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President’s Message

by Denise King



The Monmouth County Education Association leadership team has been working towards making in-person workshops and meetings possible and safe. Our office is open daily from 11:30 to 5:30 with staff available to assist with any questions or concerns that you may have regarding our programming.

We need your help more than ever to assist the MCEA in electing politicians who are pro-public education. As you have seen in our many emails, we are canvassing, phone banking and supporting the candidates that your fellow Monmouth County members screened and endorsed.

Your leadership team is working towards a full-time release program for the MCEA President and first Vice

President in order to be available to local leaders and members on a daily basis. Your local leaders need support and we want to provide that support. It is difficult to offer members support while still teaching full time. We hope the full time release program will work out so we can be available when our members need support and help.

I thank you for your support and dedication to the students we educate. These have been difficult times for our members professionally. You amaze me as you continually step up to the challenges of educating and supporting students during this pandemic. Your Monmouth County leadership team is here to support you. We find strength in developing our strong community of members. You have our commitment to continue to grow and support our Monmouth County membership.

VOTE for Public Schools
Reelect Gov. Phil Murphy

TOP TEN Gov. Murphy’s Top Ten Achievements

- Chapter 78 relief signed into law
- Job Justice signed into law
- Paid more into the pension fund than any governor in history, this includes the first full pension payment since 1996, which he made one year ahead of schedule
- Expanded access to preschool
- Expanded access to tuition-free community college
- Expanded Amistad Curriculum, signed LGBTQ curriculum into law
- Appointed the state’s first and second Black commissioners of education, Dr. Lamont Repollet and Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan
- Prioritized educator access to the COVID-19 vaccine
- Supported waiver in 2021 to #CancelTheTests
- Restored respect for public education



Association Utilizes

New Office

by John Napolitani



As we embark on a new school year with the same challenges we faced last year, the MCEA has been slowly getting back to a new normal. We have begun utilizing the new office space we moved into last Spring. We continue to add additional work-

shops for the members to get them more involved with the Association process, either with professional development or union advocacy. We are always pleased with the offerings we currently have on the calendar for all our members.

We held our first open house to introduce the membership to our newly expanded space. It is our hope that more locals will take advantage of utilizing our new space for meetings when they require a more private setting. We want to thank John and Suzanne for doing an outstanding job getting our new space set up and fully operational. Moving is never an easy task, but when you have staff like we do, it makes it even easier.

Our Executive Committee will continue to strive to add more events so that we can get more members involved in the Association. Starting at the local level is where it happens. Whether you start as a building representative, legislative action committee member, social committee member, or anything else, your involvement is pivotal to the success of our organization. Instead of complaining what NJEA or your local is doing wrong, get involved in the process and have your voice heard.

In closing, as we head into November, very important elections for governor and legislative positions happen this year. We finally have a governor who is making the right decisions regarding our pensions and benefits. Governor Murphy has the pension system on the right track with his contributions for the last 3 years. Getting to a pension that's solvent is key to getting what was promised to us when we started this career. It's a breath of fresh air to have a governor that listens to the issues that affect us. We may not agree on everything the governor stands for, but in the end, it's the end result that we look for in our profession.

MCEA Offers Professional

Development

by Erin Wheeler



MCEA continues to offer free professional development to our members. For more information and to sign up for the MCEA workshops listed below, go to <https://mceanj.com>, click on events and click on the desired workshop.

Oct 18 - Community Cultural Wealth Series Workshop – Aspirational Capital
Oct 21 - XYZ's of Retirement (virtual)

Oct 27 - Community Cultural Wealth Series Workshop – Familial and Social Capital

Nov 15 - Edpuzzle

The annual NJEA Convention will be held on Nov 4 & 5. To learn more about the pd workshops that will be offered go to <https://njeaconvention.njea.org/>. Information on registering for the convention will be posted on the NJEA website in the near future.

The NJEA Professional Development department is continuing to offer free virtual pd opportunities to all NJEA members. Please visit <https://www.njea.org/njea-learning/> to learn more and to check the calendar for upcoming workshops.

We hope you utilize these professional development membership perks. You can learn something new, meet a new friend, and stay informed.

MCEA Phone Banking



MCEA members make phone calls to help elect our NJEA endorsed candidates.

Elect Pro-Education Candidates

by Erin Wheeler and Chiarina Guzik

This year is a very important election year here in NJ. The Governor and all 120 NJ Senate and Assembly seats are up. Elected officials, on all levels, impact our daily lives as educators and school employees. If we sit on the political sidelines, we lose our voice and our collective power. Four years ago, we worked diligently to get Governor Murphy elected. During his first term, Governor Murphy paid more into our pension fund than any other governor, he increased school funding and consistently proves he is pro-union & pro-public education. A Murphy win in November is a win for students, schools, and public education in NJ. To learn more about Governor Murphy and his campaign click [here](#).

Not only do we need to get out and vote for the pro-public education and pro-union [NJEA endorsed candidates](#), we also need to help them get elected. In order to support endorsed candidates, we will host weekly phone banks and canvasses on Saturdays. The **phone banking** will take place at the MCEA office on **Thursdays in October from 3:30 – 5:30pm**. There will be food, fun and prizes. No experience necessary. For more information and to sign up click [here](#). The canvassing will take place on Saturday morning, **October 23 in LD 11**. For more information on the October 23 canvass click [here](#). Canvassers will be knocking on other NJEA members' doors to inform them of the importance of this election and supporting our endorsed candidates. Canvassers will wear a mask and practice social distancing. Breakfast will be provided.

Together we can get pro-education, pro-union candidates elected down the ballot to ensure NJ remains top in the nation in public schools. We look forward to working with you over the next month.

Meet Endorsed LD11 Candidates

LD11 Senator Vin Gopal



Senator Gopal is a lifelong resident of Monmouth County. He is proud to be a small business owner, having built his business from the ground up. Vin is also the founder and president of a 501c(3) organization dedicated to

helping Monmouth County charities and individuals in need. During his first term in the State Senate, Vin has worked tirelessly across party-lines to champion the causes of working families in Monmouth County, small-business owners, students and seniors. He has pushed for successful funding for Monmouth County Schools, women's healthcare facilities, mental health support, along with other key areas of funding support. He has also had a number of tax relief and shared-service bills signed into law and successfully fought party leadership from instituting a shore rental tax.

LD11 Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling



A lifelong resident and former mayor of Neptune Township, Assemblyman Eric Houghtaling has always strived to give back to his community. Eric is a career electrician and a proud, 40 year member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 400. He has

also served as a representative to the Monmouth and Ocean Counties Central Labor Council. Through his hard work with labor, Eric has gained a keen understanding of the issues facing working families, including the need for us to create good-paying jobs, make education more effective, and keep our communities safe. Eric serves on the Tourism, Gaming and the Arts Committee and the Labor Committee. He serves as the Chair of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and as the Vice-Chair of the Oversight, Reform and Federal Relations Committee.

LD 11 Assemblywoman Joann Downey



The daughter of a New Jersey State Trooper, Assemblywoman Downey is a former Deputy State Attorney General who prosecuted cases of child abuse and neglect. She is currently an attorney in private practice. As a member of the General Assembly, Joann is fighting to provide real property tax relief to resi-

dents. Joann served on the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee and serves as the Chair of the Human Services Committee.

Monmouth County Teacher of the Year



Alyssa Geary, a Special Education and English Language Arts teacher at Red Bank Middle School, was named Monmouth County Teacher of the Year. “In my classroom, I want my students to feel love and I want them to feel they can be their authentic

selves,” Geary said. Alyssa is committed to educating the whole child as evidenced by her dedication and bravery when it comes to tackling difficult situations. In the face of adversity, Alyssa effectively seeks out alternative programs and curricula that ensure student achievement. In addition to being an outstanding teacher, Alyssa has served in various roles in her school community including co-advisor to student council, grade level leader, PLC and Dream Team Representative, and Vice President of the Red Bank Borough Education Association. The County Teachers of the Year will network with educators throughout the state and serve as ambassadors for New Jersey’s public schools. “New Jersey public schools have been recognized as the best in the nation and the strength of our schools is driven by our dynamic educators. Congratulations to all the County Teachers of the Year,” said Governor Phil Murphy.

Retired Teachers Stay Active

by Len Sobel

The MCREA had their first member luncheon in over a year on October 12, 2021. Everyone at the luncheon showed proof of vaccination and masks were worn.

If you are thinking of retiring this year, please remember to join the MCREA to keep up on all the issues like your pension, health benefits and all the other other issues that education faces now and in the future. You can join by getting in touch with me (LSOBEL62@gmail.com) or Mary Szczepanik (maryszcz@verizon.net).

NJEA PAC Endorsements

The 125 member political action committee of the New Jersey Education Association has voted to endorse Governor Phil Murphy, as well as 97 legislative candidates.

Please support the candidates from each of these Monmouth County legislative districts.

LD 11- Vin Gopal, Joann Downey, and Eric Houghtaling

LD 12- Ronald Dancer and Robert Clifton

LD 13- Vincent Solomeno, Allison Friedman, and Erin Howard

LD 30- Edward “Ned” Thompson and Sean Kean

Three Ways to Vote

Vote-by-mail

If you have requested a vote by mail ballot you should have already received it. You can submit your ballot in one of three ways:

- **Mail:** It must be postmarked on or before 8:00 p.m. November 2 and be received by your County's Board of Elections on or before November 8.

- **Secure Ballot Drop Box:** Place it in one of your County's secure ballot drop boxes by 8:00 p.m. on November 2.

- **Board of Elections Office:** Deliver it in person to your County's Board of Elections Office by 8:00 p.m. on November 2.

Early Voting

Every registered voter now has the option to vote early in the 2021 General Election. Designated in-person early voting locations will be open October 23 through October 31. Hours will be Monday – Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. No appointment is necessary and you can vote at any of the locations in your County! Go to MonmouthCountyVotes.com for voting locations.

Vote In-Person on Election Day

As always, you can vote in person on Election Day, November 2nd, at your designated polling location. Polls will be open from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, November 2. Go to MonmouthCountyVotes.com to find your polling place.