



# EBEA NEWSLETTER

East Brunswick Education Association

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United in Excellence

September 2013

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## From the Desk of the President

As tough as it was to leave the beach, the pool, the comfort of our air conditioned homes or those summer jobs, it's now time to face the reality of two major challenges ahead of us this year - the implementation of the new teacher evaluation system and the upcoming November election for Governor and all 120 seats in the Legislature.

Our first challenge affects our certificated members impacted by the TEACH NJ Act. Under this tenure and teacher evaluation reform, each school district established a District Evaluation Advisory Committee (DEAC) to select a state approved evaluation model. Our DEAC selected Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument as the district's evaluation model. Subsequent to DEAC training by a certified Danielson trainer, the May 2012 and September 2013 district Professional Development (PD) days provided an introduction and training in the Danielson rubrics for all certificated staff. Additional training related to teacher evaluation and student performance will be provided during the October 2013 PD day. Teaching staff members were also introduced to Student Growth Objectives – or SGOs. Great teachers like those working in this school district have always established goals for their students. So in that respect, SGOs are nothing new. However, the state Department of Education's SGO requirement formalized the process by involving principals and assigning a quantifiable measure for student growth.

It is very important that our members work collaboratively with their principals to set SGOs that challenge our students but are realistic in scope. Be sure to also read this month's issue of the NJEA Review in which you'll find an article entitled, "OMG- I have to create my SGOs." This feature provides guidance on what to expect and how best to implement the process. Finally, our EBEA leadership customized a resource packet for each certificated member – Educators in the Lead. The purpose of this packet is to help our teachers understand the changes in the law and to help all become proactive in our district evaluation system making certain that it's fair, effective and reliable. If any certificated member did not receive the Educators in the Lead packet, please see your chief building representative as soon as possible. You'll need it to prepare yourself for your first evaluation!

The biggest challenge and the greatest opportunity for all New Jerseyans is the choice to be made on November 5, 2013. Voters can either reelect Governor Chris Christie or elect Senator Barbara Buono as the next Governor. Personally, I won't tell you how to vote because that's your choice. But I'd like to ask you a few questions... Are you happy with the Governor's corporate school reform agenda which increases standardized testing and seeks to privatize public education? Are you happy with higher property taxes that have gone up almost 20% in the last three years?

## SAVE THE DATES



**September 30, 2013**  
NJEA Fall Focus

**October 28, 2013**  
MCEA XYZ's of Retirement

**October 29, 2013**  
EBEA Fall Fest

**November 7, 2013**  
MCEA Reception at NJEA Convention

**November 16, 2013**  
MCEA Radio City Trip

*(Continued on page 2)*

## ***From the Desk of the President (continued from page 1)***

Are you happy with the Governor's attacks on unions, our professions and public schools in general? Are you happy with the possible elimination of collective bargaining? If the answer is YES, then vote for Chris Christie.

But if you answered NO, then your clear choice on November 5<sup>th</sup> is Barbara Buono. She voted against the cuts to our pensions and benefits and against the Governor's cuts to public education. She fully supports funding the School Funding Reform Act which will return much needed funding to our public schools. She supports due process rights for our Educational Support Professionals (ESPs). She believes in the middle class, believes the wealthiest should pay their faire share and is working to raise the minimum wage.

Of course, remember to support and help elect pro-education candidates in both

the Senate and the Assembly in the November election. After all, it was a united group of legislators from both parties who passed the two important ESP bills – due process rights and protection in the face of subcontracting. Governor Christie voted BOTH bills, but they never would have made it to his desk without legislative support. We must take a stand to elect legislative candidates who have demonstrated that they share our commitment to great public schools and its employees.

This new school year already poses significant challenges and exciting opportunities. Together, we can face whatever challenges come our way, always as members of the East Brunswick Education Association.

*Ruth Davitt*

**“When schools flourish, all flourishes.”**

**Martin Luther**

## EBEA Hosts New Member Orientation



The EBEA welcomed new members at its annual membership orientation meeting at the East Brunswick Chateau on Friday, August 30, 2013. Approximately 106 guests attended this luncheon to hear about the value of membership in the NJEA, NEA, MCEA and EBEA. President Ruth Davitt and Membership Chairperson Cathy Easley greeted and presented guests with beautiful welcome gifts to celebrate membership in all four affiliates. Informational portfolios containing materials for both certificated and support staff employees were also distributed.

NJEA Uniserv Representative Jan Witmer spoke to the group about the importance of membership in the national and state affiliates. She also spoke about the level of professionalism expected of all public school employees. Additionally, Deborah Cornavaca, NJEA lobbyist, reminded the audience of importance of the upcoming November 2013 election and the need to vote for NJEA PAC endorsed candidates on November 5, 2013. MCEA President Lois Yukna presented information about county membership, and member involvement in its activities.

The orientation luncheon also featured a variety of speakers from NEA/NJEA member benefits programs.

NEA representative Steve Eugene distributed materials about costs savings programs through the National Education Association. Alina Fayerman, from one of the many NEA discount programs, informed attendees of auto and home insurance needs available through the California Casualty Insurance Company. Finally, Prudential account representative Kelly Ray provided new members with information about the NJEA endorsed Prudential Disability Program. A directory of all other endorsed programs and providers will be distributed to members throughout September.

If you are a new member for the 2013-2014 school year and were unable to attend the luncheon, a new member portfolio is being sent to you at your school building or worksite. Be sure to also stop by the EBEA office at 575 Cranbury Road, Suites B1 and B2 to meet the staff and pick up your EBEA special welcome gift. We look forward to hearing from you and meeting you soon.

Welcome aboard, as we together, continue to be proud of our professions and promote great public schools for our students!

## Division of Pensions and Benefits Implements Changes

*Effective June 27, 2013, the Division reported that the production of annual PERS and TPAF paper statements has been discontinued. Therefore, active members must be registered MBOS users to monitor their personal benefits statements.*

### Purchasing Additional Service Credit

Staff received an email sent from the district's Financial Services Department on June 19, 2013. Attached to the email was a notice from the *New Jersey Division of Pensions and Benefits* addressing the implementation of a change to the process for the *purchase of additional service credit* available through a member's personal account on the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS). Online access is available to all members of the Public Employees' Retirement System (**PERS**) and Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund (**TPAF**). The attachment to the district email included the following information:

- ✓ A *purchase calculator*, for estimating the cost of a purchase of additional service credit is available through your personal MBOS account.
- ✓ The online purchase calculator automatically identifies your pension membership to provide **ONLY** the purchase options available to you through either PERS or TPAF.
- ✓ The online purchase calculator uses the salary information currently posted to your pension account – for the most accurate purchase estimates available.
- ✓ The online purchase calculator calculates different types of purchases.
- ✓ This online tool is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on your MBOS account.
- ✓ For those active employees who have not yet registered for MBOS, registration instructions for first time users are also provided.

### Important Reminders

As previously reported by the Division and in previous EBEA newsletters, all active PERS and TPAF members are encouraged to register for MBOS. The initial process requires that you have both your social security number and your pension Member ID number (available through our Financial Services Department).

Finally, as a reminder to any eligible member who wishes to apply for retirement, a paper application is no longer accepted by the Division. An application for retirement must be completed through the member's personal MBOS account.

Confirmation of receipt of a member's retirement application (all types of retirement applications) is then provided to the member on screen or by email.

Any questions regarding any changes or components of the MBOS should be directed to the MBOS Help Line at (609) 292-7524.

## Elections Matter... Don't Miss the



**On November 5, 2013**

As you know we are in the midst of an election that will shape our future and the future of public education here in New Jersey. More than ever we need to take collective action to protect our members and our profession. We know that electing the right gubernatorial candidate and legislators to fill all 120 Senate and Assembly seats matter. When we elect pro-education candidates, we are able to move our schools and our profession forward. When we don't, we find ourselves fight every day to keep from moving backward!

**So here's every EBEA member's "DO-NOW" because these activities can't be put off until later:**

- ✓ **Register to vote BEFORE October 15, 2013** – You must register if you haven't voted in 4 consecutive years or you've changed your name or address . All EBEA members already received voter registration forms. All others can obtain the voter registration form at **njelections.org**. Click on "Voter Information," then select "Voter Registration Applications." Select your county form and follow the directions provided.
- ✓ **Be sure to apply for a Vote by Mail (VBM) for any reason** – All EBEA members will receive a VBM application soon. The MCEA Fall Bulletin mailed to all members also included a copy of the VBM application for added convenience. All others can find the VBM application at [www.njea.org](http://www.njea.org) or at [www.njelections.org](http://www.njelections.org). The VBM application must be received by October 29th or one can be picked up in person at your county clerk's office by 3pm on November 4, 2013.
- ✓ **Go to GardenStateForward.org** – This tool reaches out to friends and families about issues in the November elections. Click on "Join the Friends and Family Program." Follow the steps to join this coalition so that you're ready to go with support and resources for the November 5, 2013 election.
- ✓ Finally, **fill out the pledge card** distributed to the membership – Your vote is critical so fill it out and return it to your building representative ASAP. You'll receive information and reminders throughout this election season.

**If there's one thing we've learned in the last four years – it's this: *politics matters.***

**As public school employees, our time is now!**

**Support and vote for a governor and legislators who have demonstrated that they share our commitment to great public schools!**



## EBEA Members Attend Summer Leadership Conference



Six Association leaders attended the 2013 NJEA Jack Bertolino Summer Leadership Conference (SLC) on August 7-9, 2013. Leslie Anderson, Beth Berzanskis, Ruth Davitt, Val Nugent, Mike Wildermuth and Dana Zimbicki spent three days at this pre-eminent advocacy conference. Selecting from a menu of 35 training seminars, these leaders learned new skills and acquired critical information regarding the challenges that all public school employees will continue to face this school year.

NJEA's newly elected executive committee – President Wendell Steinhauer, Vice President Marie Blistan and Secretary-Treasurer Sean Spiller, vowed to promote great public schools for every child in New Jersey and promised to stand against any “reform agenda” that is less about great schools and more about the politicians’ careers and the profits of private investors. Gubernatorial candidate Barbara Buono spoke during the general session as she, too, promised the return of respect for public education and its employees subsequent to her election in November 2013.

Following the general session, EBEA representatives attended sessions on negotiations/salary guides, grievance procedures, A/R advocacy and evaluation and education reform. Besides the six seminars, the group networked with other NJEA colleagues about the importance of engaging all members to prepare for November elections and imminent education reform that will surface if the wrong candidates are elected.

EBEA's leadership team has already marked its calendar ~ August 2-8, 2014 ~ for next year's Summer Leadership Conference at the Hilton in East Brunswick, New Jersey.

## EBEA Fall Fest

Come join the fun & celebrate with your co-workers!

*DJ  
Dancing  
Buffet Dinner  
Cash Bar  
Raffles  
Prizes*

October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013

4:00 PM – 7:00 PM  
\$15 per person  
(Checks only, payable to EBEA)  
EB Chateau, 678 Cranbury Road

***Look for information coming to your building soon!***



Snap the code to add the fun to your calendar!



## Cheers and Tears

### Congratulations to:

**Paula King**, retiree, on the marriage of her son (in May)

**Jean Louis**, Admin/Transportation, on the birth of his granddaughter Jeya (in June)

**Soula Katsiaticas**, Child Nutrition manager, on the birth of her granddaughter Anastasia Dean (in June)

**Polina Fisher**, Chittick teacher, on the birth of her daughter Emma Brooke (in June)

**Michael Wildermuth**, EBHS social studies teacher, on the birth of his daughter Vivian (in June)

**Kevin Brady**, EBHS English teacher, on the birth of his daughter Julia Catherine (in June)

**Amanda Coyle**, Frost teacher, on the birth of her son William (in June)

**Carol Shilling**, Central teacher, on the birth of her grandson Nathan Jonah (in June)

**Tara McGrath**, EBHS Student Asst. Counselor, on the birth of her son Connor Patrick (in June)

**Renee Rondeau**, Admin/Spec. Ed., on the birth of her grandson, Riley Aiden (in July)

**Jessica Lidsay**, Frost teacher, on the birth of her daughter Avery Ann (in July)



**Lisa Anne Foglia**, Admin/Financial Svcs., on the birth of her grandson Aiden Joseph (in July)

**Mariam Useche** and **Santiago Pena**, EBHS Spanish teachers, on the birth of their twin daughters Emma Sophia and Bella Sophia (in July)

**Diane Hassell**, Warnsdorfer nurse, on the birth of her grandson Kevin (in July)

**Melissa Farrell**, HMS social studies teacher, on the birth of her daughter Cortney Grace (in August)

**Lisa Weinert**, CJHS Computer Lit. teacher, on the birth of her daughter Livia Renee (in August)

**Matthew Hanas**, EBHS Assistant Principal, on the birth of his daughter Alexandra Paige (in August)

**Myra Strucek**, CJHS special ed. teacher, on the birth of her twin granddaughters Anna Lynn and Emma Marie (in August)

**Adriana Sarapochillo**, Warnsdorfer teacher, on the birth of her granddaughter Mikayla (in August)

**Nicole Tibbetts**, Central Principal, on the birth of her son Sebastian Xander (in September)



**Theresa Allara**, Chittick/Central teacher, on the birth of her son Tyler (in September)

### Condolences to:

**Monica Moreira**, Lawrence Brook teacher, on the death of her aunt (in June)

**Diane O'Connor**, EBHS instructional assistant, on the death of her mother (in June)

**Maria Buffolino**, EBHS Child Nutrition, on the death of her mother-in-law (in June)

**Nancy Hoffman**, Memorial instructional assistant, on the death of her brother (in June)

The family of **Dorothy Knight Duck**, retiree, on her death (in June)

**Shirley Neary**, EBHS secretary, on the death of her sister (in June)

**Kathleen Miller**, CJHS Child Nutrition, on the death of her father (in June)

**Denise Mariski**, Lawrence Brook teacher, on the death of her father-in-law (in June)

The family of **Santina Dzielak**, on her death (in June)

**Susan Rieimer**, Chittick aide, on the death of her mother (in July)

**Charlesetta Ward**, Admin/Transportation, on the death of her niece (in August)

**Senora Mobley**, Admin/Transportation, on the death of her grandmother (in August)

**Nancy Bartram**, HMS instructional aide, on the death of her father-in-law (in August)

**Teresa Kominkiewicz**, Central nurse, on the death of her father (in August)

**Scott Kominkiewicz**, Supervisor Community Programs, on the death of his father-in-law (in August)

The family of **Anthony Chinni**, retiree, on his death (in August)

**Mary Beth Graydon**, EBHS art teacher, on the death of her brother (in August)

**Kimberly Carter**, EBHS special ed. teacher, on the death of her mother (in August)

**Carol Carattini**, Frost teacher, on the death of her father (in September)

**Shari Sullivan**, HMS special ed. teacher, on the death of her father (in September)

The family of **Santina Dzielak**, retiree, on her death (in September)

### Get Well Wishes to:

**Mike Zielinski**, EBHS special ed. teacher

*With Sympathy*



## A "Thank You" From Our Scholarship Recipients

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you members of the East Brunswick Education Association Philanthropic Fund for presenting me with the East Brunswick Education Association Scholarship Fund Award. I was very surprised and excited to receive this award during the senior awards ceremony at the High School. Next fall I will be attending Kutztown University in Pennsylvania for both Special Education Grades K-8 and Math & Science Grades 4-8. I am both honored and grateful to have received this award from the East Brunswick Education Association.

Thank you very much,  
Heather Luster  
(2012 Recipient)

Dear Ruth Davitt and the EBEA,

Thank you once again for the generous gift that I can use towards my final year at Dartmouth. As I prepare for my senior year, it is an incredibly bittersweet time for me. On one hand, I can say I worked hard to finish most of my college career in the classroom and on the track. I'm doing very well in class and working hard each day at track still. I filed the two original majors I planned on since my sophomore year at EBHS, and prepared my first three years to make this year the best one. However, I'm very nervous for the "real world." I know that Dartmouth and East Brunswick Schools provided me with tools and an outlook I can use after graduation. I know that without my high school experience, I would not be where I am today and I would be totally unprepared for the years ahead. My intense love for my school will make it very hard for me to leave though. Your gift not only exists in that envelope I received in the mail for the past four years, but through the foundation my past education at East Brunswick has laid me.

Sincerely,  
Corinne Kominkiewicz  
(2010 Recipient)

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Place  
Stamp  
Here



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