



ESCNJ Welcomes the Newly-Appointed Superintendent, Staff and Students

ESCNJ is warmly welcoming back the entire school community for the 2023-24 school year!

The beginning of the year is always a memorable time. The teachers and support staff have prepared many new, exciting and lasting learning opportunities for all of our students. We want to thank the entire ESCNJ team for all the hard work and dedication to ensure a successful school year.

ESCNJ is also welcoming a new Superintendent of Schools, Nadia Romano, who took over the reigns on July 1.

Ms. Romano previously held the position of Deputy Superintendent and was appointed to her new position when Mark Finkelstein retired in June after decades of service to ESCNJ. (See full article on page 2).

Stay Tuned:

EXPO 2024

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ESCNJ Welcomes a New Leader, Nadia Romano

Ms. Romano began working at the Commission as ESCNJ's Director of Human Resources in 2017, and last year she was named ESCNJ's first-ever Deputy Superintendent.

"I have the leadership skills, temperament, objectivity and command of ESCNJ policies and procedures to hit the ground running in my new role," Romano said. "Above all, I will be maintaining the integrity and services that my predecessor and mentor, Mark Finkelstein, has put in place over the past decades."

Prior to joining ESCNJ in July 2017, Ms. Romano served for five years as the director of curriculum instruction at Hackettstown Public Schools and was an administrator in the Stanhope Public Schools. She began her career in special education.

Ms. Romano has an education specialist degree from Seton Hall University, a graduate degree in teaching and learning from Nova Southeastern University and an undergraduate degree in special education from The College of New Jersey.

ESCNJ Bids Farewell to Mark Finkelstein, After 26 Years of Service

It was a tearful farewell, as Mark Finkelstein retired this past June after three decades of service as superintendent.

Under Mr. Finkelstein's leadership, ESCNJ experienced exponential growth; including the seven schools, the transitional program Pathways to Adult Learning and the latest addition, the Adults Community Services program for individuals 21 and over.

Mr. Finkelstein was recognized and presented with a plaque at the June 2 ESCNJ Board of Directors meeting, where the room was filled with applause and well wishes.

"On behalf of the ESCNJ Board of Directors and the staff at ESCNJ, we wish Mark all the best and thank him for all her years of service. He has made an incredible difference in the lives of so many here at ESCNJ," said ESCNJ Board President Dale Caldwell.

Although he is retired from ESCNJ, Mr. Finkelstein is still active in education, serving as president of Middlesex College Board of Trustees.



Plainfield Schools Superintendent Joins the ESCNJ Board

Rashon K. Hasan, appointed as the superintendent of the Plainfield Public Schools in June, is the newest member of ESCNJ's Board of Directors.

Mr. Hasan previously served on the Newark Board of Education, and has held other positions such as school superintendent, school business administrator, board secretary, chief financial officer, elected official, college professor and manager at Verizon.

There are approximately 106 students from Plainfield Public Schools enrolled at ESCNJ this 2023-24 school year. Joining the board will provide a better opportunity to assess the supports and services that are provided to the students from his school district.

"We are very pleased to have Rashon join the ESCNJ board because of his tremendous insight, perspective and experience in many facets of education and business," said ESCNJ Schools Superintendent Nadia Romano. "I know he will be a continual asset who will take an active role in ensuring our specialized schools remain second to none."

Hasan earned a master's degree in business administration from the Florida Institute of Technology and a graduate degree as an educational specialist from Seton Hall University. He received his undergraduate from Clark Atlanta University in political science and government.



ESCNJ Hires a New Director of Human Resources

ESCNJ welcomes Dr. Matthew Scanlon as the new Director of Human Resources.

Dr. Scanlon has more than 27 years of experience in the educational arena. He oversees the daily personnel operations and works closely with the administration to recommend and support all ESCNJ employees.

"Dr. Scanlon is a valuable addition to our administrative staff; his knowledge and experience play a key role in the effective operations of the Commission," said ESCNJ Superintendent of Schools Nadia Romano. "His experience and skillsets in dealing with both educational and business entities are beneficial as the Commission continues to grow."

Prior to taking the position at ESCNJ, Dr. Scanlon served as a principal at Phillipsburg High School and as a professor at Centenary University in Hackettstown.

Dr. Scanlon, who earned a BA from Le Moyne College, has a master's degree from Loyola University in Curriculum Instruction, a master's from Lehigh University in Educational Leadership and a doctorate from East Stroudsburg University.



Meet the ESCNJ Administration Staff



Central Administration Staff



Academy Learning Center



Adult Community Services



Bright Beginnings Learning Center



Center for Lifelong Learning



Future Foundations Academy



NuView Academy



Non-public School Services



Pathway to Adult Learning



Piscataway Regional Day School



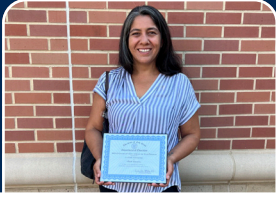
Turning Point Academy



WE ARE...ESCNJ

ESCNJ Congratulates its “NJ Governor’s Educator of the Year Award” Recipients

Congratulations to all of the 2023 recipients of this prestigious award. ESCNJ is proud to have so many talented teachers and we thank you for your contributions, dedication and hard work.



ACADEMY LEARNING CENTER:

Margaret DeGroat
Educator of the Year

Ruth Caceres

Education Specialist of the Year



BRIGHT BEGINNINGS LEARNING CENTER:

Rachel Armus
Educator of the Year

Dahlia Burrell-Thompson

Education Specialist of the Year



CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING:

Lisa Burger
Educator of the Year

Allyson Powers

Education Specialist of the Year



FUTURE FOUNDATIONS ACADEMY:

Aaron Olexa
Educator of the Year

Nicolette Vulpis

Education Specialist of the Year



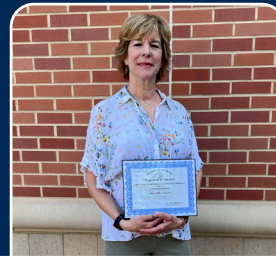
NEW BRUNSWICK COLLABORATION:

Dana Virgilio
Educator of the Year



NUVIEW ACADEMY:

Nicole Elmini
Educator of the Year



PISCATAWAY REGIONAL DAY SCHOOL:

Gail Miller-Wager
Educator of the Year



TURNING POINT ACADEMY:

Maha Youssef
Educator of the Year

NONPUBLIC: Kelly Goldman, Educator of the Year • Tzipora Guttman, Education Specialist of the Year

ESCNJ Celebrates the 2023 Middlesex County Unsung Heroes



ACADEMY LEARNING CENTER:

Mathew Jager
Sakou Thomas

CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING:

Alejandro Herrera-Cruz
James Szewczyk

FUTURE FOUNDATIONS ACADEMY:

Tyler Harabin

NUVIEW ACADEMY:

Jaxon Glover

PISCATAWAY REGIONAL DAY SCHOOL:

Dinel Cruz
Gabriella Pelaez

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR

Academy Learning Center



Center for Lifelong Learning



2023 GRADUATES

Future Foundations Academy



Academy Learning Center

William Britton
Kelly Garnice
Jared Maldonado
Nicholas Mastroia

Andrew Nekrasz
Jason Ryan
Alex Zhong

Center for Lifelong Learning

Quentin Armanie
Gissel Franco-Reyes
Thomas Garlatti
Arunima Goyal
Harold Hernandez
Alejandro Herrera-Cruz
Avnish Kirshna
Emily Ma

Shreyas Narayanan
Michael Orofino
Nicholas Sansotta
Asaad Smith
Zachary Streimer
James Szewczyk
Zachary Tobias

Future Foundations Academy

Evan Acacia
Eugene Dande
Tyler Harrabin
Kamal Jackson

Nnamdi Nnanna
Adarsh Patel
Joseph Quartsin

NuView Academy

Hudson Costa
Autumn Mignella-Colalillo

Jaxon Glover
Emmanuel Vasquez

Piscataway Regional Day School

Neel Chaudhari
Martin Cintron
Prabhjot Dhillon
Rachel Goodrich
Gina Kacorri
Gurjot Singh

Alexi Velasquez
Gabriela Pelaez
Elibaneth Tiburcio Sanchez
Johnnie Ventura
Cydney Walker

Students from Bright Beginnings Learning Center Celebrated a Moving Up Ceremony



Students from Pathways to Adult Learning Completion Ceremony



2023 GRADUATION

NuViewAcademy



Piscataway Regional Day School



LOOKING BACK ON SPRING 2023

Students from FFA who participate in the salad program made and sold salads and wraps at the Transition Coordinators Network meeting that was held in the ESCNJ Professional Conference Center.



PRDS staff and students enjoyed a delicious pizza lunch from the Piscataway Rotary Club! Members of the club provided food, drinks and served the meal, ensuring everyone had a great time!



The students and staff at PAL planted and tended to a garden in the Sayreville Community Garden.

Students from Mrs. Burger's class at NuView made "food" artwork from wet paper towels and/or plaster. Their artwork was later displayed at the well-attended ESCNJ Art Show.



The students from CLL worked at Staples as part of their Community-Based Instruction program last year.

BBLC hosted its first annual Mother's Day Tea. A Moment of Magic Foundation brought some Disney Princesses, and many family members attended the event and enjoyed the festivities.



ALC hosted its prom. Students and staff enjoyed a memorable night of celebrating with music, dancing and plenty of fun activities.



ESCNJ held its first student art show in the Professional Conference Center. There was artwork from all the schools and programs within the commission. The artwork was on display for several days for all to enjoy in this brand-new setting.



LOOKING BACK ON SPRING 2023

FFA students held a waffle and brownie sale. They made all the goodies at Lucy's café and then sold them to the staff. The sale was a huge, gooey success!



NuView's youngest students jumped the day away to raise almost \$200 for the Jump Rope For Heart program.

The students and staff showed off their many talents at the CLL Talent Show, thanks to the coordinating efforts of the Speech, Art and Music departments.



PAL students enjoy a game of basketball with Gill St. Bernard students and ex-Rutgers basketball star Paul Mulcahy.

The FFA Prom King and Queen were honored at their prom last June.



PRDS students enjoyed a day of beauty at the Piscataway Magnet School in preparation for their Graduation/Prom dance.

"Let's Fiesta" this year's CLL Prom theme. Students, staff and family members enjoyed a night filled with great entertainment. Taco 'bout a party!



Seniors from FFA spent the day enjoying the sites and activities on the Point Pleasant Beach boardwalk. Custard anyone?

Students enjoyed this year's ESY program (Extended School Year) with a visit from Niles, a beautiful black Labrador Retriever, from Creature Comfort Pet Therapy. There was also Dinosaur Day; a trip to the beach, and visiting the staff at Central Office. What a way to end a great year!



Michael Ciaccio Earns the Rebecca S. McDonald Award

Michael Ciaccio, a Pathways to Adult Living (PAL) student, received the 2023 Rebecca S. McDonald award from the Transition Coordinators Network of New Jersey at Bell Works in Holmdel. This award is given to a senior or aging-out student involved in successful transition activities and moving into the adult world. Michael was nominated based on overcoming obstacles, motivation, and achievement in transitioning from school to adulthood.

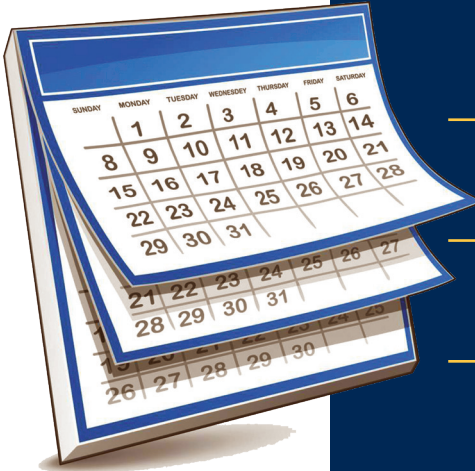


Farewell to long-time ESCNJ Employees

ESCNJ staff celebrated Debbie Bernstein, Nancy Tavormina and Linda Anderson's retirement, we wish them a happy retirement after their many years of service to the school district.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:



Back to School Night September 21, 2023

Yom Kippur September 25, 2023
(Schools Closed)

NJEA Convention November 9 and 10, 2023
(Schools Closed)

Parent/Teacher Conference November 15 and 16, 2023

Thanksgiving November 23 and 24, 2023
(All schools and programs closed)

Winter Recess December 25, 2023 to January 1, 2024

Schools Open January 2, 2024

Visit www.ESCNJ.us for more information



The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey

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Piscataway, New Jersey 08854
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Dr. Dale Caldwell, *President*

Dr. David Roman, *Vice President*

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Highland Park, Kristina Nicosia
Jamesburg, Gina Villani
Metuchen, Vincent Caputo
Middlesex, Roberta Freeman
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(Camden)
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(Ocean)
Millville Township, Tony Trongone
(Cumberland)
Robbinsville, Brian Betze
(Mercer)
Somerset Hills Regional, Gretchen
Dempsey (Somerset)

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Superintendent*
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Nonpublic School Services*

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