



February 8, 2010

NJEA response to pension proposals

Statement by NJEA President Barbara Keshishian

NJEA is pleased that Trenton is finally paying attention to the condition of New Jersey's public employee pension funds, but these legislative proposals will ultimately hurt our public schools, our students, and the people who educate them every day.

Our public officials have the responsibility to ensure that we maintain high quality public schools – and that includes maintaining the integrity of the pension system for those who work in our schools.

In the past 15 years, teachers and school employees have contributed more than \$6 billion of our own money into the funds.

But in those same 15 years, the state has only contributed \$1.45 billion of the \$7.36 billion it was required to contribute – a shortfall of nearly \$6 billion. In eleven of those years, the state contributed nothing to the funds.

We've shown our willingness to make sacrifices in order to keep the system strong. That's why we voluntarily agreed to a 10 percent increase in those contributions in 2008, and that brought real money immediately into the funds.

Now that the pension system is in an economic mess, the politicians who made the mess are pointing their fingers at the teachers and school employees who tried to prevent it.

We urge parents and all citizens of New Jersey to not let the politicians use the people we all rely upon to educate our students as the scapegoats for their own irresponsibility.