



# STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**For Immediate Release**

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## Dr. Lily Laux Assumes Leadership of New Jersey Department of Education

**Trenton, NJ** — The New Jersey State Board of Education announced yesterday Dr. Lily Laux as Acting Commissioner of Education. The change became effective at the end of the day on Wednesday, February 4, 2026, when former Commissioner Kevin Dehmer stepped down.

Dr. Laux was nominated by Governor Mikie Sherrill to serve as Education Commissioner and will assume the role in an acting capacity pending Senate confirmation.

“One of my first priorities is to get into schools across New Jersey to listen, learn, and lift up the great work happening in classrooms and communities throughout the state,” said **Acting Commissioner Lily Laux**. “New Jersey’s deep commitment to public education is what drew me here, and I look forward to working alongside educators and families to build on that strong foundation and address the challenges our schools face today.”

As Acting Education Commissioner, Dr. Laux will lead the implementation of Governor Sherrill’s education priorities, informed by collaboration with educators, families, and community stakeholders across the state. Her work will focus on strengthening student achievement from early childhood through high school, including advancing a comprehensive strategy to improve literacy outcomes and expanding access to high-impact tutoring for K-12 students.

Dr. Laux will also prioritize addressing the teacher shortage, recognizing that a strong, well-supported educator workforce is essential to student success. Central to her leadership will be efforts to modernize and stabilize the state’s school funding formula to promote equity, transparency, and long-term fiscal stability for school districts.

In addition, Dr. Laux will champion expanded access to preschool, support the implementation of programs that connect students and families to critical services, strengthen supports for students’ mental health, and enhance online safety for children to ensure learning environments are safe, inclusive, and supportive.

Dr. Laux, who began her career as a middle school teacher in Memphis, Tennessee, most recently worked as a Principal at ILO Group, where she partnered with state agencies, school districts, and cross-sector leaders to help execute major initiatives. She previously served for nearly seven years as Deputy Commissioner at the Texas Education Agency, where she led the implementation of historic school finance reform; the agency’s COVID-19 response; the training of every K-3 Texas educator on the science of teaching reading; the development of open-source instructional materials adopted by over 600 school districts; and the overhaul of college and career pathways, which led to a fourfold increase in the number of students graduating with both a diploma and a college associate degree.

Dr. Laux also worked as the Executive Director of Economic Mobility Systems, a nonprofit that aims to improve educational outcomes for underserved students, and she served in various capacities as a director at Teach For America.

She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin, a master's in Curriculum and Instructional Leadership from the University of Memphis, and a bachelor's degree from Columbia University.

Former Commissioner Kevin Dehmer, who has served as Commissioner of Education since 2024 and held various roles throughout his nearly 20-year career, has been appointed by Governor Sherrill to serve as the state's next Chief Technology Officer, overseeing the New Jersey Office of Information Technology. The State Board of Education honored former Commissioner Dehmer by presenting him with a resolution at the Wednesday, February 4, meeting.

“I want to thank Kevin Dehmer for his many years of dedicated public service and leadership at the Department of Education,” said **Kathy Goldenberg, President of the State Board of Education.** “His commitment to New Jersey’s students has had a lasting impact, and we wish him well in his next chapter. We are also pleased to welcome Dr. Laux as Acting Commissioner of Education. Her experience, leadership, and deep understanding of state education systems will be a strong asset as we work together to support students and schools across New Jersey.”

Nominations for Education Commissioner first go to the Senate Judiciary Committee and then for a confirmation vote by the full Senate.

