I have since attended numerous Summer and Winter Leadership conferences to gain training in Membership, Community Organizing, Grievance Processing, Treasurer's Training, Advanced Treasurer's Training, PERC Law, and more. Eventually I was afforded the opportunity to serve as County Coordinator to the NEA RA - a position that works to keep NJEA a professional and active presence at the national meeting.

In my years as MCCEA PRIDE Committee Chairperson, I have had the privilege of writing grants and planning Optical Academy events, organizing donations to the Interfaith Food Pantry, and most recently planning the highly successful Winter Fun Fest.

My experience as local Treasurer of a large association has provided me with the skills and experience necessary to protect and manage your dues dollars. In this position, I have worked with an NJEA approved Accountant, gained experience with Quicken, Quick Books, LAFAP filing, payroll, creating budgets, and running an association's budget in a responsible manner.

I am ready and eager to become your MCCEA Treasurer and ask for your support in this election.

EXPERIENCE:

- Treasurer (Ed. Assoc. of Mt. Olive) 2011-present
- Negotiations Committee (EAMO) 2013-present
- Association Building/Head Representative 2003-2016
- MCCEA PRIDE Chair 2013-present
- NJEA Public Relations Committee member
- NEA RA Delegate (over 10 years)
- MCCEA Friend of Education 2015

2017 NJEA Walter J. O'Brien Legislative & Political Action Conference ~ An Overview from MCCEA Participants ~

Pensions Session -

Panelists: Senator Gerald Cardinale (LD 39), Senator Linda Greenstein (LD 6), Assemblyman Herb Conaway, Jr. (LD 7)

Three questions to the panelists:

1. By 2027, the TPAF will be out of funds. How do you propose to get the state back on track?

Cardinale: Cannot see that our pensions will not be honored – economic growth will increase state revenues without increasing the rates of taxation – prioritize the areas that need to be fixed first as revenues come in.

Greenstein: Budget is always a problem - prioritize the state of the funding of our pensions - her solution is to have a constitutional amendment on the ballot and to make quarterly payments which is a MUST! - firm believer in collective bargaining.

Conaway: To fix the pension, you need to fund the pension – a constitutional amendment is necessary.

2. PERS Pension Fund – There is an incentive to districts to privatize. If the district doesn't integrate the employees into the existing system, would you be willing to work with NJEA to initiate legislation to help the situation and to keep the system growing, even if there is no money going into the system?

Cardinale: This is a new problem to the senators – it would be a co-sponsor of the bill.

Greenstein: New problem – she is against privatization – wants to be a sponsor of the bill – should fix this issue now.

Conaway: YES!

3. COLA come back – How can New Jersey live up to this commitment and get COLAs reinstated?

Cardinale: Doesn't feel comfortable about this because he doesn't know too much about it - he doesn't know the details with the budget and doesn't know where this lies on the priority list.

Greenstein: This needs a push and new administration may help – she supports bringing it back.

Conaway: Committed to it, but without the facts it's difficult to say what to do – willing to sponsor a bill once he knows more.

Charlotte Bayley, MCCEA Treasurer

Federal Issues Session -

Panelists: Congressmen Leonard Lance (CD 7) & Frank Pallone (CD 6)

If I could sum up the session in one thought, it would be that the Trump presidency has made any type of progressive agenda difficult for both Democrats and Republicans. While Congressman Lance is not fully on board with the NJEA agenda, there are enough points of overlap to believe that both he and Cong Pallone can work together to move forward several pieces of legislation that will benefit our members. The most important information I took away from the session was that both Congressmen appeared to have a great respect for each other and a genuine respect for NJEA members and our issues.

Lee Ann Brensinger, MCCEA Secretary

Legislative Conference Health Benefits Session -

Panelists: Senator Joe Pennacchio (R-LD 26), Assemblyman Craig Coughlin (D-LD 19),
Assemblyman Dan Benson (D-LD 14), Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter (D-LD 35).

The questions began with Chapter 78, where members showed the legislators pay stubs six years apart. The teacher to whom they belonged had gotten raises every year, but her take home pay went down \$700 a month. Seventy percent of our members are women - so this is disproportionately affecting females. The moderator asked panelists to consider decoupling the cost of premium sharing from the cost of the policy, so locals can bargain a raise that will outpace the health insurance costs. Coughlin, Sumter and Benson were all in favor of decoupling. Pennacchio wanted to look at some of the ways to save money on the cost and thereby reduce the amount of money members have to pay, saying, "If we could take a look at some of the cost factors, we could give you options."

An audience member brought up the fact that when a contract expires no one gets a raise until it is settled. However, the Chapter 78 increases still occur. Paterson salaries have been frozen for four years, yet they have progressed through the tiers, guaranteeing a serious decrease in take home pay. The member asked the legislators to pass a bill saying that if pay cannot increase, then insurance copayments cannot increase either. The group seemed to think that was a good idea. Benson called a negative check (where the contributions are greater than the money earned) "insane." He added that NJEA needed to be at the table. NJEA was not at the table when the law was written.

A retired member said she always hears of going after the retired members for health care copays. She said there is no more money to take from them, because there is no more COLA (cost of living allowance). Benson, once again, voiced strong support for us. He said, "Once you retire, it's done. That's the contract. We have to honor that contract."

That is a hopeful sentiment. It would be best for our members if more people who believe as Benson does were elected to the New Jersey legislature.

Kerri Lee Farrell, MCCEA Vice President

(continued on page 7)

Mount Arlington School Awarded \$10,000 for Sustainability Projects

Sustainable Jersey for Schools and the NJEA announced that Mount Arlington School has been awarded a \$10,000 Sustainable Jersey for Schools grant. Ten \$10,000 grants were distributed statewide to fund a variety of projects which address wellness initiatives and projects modeling sustainable actions which link learning to community, regional, state, and global resources. Mount Arlington's grant, **M3: Math Models Matter - SIMULATIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**, will be used to develop interdisciplinary units of study that will allow students to explore the practices of scientists and engineers. The program was envisioned and developed by STEM Coordinator and Enrichment Teacher Julie Crawford.

Proposals were judged by an independent Blue Ribbon Selection Committee. The grants are intended to help school districts and schools make progress toward a sustainable future in general, and specifically toward Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification. Mount Arlington School was one of 4 districts in Morris County to achieve certification last year and seeks to model instructional programs that allow students to practice measurements and use applied math to build their skills just like scientists and engineers.

Through an "Enrichment for All Model" and thematic focus of "Sustainability Through Local & Global Citizenship" additional STEM projects based on curriculum goals will be developed and/or expanded. Mount Arlington School will develop these projects with interdisciplinary connections and local, state, national, and global resources. In addition, they plan to establish regional and global contacts with other schools and with colleges and universities. It is the goal of the program to continue to create websites, Google classrooms for collaborative student research, and video productions for each of the programs. The focus of this expansion is the development of students' perspectives as global citizens and to expose the students to career pathways.

Explains Crawford, "This grant will enable us to expand our STEM programs to address the Next Generation Science Standards as well as the career readiness standards. It's all about making science community-based with connections to the world at large. As educators we know our students will be better global citizens with this background knowledge and field experiences."

"NJEA is proud to continue to work with Sustainable Jersey on this important program that directs resources into our schools," said NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Sean Spiller. "It is our job to help create a new generation of engaged citizens and leaders." In 3 years, NJEA has provided \$500,000 to support a sustainable future for children across the state.

This will be developed in three strands based on the school's teaching teams who meet during common planning:

Applied Technology for Public Safety:

Bridge Design and Satellite Imaging (Grades 7 & 8)

Water Management & Energy Alternatives (Grades 5 & 6)

Land Management (Grades 3 & 4)

Sustainable Jersey for Schools is a certification program for NJ public schools. To learn more, visit www.SustainableJerseySchools.com.



MOUNT ARLINGTON SCHOOL AWARDED \$10,000 FOR STEM PROGRAMS - Left to Right: Donna Drewes, Co-Director Sustainable Jersey; Tanya Occhiuzzo, MAEA President & 5th Grade ELA and Social Studies Teacher; Maureen Mack VP MAEA & 5th/6th Grade Math Teacher; Grant Writer Julie Crawford, STEM Coordinator & Enrichment Teacher; Sean Spiller, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer; Thomas Hardy, NJEA Organizing Specialist.

Minority Leadership Recruitment Committee of the MCCEA/NJEA along with NEA trainers present:

“English Language Learners”

**Thursday, April 6th
Zeris Inn ● 4:30-6:30**

This workshop will increase your knowledge about effective, differentiated teaching strategies for English language learners in your classroom.

Refreshments & 2 PD hours!

To register please follow link:

<http://mlrenglishlanguage-learners.eventbrite.com>

or go to

www.mccea.com

Don't forget to print your ticket!

(Political Action Overview continued from page 5)

School Funding and Charters Session -

Panelists: Senator Patrick Diegnan (D-LD 18), Assemblywomen Marlene Caride (D-LD 36) and Mila Jasey (D-LD 27).

Discussion centered on the necessity of a moratorium on charter schools. There is much concern about public schools' ability to maintain their own innovative and creative programs if they are shortchanged financially due to charter schools competing for funds. It was thought that charter schools should be held accountable in the same way as public schools. There seems to be a gray area as to whether this is being implemented. Others proposed charter schools should be reviewed annually and evaluated.

Some participants suggested that all students should be eligible for the lottery to attend charter schools, not just the chosen few - causing a segregation. Another important issue is the continuing opposition of Governor Christie and his unrealistic proposal for funding public schools. There was an acknowledgement that the legislators have tried to deal with all these issues and that NJEA members support their efforts.

Antoinette Corbett & Angela Cordova

*Instruction & Professional Development
Committee Presents:*

“Understanding by Design”

Tuesday April 25, 2017

4:30 – 6:30 PM • Zeris Inn

This workshop will provide participants with an overview of the three stages of the Understanding by Design template. It will also look deeper into Stage 1: Learning Goals, Essential Questions and Enduring Understanding. Participants will be challenged to consider what true understanding looks like and how to promote it in their classrooms.

To register: please visit mceea.com.

Go to the events calendar, click on the date of the event for a direct link to the registration.

Deadline for registration: April 18

Don't forget to print your ticket!

* In order to help protect members' dues, reservations that are not honored will be billed to the member.

Veteran Members Share Wisdom & Advice

by Amal Hussein, MCCEA Membership Chair

On January 26th, the Membership Committee invited experienced members (10 years or more) and local association presidents to Meadow Wood Manor in Randolph for an evening of celebration and sharing. The evening began with an important reminder to educators regarding social media responsibility, as the courts have said that **educators do not share the same First Amendment rights as other private citizens**. Please read the following two articles on this urgent topic:

<https://www.njea.org/members/sparks/social-media>

<http://www.nea.org/home/38324.htm>

Members also had a roundtable discussion about keeping experienced members involved – in both their Association and in the teaching profession. A major idea shared was when members feel respected by their community, administrators, and legislators they feel more willing to get engaged and remain in the profession. Another idea shared was that the additions to the paperwork required (such as SGOs) make educators feel like they are being questioned rather than trusted. Interesting ideas!

The highlight of the evening was advice for early career members. Attendees filled out two cards, one with ***Things that work in my class, office, bus, etc.*** and another with ***Things that I wish I had known when I started my career.*** Members' ideas and words of wisdom will be made into a book that will be handed out to early career members (7 years of experience or less) who attend the **Clambake in May**. Please check mceea.com/events/ to RSVP for this event and to find other events you may be interested in!



Experienced Morris County educators have a wealth of information to share with early career members! Mt. Olive (above) & Jefferson (below)



E-mail County Line photos, articles & information to:
dixonrb4@gmail.com

MCCEA Website:
www.mccea.com

Change of address:
www.njea.org

First Class Mail

“In My Public School We Use Creative Solutions” • Kirstin Rigby, PRIDE Poster Contest Coordinator



Maris Wheeler ~ 7th Grade
Borough School, Morris Plains



Angelina Wang ~ 4th Grade
Chester M. Stevens School, Mt. Olive



Richard Wang ~ 2nd Grade
Chester M. Stevens School, Mt. Olive



Joshua Young ~ 5th Grade
Salem Drive School, Hanover Twp.



Ahmad Mokhemar ~ 8th Grade
East Hanover Middle School, East Hanover



Urmi Banerjee ~ 5th Grade
Millington School, Long Hill Twp.



Shiloh Colongon ~ 7th Grade
East Hanover Middle School, East Hanover



Zachary Anderson ~ 5th Grade
Millington School, Long Hill Twp.



Isabella Fernandez-Pozas ~ 4th Grade
Cucinella Elementary, Washington Twp.