

NJPSA Questionnaire for NJ Legislature - 2021 General Election

User: Natale, Mark / Email: info@district8democrats.com

Survey answered on: 10/9/2021 11:59 PM

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

8

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

Assembly

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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Most would agree that in-person learning is preferable to virtual learning, however, we must make sure that each district is given the appropriate support and resources needed for safe in-person learning. I support a statewide approach to baseline COVID safety measures, but believe a district by district approach is needed if a community is experiencing a high rate of transmission.

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)

I believe we need to use this opportunity to allocate emergency funds to do improvements within the guidelines of those funds, which not only will help our schools and create a safe environment but allow us to focus resources in other areas and make needed improvements. We need to look at all avenues to get increased funding for our schools to make the necessary infrastructure and facility improvements.

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 always believe education professionals know the needs of their students best, and the most appropriate thing we can do as legislators is support them. Of course, district-by-district flexibility is important; however, I do believe in a baseline competency requirement to ensure that all children in our state have access to the same quality education. I look forward to continuing to strengthen my relationship with all education professionals to help further tailor the best approach.

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)

Testing to measure proficiency has its place in a larger context of student evaluation, but I am open to considering multiple methods to determine readiness of students. Testing is only one of a variety of factors that should be used to measure the progress of our students, and it is certainly unfair to measure the effectiveness of our educators on this metric alone. As a legislator, I am open to reviewing evaluation methods that are fair to our students while still ensuring they are ready to take the next steps in their education.

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)

We need to take an aggressive approach in recruiting the best education professionals, and making sure that we are able to get talent from all walks of life and all corners of our state. As a preliminary note, we need to continue to fully fund our schools and pensions, to make sure that compensation for our education professionals is among the best in the country. I am also open to exploring ways to incentivize students to enter the teaching profession, such as loan forgiveness options, to make sure that every talented student who wants to become an education professional, can become one.

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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)

Create a more equitable school funding formula

Make sure the pension system is fully funded

Channelresources into our schools for important infrastructure improvements

Do anything and everything possible to maintain our State's first in the nation standing for quality public education.