

# NJPSA Questionnaire for NJ Legislature - 2021 General Election

User: Fitzpatrick, Caren / Email: paul@njdacc.com

Survey answered on: 10/9/2021 11:42 PM

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

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

State Assembly

3. Party: (answer type: Short Text)

Democrat

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

609-435-4310

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

PO Box 362 Northfield NJ 08225

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

Paul Weborg 715-771-9497

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 &nbsp;New Jersey&nbsp; (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&nbsp; (answer type: Multiple Options With Single Answer)

Support

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

Oppose

11. No new unfunded state mandates for public schools&nbsp; (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?&nbsp;&nbsp; (answer type: Long Text)

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Since the beginning of the pandemic, educators have had an incredibly difficult time simply doing their job. From moving to virtual classes to dealing with the in-person challenges in 2021, we must listen to those who experienced the most difficult times of the pandemic to understand how to successfully and safely return to in-person instruction. I believe the state should set base standards for pandemic related school health policies, but there needs to be some ability for local school districts to react to COVID-19 in their area.

**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? &nbsp;&nbsp;  (answer type: Long Text)**

We must continue to put our resources into educating our children, and an important part of that is making sure our facilities are in good working condition. We must work with local leaders to understand the infrastructure needs of our schools, and then work to allocate the necessary funding.

**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? &nbsp;&nbsp; How will you support the work of educators and principals in your district?&nbsp;&nbsp;  (answer type: Long Text)**

We often say that we don't want teachers teaching for a test, and I truly believe that. I do think there needs to be a way to measure competency to confirm a student has received the same quality education as their peers, and is ready to advance, but I think that we need to partner with our local education stakeholders to get a better understanding of how to do that properly.

**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? &nbsp;&nbsp;  (answer type: Long Text)**

We know there are many outside factors that can negatively impact a student's performance on standardized testing, which are not in the school or student's control. I think that we need to engage in open dialogue with education professionals and leadership to ensure that we are putting together the best possible method for quantifying a student's proficiency level.

**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? &nbsp;&nbsp; How will you promote diversity within our future workforce?&nbsp;&nbsp;  (answer type: Long Text)**

To encourage more people to become teachers, I would propose the following items: Compensation that reflects the value of the work education professionals do for our communities, including examining salary, benefits, and good, healthy working conditions. Loan forgiveness programs offered to other professions, such as a 10 year program that would forgive their loans upon completion. College scholarships to incentivize high school seniors to seek a career in education. I also believe that we need to continue to fully fund our teachers' pensions to ensure that future educators know the state is committed to their long term success.

**17. Will you vote for legislation (S-3284 (Greenstein)/ &nbsp;&nbsp; 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? &nbsp;&nbsp;  (answer type: Yes/No)**

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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?&nbsp; (answer type: Long Text)**

We must look into how we can allocate funding to offer quality mental health services to our students who have had some of the most challenging education experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic.