



Legislative and Agency Update

March & April 2010

Governor's News

Red Tape Review Group's Final Report on Reducing State Regulation

The Red Tape Review Group, chaired by Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, presented its final report to Governor Chris Christie and released it to the public. Created by Executive Order 3, the Red Tape Review Group was appointed by the governor and empowered to review all pending and proposed rules and regulations frozen under Executive Order 1, as well as all operative Executive Orders from previous administrations. Action to implement one or more of the recommendations in the report is pending.

http://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/552010/pdf/20100419_rtr_final_report.pdf

Legislative News

NJEA Files Law Suit Challenging Requirement to Pay 1.5% towards Health Benefits

NJEA filed suit on April 28 against the State of New Jersey over recently enacted legislation which will take 1.5 percent of salary from public school employees as a requirement to qualify for health insurance coverage. NJEA's lawsuit charges that the new law violates the collective bargaining rights of school employees, illegally reduces salaries for those employees, and violates several clauses of both the New Jersey Constitution and the United States Constitution. This lawsuit is similar to two other suits filed last week by firefighters and police and other public employee unions.

<http://www.njea.org>

Department of Education News

NCLB Title I Policy Updates

The Department of Education has distributed policy updates which provide clarification and guidance on the implementation of various components of the No Child Left Behind legislation related to implementation of Title I. The updates aim to implement recommendation from the USDOE's recent monitoring visit to selected NJ schools.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/title1/leg/policy/circulars.pdf>

Elimination of House Matrix for Special Education Teachers

The Department of Education has issued a reminder to school districts that after June 30, 2010 special education teachers will no longer be permitted to use the HOUSE Matrix to demonstrate that they meet the federal highly qualified mandate.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/profdev/nclb/memos/032210house.pdf>

Department of Education Budget Testimony

On Monday, April 26, 2010, Department of Education Commissioner Bret Schundler presented testimony to the Assembly Budget Committee on the education funding provisions of the Governor's proposed budget. Members of the committee expressed numerous concerns about the proposed cuts to education funding especially the elimination of funding for school employee pensions and the impact the cuts in state funding will have on local property taxes.

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/news/2010/0426bud.htm>

State Budget

The Assembly Budget Committee and the Senate Budget and Appropriations will continue to conduct budget hearings with each department of state into the month of May. Also, the Office of Legislative Services continues to update the committees on the state's revenue projections. Once the hearings are completed, the legislature will draft a budget bill for consideration. Both NJASL and NJLA have been working diligently to convince legislators to reinstate funding for school and public library programs and staff. More information and suggestions for contacting legislators to support funding for library programs can be found at NJASL.org and NJLA.org

2010 – 2011 State Testing Schedule

The department has published the statewide assessment schedule for grades 3, 4, 5,6,7,8 and high school. <http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/schedule1011.pdf>

Preliminary Results of School Budget Elections

According to preliminary figures released by the Department of Education, 58.4 percent of the school budgets, statewide, were defeated this year. For the past two years, 26.4 percent were defeated. Eight districts requested additional spending in separate ballot questions, and all were defeated.

In his press release on the results of the School Budget Elections Commissioner Schundler "reminded teachers, school boards, and taxpayers in all districts that they can continue to work together to reduce layoffs and save important academic programs. This year, whether local school budgets were defeated or not, we will be encouraging all school boards and teachers' unions to continue negotiating until the state budget is adopted at the end of June. If more teachers accept a one-year wage freeze, there is still time to save the jobs of their colleagues and preserve important programs for children." <http://www.state.nj.us/education/news/2010/0421vote.htm>

State Board of Education

2010 – 2011 Holiday Calendar

The State Board of Education approved the official holiday calendar to be used by local school districts. <http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/holidays1011.htm>

N.J.A.C. 6A:9, Professional Licensure and Standards

The Department of Education submitted a proposal to the State Board of Education recommending that N.J.A.C. 6A:9 be amended to ease certification for some alternate route instructional candidates who must complete additional study in their content areas in order to qualify for certification. The proposed amendments will allow completion of content study to be documented directly on the transcript of a two-year, regionally accredited college, with the exception of upper-level content study requirements, which must continue to be completed at a four-year, regionally accredited college or university. [Professional Licensure and Standards](#).

Standards and Assessment Regulations

The Department presented the entire chapter of regulations governing state standards and assessment to the Board for review and readoption with amendments. Both a summary of the proposed changes a the chapter of code with recommended changes may be reviewed at [Standard and Assessment](#)

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