



## **NJDOE News**

**For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:  
Kathryn Forsyth, Director  
609-292-1126**

**For Release: May 30, 2008**

---

### **Education Commissioner Requires County Superintendents to Review District Contracts**

New Jersey Commissioner of Education Lucille E. Davy today asked the 21 county superintendents to review the existing contracts of all district superintendents within their jurisdictions, particularly any provisions relating to excessive severance payments.

“Our priorities in doing this work are transparency and accountability,” the Commissioner said.

“We understand that being a district superintendent is not an easy job. The time demands are extensive and the various skills needed to perform the job well are complex. However, resources should be focused on classroom instruction and not on subsidizing golden parachutes for public employees,” the Commissioner said.

The contracts will be reviewed against a consistent set of criteria which will be provided to the county offices next week, and the results of the reviews will be reported directly to the Commissioner. Assistant Commissioner for Field Services William King today e-mailed the county superintendents requesting that they ask all district superintendents to forward their contracts to their county offices by next Wednesday, June 4.

Commissioner Davy said she expected the focus of the review would be special severance packages and bonuses provided on retirement and termination. She said that payment for unused sick and vacation days for retiring superintendents was permissible under the law, but noted that excessive examples of these types of payments should be brought to her attention.

Contracts for school employees, including superintendents and other administrators, are negotiated by local school boards in each district. State law requires that key provisions in all contracts for superintendents, assistant superintendents and business administrators be posted on the district’s website if one exists, and made available for public review.

“Although the Department is undertaking this review, community members and taxpayers are encouraged to examine these contracts as well,” Commissioner Davy said.

While the Department has no legal authority to order modifications to existing contracts, the data that is gathered will be used to ensure that new regulations adequately delineate acceptable standards for all contracts now being reviewed under the CORE Reform Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:7-8