

Testimony of

Kate Dias

Connecticut Education Association

Before the Education Committee

**SB 1 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education
SB 1165 An Act Concerning Financial Literacy Instruction**

March 8, 2023

Representative Currey, Senator McCrory, and members of this esteemed committee. I am Kate Dias, the president of the Connecticut Education Association. CEA represents educators in more than 150 school districts across the state.

SB1 An Act Concerning Transparency in Education

We thank Education Committee members for raising SB 1 and underscoring the importance of ensuring that education funding goes to where it will make the greatest impact. We support the additional school financial reporting provisions, which will help paint a clearer picture of how funds are allocated at the local level.

However, transparency can and should be further strengthened and packaged with additional targeted funding. Connecticut is experiencing unprecedented teacher shortages in school districts and tremendous needs among students in every district. If the state does not act now, at a time when it can afford to do so, we may lose this rare opportunity to make the kind of landmark investment in our public schools that can reverse the exodus from the teaching profession and provide a more successful learning environment for all students.

To this end, CEA advocates allocating a significant portion of surplus funds toward addressing these challenges, as it did when it enacted the Education Enhancement Act of 1986, with Republican majorities in the House and Senate and a Democrat as governor. As the language for SB 1 continues to develop, we urge legislators to tie transparency to additional funding for better starting salaries for public school teachers, as well as better salaries at every point in their careers, smaller class sizes, and school environments that are better places to teach and learn.

SB 1165 An Act Concerning Financial Literacy Instruction

CEA supports including financial literacy as a program of instruction in school districts. Building financial literacy among all youth helps ensure that students graduate prepared for life after high school. While it is very important for high schools to include financial literacy within their curriculum, we ask legislators to be cautious in requiring additional credits for graduation that could

make it more difficult for all students to complete the recently expanded high school graduation requirements successfully.

Thank you.