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NewsBEAT

NEWSBEAT

SEPTEMBER 2011

Pilot Program for Teacher Evaluation

A voluntary pilot program will bring a new system of teacher evaluation to nine districts this year. Another 19 struggling schools—and the districts that contain them—are being required to change their teacher evaluation system in order to receive federal funds. And other districts are simply embracing new approaches in preparation for statewide overhaul.

... The state hopes to roll out the new program next September and use it in making personnel decisions during the 2013-2014 school year.

If you are a teaching staff member in New Jersey, how you are evaluated and the criteria used in that review

could change radically depending on the results of teacher evaluation programs being tested in several public school districts this year.

After more than three decades of state-mandated teacher evaluations in this state, New Jersey is taking big steps toward reformulating these programs, including moving toward more prescriptive formulas that it thinks will help better identify effective teachers.

This year armed with state grant money, nine districts are piloting an evaluation approach whipped up by the governor's task force on teacher evaluation. The N.J. Department of Education

(NJDOE) chose the nine among 31 applicants state-wide for the pilot – dubbed Excellent Educators for New Jersey or EE4NJ.

But those nine aren't the only ones testing the new recipe. Simultaneously, the state is requiring 19 New Jersey struggling schools that are receiving federal School Improvement Grants (SIG) to implement the task force's evaluation proposals as a state condition of receiving the federal dollars and for their districts to submit their plans to do so district wide as well. So, a program billed as a "pilot" in some districts is taking on bigger connotations in others.

Continued on pg.2



NJEA Convention

Tens of thousands of NJEA members from across the state are expected to attend the 157th annual NJEA Convention November 10-11, 2011 in Atlantic City.

Recognized as the largest educational gathering of its kind anywhere in the world, the NJEA Convention draws teachers and educational support professionals who participate in over 300 seminars, workshops, and pro-

grams.

Thursday's highlights include a State Board of Education meeting, a keynote address, as well as an evening concert by the All-State Jazz Ensemble. Look for High Tech Hall again this year, where NJEA members from districts across the state will present one-on-one demonstrations of how the latest technology applications are being used in today's classrooms and among

today's professionals. Friday's closing activities include the Celebration of Excellence, another keynote address, and a concert by the All-State Chorus and Orchestra.

In addition to the seminars and programs, convention-goers take advantage of the Convention Center's huge exhibit area, featuring more than 700 vendors and exhibitors

Taken from njea.org

Pilot Program Teacher Evaluation, cont.

Throw into that mix a number of other school districts that NJDOE staffers say want to test the approaches, even if they aren't part of the official pilot.

How the programs will be monitored still isn't clear. Neither is it certain whether the state will be equipped to provide the teacher-specific student achievement data for districts beyond the nine pilots or the districts will be able to supply the two previous years of teacher-student rosters. But we're getting ahead of ourselves here.

An external evaluator will

be hired by the NJDOE to evaluate the pilot program and assess district's experiences in implementing the teacher evaluation system.

The external evaluation, the pilot guidance indicates, will be used to "help improve the system framework, develop assessments, develop the appropriate supports for principals and teachers, and inform a state-wide implementation of the evaluation system."

New Jersey isn't alone in its quest to reconfigure teacher evaluation. Across the country states are taking another look at how they

analyze teachers. Many of these were spurred by attempts to garner federal Race to the Top (RTTT) funds, as well as other federal funding programs calling for beefed-up evaluation programs tied to student achievement.

When N.J. failed to win RTTT funds in the second round last year, Gov. Chris Christie vowed to plow ahead with his proposals, including those that affect teacher and principal evaluation.

Taken from njea.org

For more information visit njea.org.

"We are excited to support these candidates," NJEA President Barbara Keshishian said.

Get Out The Vote



The 125-member political action committee of the 200,000 member New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) voted to endorse 69 candidates for election to the New Jersey Legislature this November.

The NJEA PAC Operating Committee (NJEA PAC) endorsed 48 Assembly candidates and 21 Senate candidates in 29 of the state's 40 Legislative Districts. They include 2 Republicans and 67 Democrats.

We are excited to support these candidates," NJEA President Barbara Keshishian said. "The incumbents we endorsed are proven supporters of public education and working fami-

lies. The challengers show a real determination to return this state to its progressive, pro-education roots."

Keshishian acknowledged that NJEA is endorsing fewer candidates this year, and that some previously-endorsed legislators are not on this year's list.

While the screening committees took many issues into account in making their decisions, as a result of the recent pension and benefit legislation, our members will be facing significant financial consequences," said Keshishian. "NJEA members make these endorsement decisions and they have made it clear that they will not endorse legislators who have impaired their

right to collectively bargain and who have imposed thousands of dollars of additional costs on public employees.

Our members refuse to give precious resources and their own time to campaign for legislators who hurt them and their families," Keshishian said. "But make no mistake, fewer endorsements do not mean NJEA will be less involved in the upcoming elections. If anything, we will be more committed and will work harder to support pro-public education candidates who have shown they care about public school employees, our families, and the students we educate."

Taken from njea.org

NJEA Endorsed Candidates

Reprinted from njea.org. For more information visit njea.org.

- LD 1 *Assembly*: Nelson Albano (D)
- LD 2 *Assembly*: Alisa Cooper (D) and Damon Tyner (D)
- LD 3 No endorsements
- LD 4 *Assembly*: Shelley Lovett (R)
- LD 5 No endorsements
- LD 6 No endorsements
- LD 7 No endorsements
- LD 8 No endorsements
- LD 9 No endorsements
- LD 10 *Assembly*: Gregory McGuckin (R) and Bette Wary (D)
- LD 11 *Senate*: Raymond Santiago (D); *Assembly*: Vin Gopal (D)
- LD 12 *Senate*: Robert Brown (D); *Assembly*: William Spedding (D) and Catherine Tinney Rome (D)
- LD 13 *Senate*: Christopher Cullen (D); *Assembly*: Kevin Lavan (D)
- LD 14 *Senate*: Linda Greenstein (D); *Assembly*: Daniel Benson (D) and Wayne DeAngelo (D)
- LD 15 *Senate*: Shirley Turner (D); *Assembly*: Bonnie Watson Coleman (D) and Reed Gusciora (D)
- LD 16 *Senate*: Maureen Vella (D); *Assembly*: Marie Corfield (D) and Joe Camarota (D)
- LD 17 *Senate*: Bob Smith (D); *Assembly*: Joe Egan (D) and Upendra Chivukula (D)
- LD 18 *Senate*: Barbara Buono (D); *Assembly*: Pat Diegnan (D) and Peter Barnes (D)
- LD 19 *Senate*: Joe Vitale (D); *Assembly*: John Wisniewski (D) and Craig Coughlin (D)
- LD 20 No endorsements
- LD 21 No endorsements
- LD 22 *Assembly*: Linda Stender (D) and Jerry Green (D)
- LD 23 *Senate*: John Graf, Jr. (D); *Assembly*: Karen Carroll (D)
- LD 24 *Senate*: Ed Selby (D); *Assembly*: Leslie Huhn (D) and Jim Nye (D)
- LD 25 *Senate*: Rick Thoeni (D); *Assembly*: Gale Heiss-Colucci (D) and George Stafford (D)
- LD 26 No endorsements
- LD 27 *Senate*: Richard Codey (D); *Assembly*: Mila Jasey (D) and John McKeon (D)
- LD 28 *Senate*: Ronald Rice (D); *Assembly*: Cleopatra Tucker (D) and Ralph Caputo (D)
- LD 29 No endorsements
- LD 30 *Senate*: Steven Morlino (D); *Assembly*: Howard Kleinhendler (D) and Shaun O'Rourke (D)
- LD 31 *Senate*: Sandra Cunningham (D); *Assembly*: Charles Mainor (D) and Jason O'Donnell (D)
- LD 32 *Senate*: Nicholas Sacco (D); *Assembly*: Vincent Prieto (D) and Angelica Jimenez (D)
- LD 33 *Assembly*: Sean Conners (D) and Ruben Ramos (D)
- LD 34 *Assembly*: Thomas Giblin (D)
- LD 35 *Senate*: Nellie Pou (D); *Assembly*: Benjie Wimberly (D)
- LD 36 *Senate*: Paul Sarlo (D); *Assembly*: Gary Schaer (D)
- LD 37 *Senate*: Loretta Weinberg (D); *Assembly*: Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D) and Gordon Johnson (D)
- LD 38 *Senate*: Robert Gordon (D); *Assembly*: Connie Wagner (D)
- LD 39 No endorsements
- LD 40 *Assembly*: Cassandra Lazzara (D)

NJEA PAC voted on the recommendations of local interview teams from each legislative district.

Invite the CAT IN THE HAT to your school

How would you like a visit from the Cat in the Hat to help your school celebrate NEA's Read Across America? Well, NJEA members can now request a visit from the Cat himself right online. Visits begin in early February and continue through the end of March. You will be notified in January whether your school will receive a visit. The deadline for inviting the Cat is November 18.

Taken from njea.org. For more information visit njea.org.



Fall Focus

October 19, 2011 - 4:15 PM

Valley Regency, Clifton NJ



Nominate scholar athletes for NJEA/News 12 recognition program

NJEA and News 12 New Jersey are seeking high school students who excel both academically and athletically. The NJEA/News 12 Scholar Athlete Recognition Program honors New Jersey high school seniors who are successful not only in the classroom, but on the court or on the field.

Thirty students will be selected based on nominations received from high schools around the state. Each week, the Scholar Athlete will be featured in a news segment on News 12 New Jersey. In June, the winners, their families, coaches, and teachers will be honored at a luncheon. One student will be selected as 2011-12 Scholar Athlete of the Year and receive a \$1,000 scholarship.



Kids get Fit with the New York Giants and NJEA



NJEA and the New York Football Giants have joined forces to help your students Get Fit. These activities are fun ways to keep children active. They are designed for grades 4, 5 and 6, but may be adapted for lower grades.

These activities can be used in physical education classes, at recess or during after-school programs. The goal is to get children moving and to help them find ways to make fitness a part of their lives.

If you are a physical education teacher and would like to receive more information and resources from NJEA, the NY Giants, and the American Heart Association, please e-mail Dawn Hiltner at dhiltner@njea.org.

Taken from njea.org. For more information visit njea.org