



New Jersey State Elks Association
Peer Leadership Conference
P.O. Box 43
Manahawkin, NJ 08050
Email njelksconference@gmail.com



Dear Educator,

We are pleased to invite your students to attend the **38th Annual New Jersey State Elks Peer Leadership Conference**, taking place **February 5–7, 2027**, at the **Ocean Place Resort & Spa in Long Branch, New Jersey**.

Each year, more than **400 high school students from across New Jersey** come together for an unforgettable weekend focused on leadership, personal growth, prevention education, and building meaningful connections with their peers.

The mission of the Peer Leadership Conference is to give students the confidence, knowledge, and tools they need to **make healthy choices, become stronger leaders, and positively influence their peers, schools, and communities**.

By attending the conference, students will:

- Strengthen leadership and decision-making skills
- Participate in prevention education that supports **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** goals
- Gain practical tools and resources they can bring back to their schools and communities
- Build connections with students from across New Jersey who share a commitment to wellness, leadership, and service

We are excited to welcome **Dr. Julia Garcia ("Dr. J")**, a nationally recognized youth advocate and motivational speaker, as **one of our dynamic speakers joining us at this year's conference**. Through her authentic, energetic, and relatable approach, Dr. J connects with young people while delivering a powerful message centered on **compassion, resilience, courage, and recognizing their ability to create positive change**.

The cost is **\$385 per student**, which includes:

- Hotel accommodations
- All meals
- Workshops, seminars, and conference activities

Important Cancellation Policy: No refunds will be issued for cancellations received after **January 5, 2027**. Cancellations made after this date will still require full payment.

Online Application: <https://form.jotform.com/njelksdap/peer2027>

Application Deadline: **December 15, 2026**, or when the conference reaches capacity, whichever comes first.

Please keep the following in mind when submitting applications:

- Each student must submit their **own application**.
- The "**Responsible for Payment**" section must be completed accurately.
- Students should list their **requested roommates** during the application process. Up to **four students may be assigned to one room**, and students should expect that rooms will likely be filled to capacity.
- If an **advisor's email address** is provided on the application, the advisor will automatically receive a copy of the student's completed application.

Invoices will be emailed after **December 15, 2026**. Payments should be mailed to our **new mailing address**:

NJ State Elks Association Peer Leadership Conference
PO Box 43
Manahawkin, NJ 08050

If submitting payment for both the **Peer Leadership Conference** and the **Path to Leadership Conference**, please send **separate checks** and include the appropriate invoice number with each payment.

We recognize that funding can sometimes be a barrier to participation, and we encourage schools to explore available community resources.

- Schools may contact their local **Municipal Alliance** regarding possible financial support.
- The Peer Leadership Conference qualifies as an eligible use of funding through the **New Jersey Opioid Settlement Funds**.
- If you are having difficulty identifying funding opportunities, please contact us at njelksconference@gmail.com. We are happy to provide guidance and help you explore potential resources.

We know how much you invest in the success and well-being of your students, and we are confident that the Peer Leadership Conference will provide them with experiences, connections, and skills that extend far beyond the weekend.

Thank you for encouraging your students to take advantage of this unique and potentially life-changing opportunity. **We look forward to welcoming them in February!**

With appreciation,

Mary Ellen Lawrence

NJSEA Chairperson, Drug Awareness Committee

Conference Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/njelkspeerleadership>