



This Week at NJ21st: Education Focus, Policy Myths and Referendum Facts

Education Stack

This week we shift the spotlight firmly back to education and look at it from every angle.

We start with the sixth installment of our “Understanding Your New Jersey Government” series, where we break down each part of a BOE Meeting. The goal is to help residents become more informed and more effective when advocating for an accountable school district.

Next, we examine a DOE memo that outlines major changes to how New Jersey will measure school performance. The memo is light on details, vague in places, and raises more questions than answers. We emailed Commissioner Dehmer a third time requesting the technical documentation that should already be public. If the changes are solid, there should be no barrier to transparency. The concern is that these shifts could hide what has been a steady decline in math, science and ELA proficiency since 2019.

We move to governance by addressing a myth that keeps circulating in politically curated local Facebook groups - that Boards are "hands off" when it comes to instruction. We dismantle that claim with actual law, public documents and DOE guidance. We walk through one superintendent's response to our earlier article and end with the State Board's October 2025 adoption record which reaffirms that Boards are legally responsible for instruction.

Shifting to policy, we outline four practical, research-backed policies tied to academic achievement that any BOE can adopt today to strengthen outcomes for students.

We close the education section with Berkeley Heights. Our first installment in a referendum breakdown series cuts through another round of meme-driven misinformation circulating on social media. Residents deserve facts, not slogans. If the District wants the referendum to pass, it may need to offer clearer choices, a cleaner proposal and a fairer ballot.

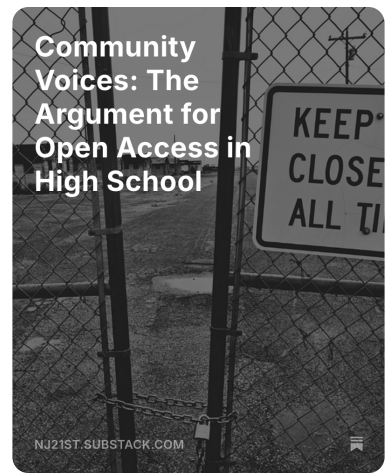
Pensions, PILOTs and More

We reviewed the past week's NJ Senate legislative agenda and highlighted four bills with real implications for taxpayers. One is promising, one raises concerns and one makes no sense given the state's problematic pension obligations.

Berkeley Heights Recreation Commissioner Steps Down

After a year defined by the Township's troubled turf field saga, the central figure in that controversy has resigned. Inside sources tell us this may be more of a position transition that could raise further public concerns.

Top Three Articles for October



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