



New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association

# Capitol Update

Winter 2006

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## President Proposes to Cut Education Budget, Eliminate 42 Programs

In the President's proposed Fiscal Year 2007 budget, released in early February, the Bush Administration called for cutting more than \$3 billion from federal education. This would be a 5.5% decrease, or a 2% reduction when subtracting last year's school support related to Hurricane Katrina.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), funded at \$11.6 billion in FY 2006, received a minimal increase of approximately \$44 million. The President has again proposed a \$100 million voucher initiative, America's Opportunity Scholarships for Kids.

As part of the proposed budget, the President also called for the elimination of the \$1.29 billion Carl D. Perkins vocational education program. Additionally, the President proposes to eliminate other existing education programs that the Administration considers ineffective. The 42 programs include, among others, the School Leadership Program, Smaller Learning Communities, Comprehensive School Reform, Dropout Prevention, Elementary and Secondary School Counseling and Civics Education.

According to New Jersey's two Democratic Senators, Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez, the President's Fiscal Year 2007 (FY07) budget would cost New Jersey. If these cuts are enacted, No Child Left Behind Act underfunding could leave New Jersey with a \$233.9 million shortfall to fund the law's mandates. Furthermore, under Title I, New Jersey could lose \$3.8 million, and under Special Education funding, a \$192 million shortfall. Eliminating Perkins Vocational Education would cut \$32 million out of 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which may affect 14 centers across New Jersey.

However, the President offers some new initiatives, including the high school reform proposal introduced last year. The administration's high school proposal hinges on a formula grant to states that would support:

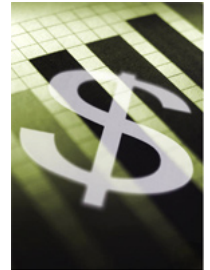
- The development, implementation, and evaluation of targeted interventions designed to improve the academic performance of students most at risk of failing to meet state academic standards.
- Expanded high school assessments that would assist educators in increasing accountability and meeting the needs of at-risk students.

The high school initiative would require assessments in an additional two years of high school, on top of the current NCLB requirement of testing once in grades 10-12.

Furthermore, President Bush requested a \$70 million increase for Striving Readers, a program supporting research-based literacy interventions for secondary school students reading below grade level. The Title I program received no increase in funding for grants to school districts. However, the President proposed a new \$200 million Title I School Improvement for states to provide technical assistance to schools identified as in need of improvement.

Another piece of the budget proposal linked to the high school reform is the new American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI). Included in ACI are new \$125 million Math Now programs aimed at improving algebraic instruction at the elementary and middle levels.

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## U.S. Congress Passes Federal Education Funding Bill

At the end of 2005, right before its winter break, the U.S. Congress passed funding for education for Fiscal Year 2006 by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 215-213 in the House. The President signed the bill on December 30, 2005.

Congress was exceptionally late this year in passing appropriations funding, due in part to discussions over Hurricane Katrina relief. Normally, there are at least a few months between actual approved funding and discussions on the President's budget proposal for the following year. This article deals with the actual funding approved by Congress for this year, Fiscal Year 2006. An analysis of the President's proposed budget for the next year, Fiscal Year 2007, is addressed in another article.

The final bill, the Labor, HHS, Education conference report, cut total education funding by 1.2% below FY 2005 funding levels or more than 2% in real terms when considering inflation.

Special Education funding was trimmed by almost \$21 million, or a -0.2% decrease from last year, without accounting for inflation.

Overall Title I funding, which is composed of different grants, had mixed results. The Title I Basic Grants suffered a decrease of 1.8%, while Targeted and Education Finance Incentive Grants each had an increase of 2.3%. The Title I Subtotal Grants to LEAs had a modest 0.2 percent decrease.

Overall, the conference report eliminated more than \$651 million in discretionary funding for the Department of Education. Many programs were hurt including comprehensive school reform (-96%), which was all but eliminated. In addition, the report lowered funding for Perkins vocational and technical education (-2.3%), teacher quality enhancement grants (-12.3%), safe and drug free schools (-20.8%), and smaller learning communities (-1%) among others. These programs address issues such as providing smaller school size for a more effective learning environment, encouraging students—especially “at risk” students—to stay in school, and supporting school wide reform.

Congress also shaved about \$100,000 from the School Leadership Program, which fared



better than many other programs. Last year, the President proposed eliminating this program. Other big losers, in terms of percentage, include Construction Impact Aid (-63.3%), Even Start (-56%), State Grants for Innovative Education

Programs (-50.1%), Education Technology State Grants (-45.1%), and Star Schools (-28.7%).

Some big winners include the Striving Readers Program (+19.8%), Early Reading First (+9.0%), and Advanced Placement Fees (+8.1%).

One of the rationales cited for the lower appropriations was the diversion of funding to Hurricane Katrina. The budget included a supplemental for Katrina relief focused on programs to restart school operations, and included a one percent across the board cut. ◀

## President Proposes to Cut Budget

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Both programs would require implementation of research-based practices, including those recommended by a new \$10 million-funded National Mathematics Panel, which the Bush administration compared to the National Reading Panel. The National Math Panel would identify effective practices and seek to improve instructional practices.

Also part of the ACI is an additional \$90 million for the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, funded for FY 2007 at \$122.2 million. The additional \$90 million would provide competitive grants to expand AP/IB math, science, and foreign language offerings and is intended to attract and reward AP/IB teachers who improve student test scores.

Finally, the ACI would include a new \$25 million Adjunct Teacher Corps to attract nontraditional math and science teachers to secondary schools, and a \$5 million Evaluation of Mathematics and Science Programs initiative to evaluate and improve the quality of all federal math and science initiatives and link the programs to NCLB.

Congress will be the final arbiter on all of these proposals. In the FY06 Budget, Congress restored many of the President's proposed cuts after successful efforts by the education community. ◀

## Corzine Transition Policy Advisory Groups Release Reports

On January 27, Governor Jon Corzine released the final reports from all 19 transition policy advisory groups, including the Public Education Transition Policy Group and the Property Tax Reform Transition Policy Group.

"I have made a pledge to run a government that is open and accountable, and with that in mind I have made these reports publicly available," Corzine said. "My administration will not shy away from the problems facing our state and these reports will be helpful in weighing potential solutions."

The reports offer recommendations reached by members of each policy group made up of private citizens. The recommendations now go to the Governor for consideration.

### Public Education

The Public Education Transition Policy Group included representation by JoAnn D. Bartoletti, NJPSA Executive Director, who chaired the Subgroup on High School Reform. Overall, the group made thirteen recommendations—five of the most significant as follows:

- **Expand high quality preschool and full-day kindergarten to every school district.** Since statutory district spending limitations impede expansion of full-day kindergarten and preschool in the first six months of the new administration, a specific Spending Growth Limitation Adjustment should be provided for preschool and full-day kindergarten.
- **Issue an executive order that would, at minimum, cap all tuition rates for special education, whether in private or public schools, to the consumer price index.** A review of N.J.A.C. 6A:23 pointed to several areas that could be reviewed in making a tuition determination including: lowering the percentage of administrative costs, using averages as benchmarks for maximum salaries, limiting the free fund balance and applying public school restrictions of administrative and staff travel.
- **Launch a blue-ribbon panel to design a statewide funding formula for the education system that is equitable and supports the integrity of the Abbott decision.** The state has failed to fully fund CEIFA (Comprehensive Education Improvement Financing Act) for

several years, resulting in growing disparities among districts. A new funding formula should address the changing economic circumstances of some Abbott districts as well as the problem of property taxes.

- **Support the ongoing development of an effective and cost-efficient assessment system that will provide policy makers, teachers, students parents, and other instructional leaders with important data to make decisions about students, schools, and districts.** Currently, the Testing and Assessment Task Force convened by the Acting Commissioner is deliberating on a system that will provide more useful information for educators and the state and comply with federal requirements—their work should be supported and advanced.
- **Strengthen the role of the state-mandated Intervention and Referral Services Teams in every school.** The state should provide intensive professional development I&RS teams that includes training of key personnel in research-based interventions.

Other recommendations include supporting more rigorous curriculum standards, particularly in math and science, and aligning these standards through grades P-16; strengthening teacher and leadership education, recruitment, and retention; expanding after school programs; establishing model early learning research and demonstrations centers in partnership with institutes of higher education; and fully supporting and funding the establishment of a statewide student database.

### Property Taxes

The Property Tax Reform Transition Policy Group also released its recommendations in an interim report. It is unclear when and if a final report will be available.

The recommendations cover many areas, including reforming the rebate structure and examining local government issues. Many of the recommendations focus on schools and school funding. Of particular importance, the report analyzed the following:

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## Legislative Session Underway: Education Committees Consider School Bills

The 212th Legislative Session is officially underway. On January 26 and February 6, 2006, the Senate and Assembly Education committees favorably released several bills, which if passed into law, will impact our schools. The bills may be subject to a vote by the Senate and/or Assembly at a future voting session.

### SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ACTION

#### **S-246 (Palaia) Violence and Vandalism Reporting**

This bill provides statutory authority for the existing requirement that districts annually file a Report on Violence and Vandalism in the Schools. It updates the requirement to include information on the number of pupils who have been “removed” from the regular education program pursuant to the Zero Tolerance for Guns Act. *NJPSA supports the bill.*

#### **S-338 (Bark) and A-370 (Chadzikis) Prepaid Lunch Programs**

This bill provides statutory authority for the practice in many school districts of establishing prepaid school lunch programs in school cafeterias. NJPSA supports the bill which was approved by the Assembly on February 6, 2006 ( 78-0 vote ).

#### **S-548 (Smith) Sick Leave Banks**

NJPSA supports S-548 which permits local school districts to establish sick leave banks with local bargaining units in the district. Under this bill, employees would be able to donate sick leave days or other leave time as agreed upon by the board and local bargaining representatives. Sick leave drawn from the bank will be treated for all purposes as if it were the accrued sick leave time of the employee who receives it. The sick leave bank would be administered by a local committee consisting of three members representing the school district and three members representing the bargaining units involved. NJPSA submitted amendatory language to permit multiple-bargaining unit sick leave banks if all parties agree.

#### **S-129 (Gormley) Photo Identification – School Bus Drivers**

This bill requires public school districts, agencies and nonpublic schools that own their own school buses, and private contractors that operate school buses to provide all school bus

drivers with photo identification and to require drivers to wear photo identification to ensure student safety. School districts can apply to the NJ Department of Education for reimbursement for the costs of implementing this legislation. *NJPSA supports this bill.*

#### **S-328 (Madden) Bus Inspections – Students**

In response to recent cases of students being left on a school bus after the route is completed, this legislation mandates that all bus drivers inspect their buses at the end of the route. Under the bill, if a child is left on the bus the bus driver's endorsement will be suspended for six months for a first offense or permanently revoked for a second offense.

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### Corzine Transition Groups

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- *Call a special session of the Legislature limited to one purpose, property tax reform, and scheduled to run only in a matter of weeks, if not day(s).* This provision would focus on work completed by a preliminary appointed Constitutional Commission. The group noted that there are several reports and recommendations currently available to assist the Legislature with making decisions on the issues without need for more investigation.
- *A Citizens' Convention on Property Tax Reform should be limited in scope and not permitted to consider issues of spending.* The report emphasized that issues of spending and consolidation are too politically charged for a convention to consider successfully. The report also rejected consolidation and revenue sharing of school districts and municipal governments as a viable solution. The group noted that any potential cost savings “would not make much of a dent in the \$18 billion in property taxes now raised.” However, the group did encourage Governor Corzine to pursue a “vigorous” budget process and hold schools and local governments more accountable for their spending.

For full reports, visit <http://nj.gov/governor/news/news/approved/20060127.html>. ◀



## Legislative Session Underway (continued from previous page)

If a driver is guilty of gross negligence on the first offense, the penalty would be the permanent revocation of the school bus endorsement.

### **S-384 (Martin, Turner) Teacher Candidate GPA Exemption**

NJPSA supports this legislation which would permit teacher candidates for certification to be given an exemption to the 2.5 grade point average (GPA) requirement by the State Board of Examiners. The State Board of Education must develop criteria for State Board of Examiner review which must include a review of:

- the year in which the candidate graduated;
- the grading policies in place during the candidate's attendance at the institution;
- events during the candidate's attendance which impacted his/her GPA;
- admissions criteria at the institution attended by the candidate;
- whether a critical need exists for teachers within the candidate's area of endorsement and in the job the candidate seeks; and
- the difficulty of the course work undertaken by the candidate at the institution.

### **S-1218 (Turner) and A-833 (Stanley) School Nutrition Requirements**

NPSA supports this legislation which provides statutory authority to back up the Department of Agriculture's regulations on school nutrition adopted last year. These regulations are scheduled to go into effect in our schools in September 2007.

The bill requires that, effective September 2007, foods of minimal nutritional value (as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture), foods and beverages listing sugar as the first ingredient and candy will not be served, given away or sold on school property before the end of the school day. The bill also contains restrictions on all snack and beverage items sold or served during the school day on school property. Exceptions exist for special school celebrations, curriculum related activities, special needs diets and for health care provided by the school nurse.

### **S-621 (Girgenti) Date Rape Drugs – Inclusion in Core Curriculum**

This legislation requires the inclusion of a discussion of certain "designer" drugs, including date rape drugs, in the health and physical education core curriculum.

### **ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE ACTION**

#### **A-515 (Bateman) Criminal History Check – School Volunteers**

This legislation permits local school districts to require a criminal history check of all school volunteers who have direct contact with students. If the district chooses to require the check, the school must reimburse the volunteer for the cost of the check. Similarly, local boards are authorized to reimburse paid applicants for employment for the cost of criminal background checks if the district so chooses. *NJPSA supports this permissive legislation.*

#### **A-914 (Gusciora) Annual Report on School Contracts**

This legislation requires public school districts to annually report on all school district contracts.

#### **A-1650 (Barnes) Gang Violence Prevention Instruction**

This bill requires boards of elementary schools to offer instruction in gang violence prevention and in ways to avoid gang membership. The instruction would take place as part of the comprehensive health and physical education program.

#### **A-856 (Stanley) School Location Restrictions**

This legislation would prohibit the location of certain highway entry or exit ramps within 1,000 feet of a K-12 school, unless the Department of Transportation determines that no feasible or prudent alternative exists. This legislation is in response to the tragic death of student Terrell James in Newark nearly ten years ago. *NJPSA supports this legislation.*

#### **A-961 (Munoz) Emergency Administration of Epinephrine at School**

This legislation seeks to clarify the current law concerning the emergency administration

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## Legislative Session Underway (continued from previous page)

of epinephrine to students for asthma, life-threatening illnesses or life-threatening allergic reactions. The bill would allow students who have been permitted to self-medicate under the provisions of the law to carry an epi-pen at all times for emergency use. The bill also requires districts to develop policies for self-medication which comport with NJDOE guidelines and which require the placement of epinephrine in each classroom where a student who might require it is in attendance. The board must also develop a district or school plan that outlines procedures to be followed to reduce student exposure to allergens. The bill would change the current law which permits the school nurse to designate an additional person to administer epinephrine in her absence to allow additional designees to be trained by the school nurse. Finally, the bill would establish a ratio of trained designees to students enrolled in the district who may require emergency administration of epinephrine. *NJPSA will seek to amend this bill.*

### A-2051 (Burzichelli) N.J.S.I.A.A.

This bill would prohibit local school districts from joining the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) unless NJSIAA does the following:

- Agrees to give the Commissioner of Education control over the establishment of certain ticket prices;
- Allows parents and guardians, to attend NJSIAA playoff games for free;
- Agrees to certain restrictions on its licensing rates to cable television companies who broadcast playoff games; and
- Agrees to “caps” on membership and entry fees in future years.

NJPSA issued an alert to high school principals and athletic directors on this legislation. The Assembly voted to approve this legislation on February 6, 2006 by a vote of 60 to 18. *The bill has not yet been heard in the Senate.* ◀

## DYFS Reporting Rules Clarified

The NJ Department of Education has issued a clarification of the requirements for DYFS reporting in public school districts in response to numerous questions from practitioners after a September 5, 2005 memo issued from the NJDOE.

A January 3, 2006 memorandum from Acting Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Student Services, Barbara Gantwerk clarifies that **an individual is required to report missing or abused child situation to the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS); but is not required to report directly to law enforcement authorities.** The school district **has the obligation to report such suspected cases to law enforcement, not the individual.**

N.J.S.A. 18A:36-25 requires that *school districts* establish policies designed to provide for the early detection of missing and abused children, including provisions for the notification of appropriate law enforcement and child welfare authorities. In contrast, N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 requires *any person* having reason to believe that a child has been abused must report to DYFS.

You should be aware that the State Board is currently considering this issue as well. The proposed Student Development Code provides more detailed procedures for reporting. This code proposal can be viewed at [www.state.nj.us/njded/sboe](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/sboe). You should click on Administrative Code, Chapter 16, Programs to Support Student Development. This code is currently subject to public comment and not yet finalized. For more information, contact the NJPSA Government Relations Department. ◀



## TAKE ACTION TODAY!

Voice your opinion about  
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and **CORPORATE**  
**SCHOLARSHIPS** to  
national and state  
decision makers.



**Please take a few moments to visit the  
NJPSA Legislative Action Center at  
[www.njpsa.org](http://www.njpsa.org).**

## NJPSA Advocates on New State Monitoring Proposal

Currently, the NJ State Board of Education is considering regulations to implement a new state monitoring law called the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC). This new statute, P.L. 2005, Chapter 235 was signed into law on September 26, 2005, after a year of legislative wrangling.

The law, and code proposal, seeks to establish a single and streamlined system of state accountability measures for New Jersey school districts. This system will place all school districts on a continuum of performance, with state support and intervention services tailored to district need based upon performance. The law also revises the state takeover law in important ways, permitting a range of interventions, partial or full takeover status and new resources and remedies to address district deficiencies.

NJPSA is actively involved in reviewing this legislation/code and advocating on your behalf. The NJPSA Board of Directors has already met with the NJ Department of Education staff to share our concerns about the current code proposal. In addition, NJPSA Director of Government Relations, Debra Bradley has participated in several meetings with Commissioner of Education Lucille Davy, staff and other education associations to share NJPSA recommendations. On February 16, Bradley testified before the State Board of Education on the code proposal, N.J.A.C. 6A:30. To review her remarks, visit [www.njpsa.org](http://www.njpsa.org).

Since this code is complex and still in the formative stages, NJPSA urges you to become informed about the new law and to share your concerns about its implementation. You can participate in NJPSA committee discussions of the proposal or testify on any area of the code proposal that concerns you. The State Board will be taking additional testimony on this code proposal in future meetings. NJPSA will keep you advised of these opportunities. You can read the complete proposal at [www.state.nj.us/njded/sboe](http://www.state.nj.us/njded/sboe). (Once in the site, click on Administrative Code, click on Proposed Code, and then click on Chapter 30, Evaluation of the Performance of School Districts.)

The following summary of the code proposal provides an introduction to NJQSAC in its current form.

### The Annual Process

Under NJQSAC, school districts will be evaluated in five key component areas of school effectiveness to determine if they are providing a thorough and efficient education to their students. The five areas include instruction and program, personnel, fiscal management, operations and governance. The standards or performance indicators in each of these five areas will be weighted by the NJDOE. These indicators will then be used to evaluate districts based upon both actual achievement and progress toward proficiency, as indicated by implementation of programs, policies and measures to improve district performance. These performance indicators are not yet available to the public for review.

The proposed code currently provides that this process of evaluation will take place on an annual basis. Each fall, the school district will participate in a self-assessment (unless the district is implementing a District Improvement Plan as detailed below.) The Chief School Administrator will convene a local committee, comprised of teachers, including the majority representative, administrators, parents, community representatives, the school business official, district-wide curriculum leaders, and one or more board members. The committee's role is to develop the district's self-assessment report addressing all performance indicators in the five core areas of review. This report is to be submitted with supportive data to the local board for approval and then to the county superintendent by November 15 of each year.

The County Superintendent will then review the self-assessment report for completeness, committee participation, and performance. This review could include a site visit, if deemed appropriate. The County Superintendent will develop a recommendation as to the appropriate placement of a district on the performance continuum to the Commissioner of Education.

The Commissioner will review the self-assessment report and recommendation of the County Superintendent to determine the district's placement on the performance continuum by January 30 of each year. The Commissioner will notify the district of its

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## New State Monitoring Proposal (continued from previous page)

placement in the form of a district profile. The district profile will consist of the reporting of the percentage of weighted quality performance indicators satisfied by the district in each of the five key components of school district effectiveness. The profile shall also include a report of the district's performance under other applicable Federal and State laws.

Each district must report its placement on the performance continuum, as determined by the Commissioner, at the next public meeting of the district board of education.

### Consequences of Placement on the Continuum

If a school district satisfies between 80 and 100 percent of the weighted quality performance indicators in Program and Instruction, Fiscal Management, Governance, Operations and Personnel, the Commissioner will designate that district as "high performing." This status means that no further state review or intervention is required; that is, until the next year when the district must go through the self-assessment and placement process again.

Districts that satisfy less than 80 percent of the performance indicators in one or more of the five areas noted above will be subject to improvement activities, which may include an in-depth evaluation by the NJDOE, the development of a district improvement plan and the receipt of technical assistance, targeted assistance or both, provided by NJDOE staff or "highly skilled professionals."

Highly skilled professionals are defined as "designees of the Commissioner" who have "relevant skills and expertise based on education and/or experience" in one or more of the core component areas. Chapter 235 mandates that their cost is to be equally shared by the district and the NJDOE. NJPSA strongly believes that highly skilled professionals must meet state certification standards if working in instructional areas and be current in their practice. We have also recommended that the district have an equal say in their selection when highly skilled professionals are providing technical assistance to the district, not evaluative services.

Please note that the HSP's are given a role in the hiring and firing of school personnel.

### In-Depth Evaluations

The NJDOE will conduct an in-depth evaluation of a district that satisfies less than 50 percent of the mandatory performance indicators in one or more of the five core areas of district effectiveness. The NJDOE may conduct an in-depth evaluation of districts that satisfy 50-79 percent of these standards. The Commissioner will notify the district within 30 days of completion of its annual review if the NJDOE will be conducting an in-depth evaluation.

An in-depth evaluation involves a review by a state-appointed evaluation team. The team—consisting of NJDOE staff, highly skilled professionals and others—will visit the district's central office and school(s), review relevant data and materials, interview the self-assessment committee and others, and conduct a public meeting to discuss district practices. Within 45 days of the conclusion of its review, the evaluation team will submit its report to the Commissioner with recommendations for the development of a district improvement plan. The Commissioner will review this report and make a final determination of the district's placement on the performance continuum. The district will then utilize the approved report to develop its District Improvement Plan.

### District Improvement Plans

Each school district that is not "high performing" must develop a district improvement plan to address any areas of deficiency. The District Improvement Plan is to be "data driven, results oriented, and outlines continuous improvement of the district." N.J.A.C. 6A: 30-5.4 sets forth the parameters of this plan which is to be developed by an in-district team established by the Chief School Administrator. The team must include a cross section of that district's education community similar to the composition of the self-assessment team. It may also include highly skilled professionals. The District Improvement Plan is due within 45 days of the receipt of notice that no in-depth evaluation is required or within 45 days of the receipt of the In-Depth Evaluation Report.

NJDOE staff then review the District Improvement Plan and the Commissioner approves the plan.

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## New State Monitoring Proposal (continued from previous page)

Once approved, the district will work at implementing its plan promptly. The NJDOE will review the district's progress every six months through review of a district implementation report and an on-site visit. If the district fails to meet the 80 to 100 percent standard of high performing schools, the improvement plan continues. If the district meets the standard of high performing schools, a letter is issued by the Commissioner, six-month assessments end, and the district takes on the total fiscal obligation if it continues to employ highly skilled professionals.

District Improvement Plans can be amended and will be reviewed every two years.

### Full and Partial State Intervention

N.J.A.C. 6A:30-6 details the scope, process, and remedies for districts requiring state intervention. A significant change is the availability of partial state intervention for

districts failing in only some of the core areas of effectiveness. The remedies available to districts in this section range from technical support to the appointment of a chief school administrator to the appointment by the Commissioner of additional board members. The code proposal also addresses the process of returning intervention districts to local control, a flaw of prior state takeover legislation.

### Future Action

For the next few months, the NJDOE will be discussing NJQSAC with the State Board at its public meetings. The NJDOE plans to present the performance indicators in the five areas of district effectiveness at an upcoming meeting in March or April. As the code process continues, NJPSA will keep you advised of future developments and opportunities for you to weigh in on these important issues. ◀



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\_\_\_ Yes, I understand it is more important than ever to have a voice in government.

I have enclosed my check, payable to NJPSA-PAC\*

Amount Contributed: \_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$100 \$ \_\_\_ (other)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone \_\_\_\_\_ School Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize NJPSA to charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to my \_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_ MasterCard

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear Member:



### ***IS KEEPING YOUR PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS WORTH \$25 THIS YEAR?***

If you had the chance to make allies, and not enemies, out of the politicians trying to run your school and your job, would you take the chance or walk away?

As Principal of Somerville High School and President of New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, I am very concerned over how the State is making our jobs as school leaders harder without new support. On top of this, schools are constantly under attack in the media by our elected officials. Now, these attacks are aimed at our most prized investment—our many years of retirement in the pension system.

Last year, the State released a report on pensions and benefits in New Jersey. The report made recommendations that could cost school leaders dearly. This report is now in the hands of legislators who are deciding what to do with it.

### **WILL YOU BE AT THE TABLE WHEN TRENTON LEGISLATORS DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR PENSION? A small donation to NJPSA-PAC helps you to be.**

There is one simple, undeniable fact about politics: money talks. While not the only thing that matters, it is an additional tool to promote the interests of our members.

And this year, we need as many tools as possible. The outlook for 2006 is not promising:

- New Jersey is facing a \$5 billion deficit for the upcoming fiscal year;
- The state pension system is targeted for review;
- There is talk of a special session of the Legislature or a convention on property tax reform that may completely change the way schools are funded;
- The state is redoing its special education regulations; and
- No Child Left Behind is still being implemented.

And if we're not at the table while these issues are discussed, you can bet that those who want to cut our pension, cut school funding and cut our professional judgment will be.

By joining NJPSA-PAC, you can help to make sure our voice is heard. Having a Political Action Committee shows politicians that an association is a "force" in Trenton, that it will be involved in the legislative process and that it has money and membership behind it.

NJPSA does not try to "buy votes" with its PAC. Instead, NJPSA-PAC utilizes its funds to attend fundraisers and increase our influence on the issues of top importance to you, your students, your school and your profession. Politics is an expensive business, and we need your support to be a part of it.

NJPSA needs this kind of advocacy with all the issues facing our schools this year. As the NJPSA President, I implore you to take the time to **PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR PENSION IS!!!** Use the NJPSA-PAC contribution form on page 9 to make a contribution today!

Sincerely yours,

*Timothy O'Halloran*

Timothy O'Halloran, NJPSA President  
Principal of Somerville High School

