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# NewsBEAt October 2010

ESSEX EXCHANGE

OCTOBER 2010

## ECEA Launches Media Campaign

The Essex County Education Association has launched a media campaign to combat the misconceptions about issues affecting educational professionals and educational support staff. Spearheaded by ECEA President Tony Salese, local presidents from across the county met to discuss a plan to educate the public on controversial issues affecting education.



Salese felt that Essex County must take a stand on the misinformation presented to the public. To that end, Salese held a closed meeting with local leaders so that ideas

and concerns could be voiced openly and honestly. Local leaders met to devise a plan for providing the public with important information. The presidents wanted to combat the Governor Christie's "mistruths" about issues and felt the public needed to hear "our side"

The campaign will consist of public service ads published in *The Star Ledger*, bumper stickers for the public, and bus signs. Districts were asked to submit ideas for bumper sticker and bus sign slogans that would encapsulate the sentiment of public school professionals.

The first ad **The Truth About Tenure** was published on Wednesday October 20, 2010. The ads will address

tenure, merit pay, pensions, vouchers, and NJEA members. Ads are available on line at [eceasonline.org](http://eceasonline.org).

The bumper stickers will be available soon. Look for the ads in *The Star Ledger* in the upcoming weeks. Any ideas for bumper stickers or ads may be emailed to [eceasonline@eceasonline.org](mailto:eceasonline@eceasonline.org) or [ecea@comcast.net](mailto:ecea@comcast.net).

### Chris Christie: A \$400 Million Mistake

*An example of one of the bumper sticker slogans submitted by West Orange*

## NJEA Publishes Myth vs. Reality

The NJEA has published a 30 item fact sheet for members to use to combat the misconceptions about public education. The fact sheet covers items such as property taxes, the achievement gap, tenure, charter schools, merit pay, and other issues.

Members can use the items as talking points to address family members, friends and neighbors who believe the misguided hype coming out of Trenton.

The publication is available to all members. For a copy

of Myth vs. Reality, visit [NJEA.org](http://NJEA.org) or [eceasonline.org](http://eceasonline.org).

Fight back with accurate information. Public education employees are dedicated professionals who serve their communities and pay the same taxes as the rest of the residents of New Jersey.

**Know Your Power  
Grow Your Power  
Show Your Power**

*“Know the Truth.../ Listen to the Facts not the Spin” ads will appear in The Star Ledger.*

## Fall Focus or Rather Re-Focus

On October 20, 2010 the ECEA held its annual Fall Focus at the Valley Regional in Clifton NJ.

NJEA officials and Region 21 Uni-Serv representatives presented the Fall Focus program entitled Fall Re-Focus: Know Your Power, Grow Your Power, Show Your Power.

ECEA President Tony Salese began the program with a welcome address which included introducing the

visiting NJEA officials and staff. Following a short film chronicling the storied history of the NJEA, Vince Giordano, NJEA Executive Director called on ECEA members to continue the fight to keep the rights for which past NJEA leaders and members have fought so hard. Mike Flynn, Essex County Lobbyist and Ken Wiggins, Region 21 Uni-Serv representative also addressed the audience calling on each and every member to become active in the movement to fight

Governor Christie’s “toolkit”.

More than 200 ECEA members attended the Fall Re-Focus program. The program centered on voting and non-voting members. NJEA officials called on local leaders to stress the importance of voting in all elections and to urge local leaders to run voter registration drives within their communities. There is a surprising high number of NJEA members who do not vote and members who are not registered to vote.

## NJEA Officers meet with ECEA Local Presidents

On October 14, 2010, NJEA President Barbara Keshishian, NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Marie Blisten, and NJEA Executive Director Vince Giordano joined ECEA President Tony Salese along with local leaders at the ECEA President’s Roundtable Meeting at the Appian Way.

During the meeting local leaders voiced concerns

about the NJEA’s lack of ads/commercials to combat the governor’s attacks on members across the state. Leadership assured ECEA members that campaigns to combat the attacks were being aired on TV and billboards along the NJ Turnpike are in place.

ECEA leaders felt that more could be done. To that end, ECEA leaders gave

NJEA officials ideas for future ads.

In addition to ad ideas, NJEA officials were given drafts of the ads which will be published in the Essex section of the Star Ledger and copies of slogans for bumper stickers that are part of the ad campaign being launched by ECEA.

## NJEA MAC Centers—Program

The NJEA has launched a member action program. Member Action Centers or MACs are designated areas in each school building that keep mem-

bers up to date on current, impending legislation.

Member engagement will be critical in this fight for the future of our schools and our profession. In order to communicate and engage members quickly, NJEA’s local associations are creating Member Action Centers (MACs) at every worksite in the state. Each MAC will

be stocked with information about current challenges and strategies for engaging members in the fight

For more information, visit [njea.org](http://njea.org) or [eceaonline.org](http://eceaonline.org).



# Urban Teacher Academy

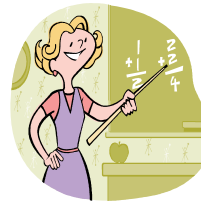


The College of New Jersey's Urban Teacher Academy (UTA) is offered to high school juniors interested in pursuing careers in urban education and/or high shortage subject areas. This intensive, two week summer program is designed to attract students to teaching in high poverty schools and/or high short-

age subject areas through exposure to a curriculum and practicum experiences that focus on teaching.

Source: <http://www.tcnj.edu/~educat/urban/>

This program is especially designed for students who are considering teaching in subjects areas such as math, physics, chemistry, biology and general science, bilingual education, ESL, special education, world languages and technology education. Future teachers from diverse, underrepresented backgrounds as well as males are



particularly encouraged to apply. (taken from *Urban*

*Teacher Academy Fact Sheet.*)

The NJEA is a sponsor of this program. High School teachers are encouraged to recommend their students for this program. For more information visit [eceaonline.org](http://eceaonline.org) or [www.tcnj.edu/futureeducators](http://www.tcnj.edu/futureeducators).

**Upcoming Workshops**

**Bargaining "In Spite" of Christie's Toolkit**  
Turs., Nov. 18, 2010  
The Appian Way

**Constitution Revision**  
Wed., Nov. 10, 2010  
The Appian Way

## NJEA Convention Bus—ECEA Hospitality

The ECEA bus to the convention will leave on Thursday, November 4, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. SHARP. Members are asked to be present at 7:45 a.m. The pickup point is Redwood School, 75 Redwood Avenue, West Orange. The bus will arrive at the Showboat Casino at approximately 9:45.  
Cost: \$20.00 per person\*

\*(Reimbursement: \$30.00 in slot credit) Vouchers will be turned in at the casino

PLEASE NOTE: All casinos require that you have a "Total Rewards" card to collect your money. If you do not have one, they will ask for picture I.D. and they will provide you with a card. Please save this card for next year. Please see registration form at [eceaonline.org](http://eceaonline.org).

The ECEA will be hosting a hospitality suite at the Sheraton on Thursday and Friday, November 4 and 5, 2010 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. ECEA members are invited to attend. Thursday's hospitality will be held in the Crown Ballrooms 4 and 5. Friday's hospitality will be held in the Pearl Ballroom.

**Hospitality suite at the Sheraton—Thursday and Friday—11:00 AM to 1:00 PM—Members only Please!**

## Contact Legislators

All NJEA members are urged to contact legislators concerning Governor Christie's "toolkit". Talking points are available on the [njea.org](http://njea.org) website Member Action Center bill summary sheets.

NJEA is urging all members to call legislators. Members are also asked to make appointments with legislators to discuss

the issues face to face.

Members should urge family members, friends and neighbors to contact legislators as well. An all out blitz on local legislators is imperative to voice our concerns and remind legislators that NJEA members and their allies are taxpayers and voters.

Calling and visiting legisla-

tors should be a continuous activity. Bills may be up for votes at any time. It is important for all members to participate in telling legislators to vote no on the current bills that assault public education and public employees.

For more information on the pending bills visit [njea.org](http://njea.org) or [eceaonline.org](http://eceaonline.org).



**Call NOW!!! Urge all members to Call their legislators! Members should add legislators to their contact lists.**

## Bill Summary taken from njea.org

**Bill S-2043** (Kyrillos R, 13) is another item in the Governor's "toolkit." This legislation would allow boards of education to impose their "last, best offer" as the terms and conditions of employment, overturning the current collective bargaining law (as amended in 2003 to prohibit contract imposition) which has brought fairness and balance to the negotiations process without harmful strikes. **NJEA DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL.**

**Senate bill S-2025** (Kyrillos R, 13), part of the Governor's "toolkit," would authorize Executive County Superintendents to approve all locally negotiated collective bargaining agreements. It is ready to be heard by the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. **NJEA DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL.**

**S-1872**, sponsored by Sen. Lesniak (D-20) and Sen. Kean (R-21), would create a publicly funded voucher program in New Jersey under the guise of "opportunity scholarships." The program would divert \$360 million from the state treasury to subsidize private and parochial school tuition by giving dollar-for-dollar tax credits to corporations contributing to "scholarship funds." **NJEA DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL.**

**S-1940** (Van Drew, Ruiz)/A-2772 (Albano, Ramos, Diegnan, Riley) will bring fairness and certainty to the bargaining table in uncertain economic times by allowing local associations to bargain for positions to be saved when a local is asked to make concessions in order to save jobs. This bill has already passed the Senate with strong bipartisan support (36-2). This NJEA-initiated legislation would require that the monetary equivalent of any wage or benefit concession agreed to by a collective bargaining unit must be used by the school district to offset any reduction in force initiated for economic reasons. **NJEA SUPPORTS THIS BILL.**

**A series of bills** that are part of the Governor's "toolkit" would limit unused sick leave and vacation buyout for school employees to \$15,000. The lead bill is S-2220 (Sarlo-D, 36) which has been released from the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee. The Assembly version is A-2952 (Casagrande R, 12, Munoz R, 21). Currently only S-2220 is ready for a Senate vote. **NJEA DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL.**

**S-2043** (Kyrillos R, 13) is another piece of the Governor's "toolkit." It would cap increases in school districts' labor costs, including the cost of benefits, at 2%. **NJEA DOES NOT SUPPORT THIS BILL.**

## Governor's Toolkit—Attacks on Educational Issues

- **Gov. Christie recently announced an education "reform" agenda.** While most of the proposals (with the exception of private school vouchers) are not yet in the form of legislation, we anticipate a series of bills aimed at implementing them. The key elements of the plan include:
  - • **Teacher evaluations** – Will appoint a nine-member New Jersey Educator Effectiveness Task Force. That body's conclusions are already established, including a requirement that "at least 50%" of a teacher's evaluation be tied to student test scores.
  - • **Merit pay** – Would do away with the current salary schedule system of paying

teachers based on years of service and degrees held. He wants to replace that system with a merit system based exclusively on individual teachers' ability to improve student test scores.

- • **Tenure** – Calls for tenure to be "granted and maintained" by having teachers "showing they know how to teach," by raising student test scores.

- • **Charter schools** – Rapid expansion of charter schools, including "cyber" or "virtual" online schools, by increasing the number of charter school authorizers, as well as by allowing private, parochial and traditional public schools to convert to charter status.

- • **Vouchers** – Calls for S-1872, a voucher bill, to be passed by the legislature. That bill would divert 360 million tax dollars to subsidize private and parochial

schools. Other elements of the plan would include a new credential and career ladder for teachers and principals, an alternate route for principal certification to allow non-educators to become principals, and an expanded data-collection system to link student performance to individual teachers.

*Taken from njea.org*



**Visit njea.org MAC for more information.**