

# NJPSA Questionnaire for NJ Legislature - 2021 General Election

User: Jasey, Mila / Email: mmtheroux@aol.com

Survey answered on: 9/29/2021 03:24 PM

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

27

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

NJ General Assembly

3. Party: (answer type: Short Text)

Democratic

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

19736101499

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

PO Box 1006, South Orange, NJ 07079

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

Mary M. Theroux

973-610-1499

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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It is imperative that we follow the science and the recommendations of the CDC as our schools struggle to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic. We remain in a state of emergency, breakthrough COVID exists putting staff and students at risk everyday. At the same time, we understand the need for in-person learning and the essential social emotional aspects of the education process that make in-person learning desirable. For these reasons, and because of the added expertise of the NJ State Department of Health, I believe the interaction between state and local must be collaborative. Unfortunately, masks have become a polarizing, political issue for inexplicable reasons. The CDC says the wearing of masks lessens the likelihood of transmission as much as 6.5x. Where the State has not issued an unequivocal directive, local school boards should be free to establish policies, both with the goal of protecting the health, welfare and safety of all.

**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)**

The pandemic has brought issues of adverse conditions in school buildings throughout the state to the forefront, notably ventilation systems. At the same time, we have summer classes for remediation in buildings that are not only without air conditioning but so old that the electrical systems cannot support them. We have learning delay that will need to be addressed and how is this meaningfully accomplished in stifling buildings? My temperature control bill has still not moved. Those communities that are fortunate enough to have support to bond for infrastructure repairs are much better situated than those that are not. It took a pandemic to finally address the digital divide - we need the same commitment to comprehensively address our school infrastructure, and the JCPS is slated to consider facilities throughout the State on its fall agenda.

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

We will continue to support our hard-working teachers who, together with their principals and educational support professionals, have made NJ public schools the best in the nation. While we will continue to require inclusion of our rich and diverse history into the curriculum (eg: Amistad, LGBTQI, - and we fully support the addition of Asian-American history and culture - we simply provide a framework, recognizing that the day-to-day decisions as how to best teach students while complying with the law rests with school districts and educators.

**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)**

The strongest indicia of student proficiency is made by classroom teachers, and we fully support the use of tailored assessments to assist them in determining whether students have met the requisite benchmarks. We believe that the state graduation test requirements (ie PARCC, NJSLA) contain inherent bias, do not accurately reflect content knowledge and create obstacles to college and career opportunities caused by the inability to earn a high school diploma.

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

The teacher shortage has steadily increased in past years and has been dramatically exacerbated by the pandemic. It is well-known that they are the least paid of all professionals, and most have post-graduate degrees. For years teachers were disparaged by the previous administration, and frustration about remote learning caused a resurgence of discontent. Immediate steps need to be taken to establish a career pipeline, and that includes elimination of the Core-Praxis that creates a barrier to many who wish to enter the profession, (especially students from underserved school districts), creating a one-on-one mentoring program that so prospective teachers enter the classroom equipped with both content knowledge and classroom management skills giving them much-needed confidence.

**17. Will you vote for legislation (S-3284 (Greenstein)/ &nbsp;&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;&nbsp;(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?&nbsp;&nbsp;&nbsp;(answer type: Long Text)**

Full funding for every school district under the SFRA, 21st century facilities, an environment that supports high expectations for academics, social and emotional learning.