

NJPSA Questionnaire for NJ Legislature - 2021 General Election

User: Johnson, Gordon / Email: johnsonforsenate21@gmail.com

Survey answered on: 10/8/2021 05:12 PM

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

37

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

State Senate

3. Party: (answer type: Short Text)

Democrat

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

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

PO Box 014, Tenafly, NJ 07670

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

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)

The Department of Health, in consultation with federal authorities, should be interpreting the science while taking into consideration the virus trends regionally and statewide within New Jersey. Local school districts should be in charge of the learning and disciplinary process, as well as adapting state

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guidelines to the unique circumstances in the district.

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)

One step that the Legislature took to address school infrastructure is appropriating \$180 million for the School and Small Business Energy Efficiency Program, which is available to school districts for the repair and replacement of HVAC systems, appliances, and other needs. The Legislature must ensure that funds spent on school infrastructure are spent efficiently. In light of the State Commission of Investigation's reports detailing waste and abuse at the Schools Development Authority, it must be reformed or replaced. Either option will increase the efficiency with which school facilities are constructed or rehabilitated and provide more resources to students with the limited funds available. I also support repurposing any funds available in the Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act to non-SDA districts. Lastly, the State needs to have better coordination, management, and leadership when assisting school districts with capital needs after disasters like Hurricane Ida.

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)

I will continue to meet with and listen to school administrators on any legislation that comes before me. Having an open line of communication is valuable to address any pending legislation that includes mandates that would negatively affect school districts. My door is always open, especially about such an important issue of education.

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)

In the past legislative session, I supported legislation that removed the 11th grade testing requirement and allowed New Jersey to create alternate assessments to determine college and career readiness. In the current legislative session, I wrote to the Commission of Education requesting that standardized testing be waived due to the pandemic.

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)

The Assembly passed S2826/A4594 which allows school districts with a demographic disparity to hire teachers with a limited certificate of eligibility. Last session, PL 2019 c. 102 was enacted that creates a pilot program in the Department of Education to recruit disadvantaged or minority men to teach. Reducing the cost of college, which we are doing through the Community College Opportunity Grant and Garden State Guarantee will help students receive the degree necessary to become a teacher. Programs that assist young people with student loan payments would be a great recruiting tool for being a teacher.

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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)

A student in New Jersey must receive a quality public education that enables them to enter the workforce, attend college, or join the military. I will work to ensure that the rebalancing of state school aid continues, which has brought millions of dollars in much-needed state aid to the districts I represent in Bergen County.