

NJPSA Questionnaire for NJ Legislature - 2021 General Election

User: Addiego, Dawn / Email: info@dawnmarieaddiego.com

Survey answered on: 10/10/2021 12:01 AM

1. Legislative District #: (answer type: Number)

8

2. Office You Are Seeking: (answer type: Short Text)

Senate

3. Party: (answer type: Short Text)

Democrat

4. Campaign Phone Number: (answer type: Short Text)

609-410-8476

5. Campaign Mailing Address: (answer type: Long Text)

PO Box 1224 Marlton NJ 08053

6. Staff Contact Name and Phone Number (if preferred): (answer type: Long Text)

Austin Lyle 406-459-3019

7. State investment in a state level school facilities strategic plan to address long-ignored school infrastructure needs across all school districts in need in New Jersey (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Support

8. Supporting school employees' (including NJPSA members') rights to collective bargaining (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Support

9. An ongoing commitment to the scheduled phase-up of funding of public employee pensions according to the schedule set forth in the law (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Support

10. Private school vouchers in any form (tuition tax credits, opportunity scholarships, etc.) (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Oppose

11. No new unfunded state mandates for public schools (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Support

12. What health care policy approaches and priorities do you support for our public schools with the goal of maintaining in-person learning? In your mind, since educators are not health professionals, when do you believe a statewide approach is needed and when is a local approach more appropriate in deciding pandemic-related school health policies? (answer type: Long Text)

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Since day one of the pandemic, I have been an advocate for more consistent state-wide guidance while addressing the unique needs of individual districts as they arose. As stated above, educators are not health professionals and should not be put in that role. There is no question that we are all committed to having our children in the classroom receiving their education in a face-to-face environment. That realization and commitment can only be maintained by ensuring schools are given the appropriate guidance, support, and resources necessary for students, teachers, and school staff to remain safe.

13. What issues do you see in this area and how can you assist local districts in addressing school infrastructure needs in both SDA (Schools Development Authority) districts and regular operating districts? (answer type: Long Text)

As in all crisis situations, the pandemic has forced us to confront head-on many pre-existing problems that face our education system. If there can be anything positive to come out of the last 18 months, the pandemic has forced a near-universal recognition that this cannot be a can that is further kicked down the road. Fortunately, the debate going forward will center around how we do this (through unallocated federal funds or through other means) and not whether it should be done at all.

14. As a legislator, will you support professional educators in their work with their students and avoid the temptation to mandate specific programs for every school district as we work to meet the individual needs of each student, school and district? How will you support the work of educators and principals in your district? (answer type: Long Text)

My door is always open to hearing from the educators and principals in my district. You are the frontline in our fight to maintain our educational excellence. You are the first to know when things are working and when they are not. It would be legislative malpractice not to seek your advice and counsel.

15. Do you believe New Jersey students should pass a state graduation test or demonstrate proficiency in math and language arts standards as described above to earn a high school diploma? (answer type: Long Text)

I believe that testing alone should not be the only measure of a student or teacher's performance. While important, they are only an assessment of only that moment in time or of a particular student's test-taking prowess. Outside factors are also not taken into account that may be present in a child's life. I am open to reviewing with you the methods by which we determine graduation readiness while still ensuring students are prepared for their next steps.

16. As a legislator, what will you do to promote education as a positive career path to our youth and what types of initiatives will you consider to enhance the educational career pipeline for the future? How will you promote diversity within our future workforce? (answer type: Long Text)

Most teachers I know did not just suddenly decide they wanted to be teachers; for most, it has been a lifelong passion, often inspired by their educational experiences when they were young. Unfortunately, in today's competitive world many of those would-be educators are forced to abandon their dreams in pursuit of other opportunities. So in short, if we are going to overcome the current teacher shortage as well as the lack of diversity, we have to make working in education competitive with other industries. Future educators need to know their livelihood during their careers, and after, are secure. They need to know they will have the tools and resources available to do their job and

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they need to know that when things get tough, such as during covid, they will have our support. All of these things require a commitment to providing the necessary funding from those of us in the legislature. This may and should include incentivizing people to enter education professions through loan forgiveness, grants, and scholarships.

17. Will you vote for legislation (S-3284 (Greenstein)/ A-5011 (Wimberly)) that provides the same accidental death benefit to school employees who lost their lives in the service of their school community while performing such essential services? (answer type: Yes/No)

Yes

18. Thinking about the future, what are your goals for our public education system and what actions will you take as a state legislator to support our educators, our students and our schools? (answer type: Long Text)

We need to review and reassess the state's school funding formula. My legislation to create a task force to do so has passed the Senate.

The state must continue to meet its obligation to fully fund the pension system.

As discussed above, COVID has exposed the need for improving the infrastructure of schools. The need for a safe classroom environment for both students and staff can no longer be ignored.

Each day we are reminded of how COVID affects our physical health, but we cannot lose sight of the impacts it has had on our mental health, in both the short and long term.

The federal infrastructure bill now pending is expected to carry funds to address the internet connectivity issues facing nearly every state in the country. That legislation needs to be monitored and supplemented, if necessary, to ensure all of our kids have access to high-speed internet.