

# NJ & Region

## NJSBA honors N. Plainfield Board of Education

**By Mark Spivey**  
Staff Writer

**NORTH PLAINFIELD** — A good year for borough public schools is only getting better.

Just months after Schools Superintendent Marilyn Birnbaum and Board of Education President Linda L. Bond-Nelson received individual honors from state education organizations, the entire board was honored Friday evening in Trenton for its own achievement in meeting a set of rigorous performance standards set by the New Jersey School Boards Association.

The North Plainfield board was one of a few statewide, and the only one in Somerset County, to earn the association's Carole E. Larsen Master Board Certification.

"This has been a banner year for us in so many ways," Birnbaum said. "Really, I think people on the outside don't always realize how much time and effort go into all of this. So it was nice for the board to be recognized for how much work they put in."

According to the association, to earn master certification, a board must meet 80 percent of the indicators in the "governance" section of its most recent New Jersey QSAC (Quality Single Accountability Continuum) scores, maintain an overall average of

at least 3.0 in its annual self-evaluation and complete training sessions attended by at least 70 percent of its members and the district superintendent. The association began offering the title 2007, and the current school year marks the first time the local board earned it, Birnbaum said.

Larsen, the late New Jersey education official after whom the certification is named, was an association field representative who worked with North Plainfield schools for years.

"That's why this award was so special for us," Birnbaum said.

"She was one of the very first representatives I met," Bond-Nelson added. "We went back a long way."

Bond-Nelson, an 18-year veteran on the board who has spent the past eight years as president, in December was named by the association as the New Jersey School Board Member of the Year. Birnbaum two months earlier had been honored as Central Jersey Regional Superintendent of the Year by the New Jersey Association of School Administrators.

Bond-Nelson said she was pleased to see the board honored for its work managing a \$55 million annual budget to provide education to about 3,250 students in five public schools.

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