

DKGNJ Legislative Update October 2023

In New Jersey, we will be electing/re-electing the entire Legislative Body on November 7th. NJEA and County Education Associations screen candidates in their particular districts. Approved candidates agree with NJEA on educational policy and issues that affect students, schools and school employees.

Please look into the candidates in your District so you can familiarize yourself with them before you vote. Remember, these are only recommendations, you should vote for who you believe is the best candidate. For more information, if you are an NJEA member, you can go to the NJEA website, sign in, then go to the Advocacy Tab and scroll down until you reach the link for “Voting for PAC Endorsed Candidates.” Also located in this area of the website, is a spot for you to help with the elections by making phone calls, sending out postcards, canvassing for your candidates etc.

Also available is a website to find candidates for your local School Boards. These candidates have been recommended by parents in your community **but not endorsed by NJEA or our County EA’s**. This is called the **New Jersey Project**. Click on this hyperlink: [New](#)

Mail in Ballots have been mailed out and if you are using them, they must be postmarked by, or returned in person, by November 7th. Other important election dates are listed below.

Important Dates to Remember:

Oct. 28- November 5- Early Voting Period for General Election

Oct. 31 – Nov. 5- Deadline to apply for a Vote-By-Mail Ballot by mail for General Election

Nov. 6 - Deadline for in-person **Vote-By-Mail Ballot applications** for General Election (by 3 p.m.)

Nov. 7 - General Election

The National Education Association (NEA) is asking for our help to Stop Drastic Cuts to Public Schools through the **House Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. Here are the bullet points and the negative impact this bill would have on education, educators and our students:**

- Wipe out as many as **248,000 educator jobs**;
- **Cut funding by 80% for the Title I program**, which helps our most-vulnerable students;
- Block President Biden from enacting meaningful reforms to federal **student debt programs**; and
- Eliminate federal funding for much-needed professional development, **class size reduction, educator salaries, and the English Language Learner (ELL) program**.

If you are an NJEA or NEA member (active or retired) you can click on this hyper link and send a message to your legislators. [Stop](#)

The New Jersey sick leave bill, **A-5060/S-3440**, was signed into law on July 3, 2023. The law expands the allowable use of sick days for public school staff. Under the prior law, the 10 annual statutory sick days were limited to use for your own illness, injury, or disability, or if you needed to quarantine due to your or a household's member's exposure to a contagious disease. Now, sick days can still be used for those purposes as well as the following reasons:

- To recover from, or for the diagnoses or treatment of a health condition (mental or physical) or for preventative medical care;
- To care for a family member who is sick, injured, needs diagnosis, treatment, or care of a condition (mental or physical) or needs preventative medical care;
- To care for yourself or a family member who needs assistance due to being a victim of domestic or sexual violence, such as needing medical attention, services, counseling, to relocate, or for legal services or proceedings;
- For bereavement of a family member (up to seven (7) days);
- To attend a child's school-related conference, meeting, function or other event at the request of a school staff member or a meeting related to the child's health condition or disability; and
- If a child's school or daycare is closed by the order of a public official, or due to a state of emergency or public health emergency.

This is great benefit to our members still working in our public schools.

Please remember to vote and support candidates that endorse education and our public schools.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna R. O'Malley