

Ambassador Murphy *in his own words:*

On Oct. 8, the 125-member NJEA PAC voted unanimously to endorse Ambassador Phil Murphy for the Democratic Gubernatorial Primary because he shares NJEA members' priorities and values.



ON BUDGET PRIORITIES:

"There is no question that, as a state, we are in a tough fiscal climate. But our budget is also a \$35 billion statement of our priorities. Governor Christie's priorities have been clear: he has underfunded education by \$8 billion while handing out almost the same amount in tax credits to large corporations. I believe we need a governor who both values public education and is committed to making funding our schools a priority."

ON PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' PENSIONS:

"The state has a moral obligation to fund the pensions. In light of Governor Christie's refusal to meet his end of the 2011 bargain, I believe it should also be a constitutional obligation. That is why I supported a constitutional amendment requiring the state to meet its actuarially required payments into the pension system."

"Many educators joined the profession not because they were expecting to get rich, but because they wanted to make a difference in their community and because they would have a secure retirement with a defined benefit pension. It is a central part of the promise that we have made to our school employees, and I would work to preserve it."

ON HEALTH CARE:

"I believe in the collective bargaining process. Now that Chapter 78 has expired, health care benefits should return to the collective bargaining table. And, as governor, I would support that."

ON HIGH-STAKES STANDARDIZED TESTING:

"I have been a vocal critic of PARCC. I believe the era of high-stakes, high-stress standardized tests in New Jersey must end, and I will see that it does. We must get back to the simple premise of letting teachers use classroom time to teach to their students' needs, and not to a test. Standardized tests have a role, but good teachers and good students can have bad test days. Too much emphasis is being put on a single test, as opposed to weighing a student's progress through years of instruction."

"Specifically, I have called for ending PARCC, eliminating the exit test graduation requirement, and developing new and innovative tests to track student progress. New Jersey should follow the federal government's lead under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, which gives states the ability to develop innovative, easy to administer, and shorter tests that provide real-time feedback to both teachers and students."

ON TYING TEST SCORES TO TEACHER EVALUATIONS:

"I believe any test used in a teacher's evaluation should be a fair and accurate assessment of a student's progress through a core curriculum over time. PARCC is not such an assessment, and I opposed the State Board of Education's decision this year to triple PARCC's weight in a teacher evaluation. As governor, I would reconsider our teacher evaluation process to ensure that it actually furthers the primary goal of increasing student learning and performance."

ON SCHOOL FUNDING:

"SFRA, when passed, was a landmark piece of legislation. It was the first funding formula upheld by the NJ Supreme Court and continues to be considered a national model. Unfortunately, Gov. Christie has underfunded the formula by more than \$8 billion – forcing many towns to either raise property taxes or cut school services. When the conversation earlier this year shifted to a misguided debate over how to change the formula, I continued to advocate for funding the existing formula."

ON CRITICAL PROTECTIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS:

"Educational support professionals (ESP) play a critical and under-appreciated role in a child's learning experience, especially when we consider that learning does not just occur inside a classroom. I support legislation that would protect ESPs from privatization and give them due process rights."

ON STATE TAKEOVER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

"I believe that education is fundamentally a local issue. I am particularly troubled by the state's history of taking over school districts, which only seems to occur in districts that have student populations that are overwhelmingly minority. I have been a consistent critic of state takeovers more broadly, including most recently, the proposed takeover of Atlantic City. I have supported efforts to return control over education policy to local school boards, and I would continue to do so as governor."

ON CHARTER SCHOOLS:

"I support a brief moratorium on the charter application process to identify what works, what doesn't, and to bring all parties to the table to develop a reasonable plan forward. I am concerned that, too often, charters fail to reflect the diversity of their communities and leave districts with disproportionate numbers of high-needs students and are not held to the same standards of accountability as traditional public schools."

ON THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC EDUCATION:

"As a product of a public school education and the brother of a retired Boston teacher, I am a strong supporter of traditional district schools and public school employees. One of the greatest strengths we have as a state is our system of public education, and we desperately need a governor who values and promotes that system – rather than one who uses public education, the NJEA, and our school employees as punching bags to further his own political agenda. I have been a vocal ally and advocate for public education, and I intend to continue to champion these causes as governor."



This message is intended solely for NJEA members and their families.