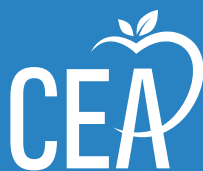




# Membership Matters

Value for Your Life



# When We Work Together, We Achieve Great Things.

One of the greatest benefits of CEA membership is our combined power to create positive change. Together, we advocate for quality public education, teachers' rights and safety, and the resources you need in and out of the classroom.

## **Together We Rise**

Your membership means you are part of a strong union that fights for your salary, benefits, and working conditions, protects your freedom to teach, negotiates your contracts, and provides work-related legal protection.

While teachers in states with weakened unions have struggled for better pay and working conditions, CEA—with our strength in numbers—has maintained high standards that boost student outcomes and elevate our profession.

To maintain this strength, we need you—and every teacher—to be active and engaged.



## Because of our union, we have

- Some of the highest teacher salaries in the nation
- Pensions that support us in retirement
- Full federal retirement benefits from income earned in Social Security-eligible jobs, previously not available to Connecticut teachers
- Social Security survivor's benefits, previously not available to Connecticut teachers
- Substantial healthcare and other benefits
- Guaranteed 30-minute, duty-free lunch
- A ban on dual teaching (forcing educators to teach to in-person and remote students simultaneously)
- Personal and sick days
- Guaranteed equivalent position after taking maternity or medical leave
- Additional pay for additional responsibilities, including coaching and extracurricular activities
- Streamlined DCF reporting process
- Class sizes typically under 30 students
- Students taught by certified, highly educated teachers
- Prep periods
- Legal protection against censorship with clear new policies on how school or classroom book collections are developed and reviewed
- Free, relevant professional development
- Play-based learning in the early grades
- Higher kindergarten start age
- Increased special education funding

**"While you are focused on your students, we are focused on you—addressing your needs and protecting your rights."**

Kate Dias, CEA President



# Because of Our Union, We Are Strong.

CEA's victories in recent years include everything from a revamp of teacher evaluation and mandated reporting to laws ensuring play-based learning in the early grades, classroom safety protocols, duty-free lunch periods, and more—and the funding to make significant teacher priorities a reality.

On the national front, CEA led the charge to repeal two federal laws—WEP and GPO—that unfairly reduced or eliminated Social Security benefits, including survivors' benefits, that public school educators should be entitled to. In 2025, as a direct result of those efforts, the Social Security Fairness Act was signed into law, and educators began receiving payments retroactive to the previous year.

The same union advocacy that has garnered widespread support for our profession has also drawn the attention of corporate interests that see unions as a threat to their profit margins and their influence. Slick campaigns organized by well-funded, union-busting groups—often emails, postcards, and calls directed at teachers—are aimed at undermining our union and eroding our freedom, solidarity, and strength.

CEA is your union, your voice, and your protection against attacks designed to take away your hard-fought benefits, prevent salary increases, reduce your pension, and eliminate your right to collective bargaining and your ability to teach.

When we stand together, we succeed.





## CEA advocates for teachers by

- Negotiating contracts that include a competitive salary, health coverage, and other benefits
- Improving your working conditions
- Protecting your teaching certification
- Helping you navigate the pension system for a secure retirement
- Providing meaningful professional development
- Developing sound educational policies and conducting research that informs those policies
- Speaking up for teachers in the media to provide perspective and generate public support and respect

**"I've been teaching for years, but I've benefited from CEA membership since the day I was born, because both my parents were Connecticut teachers and proud CEA members."**

Jeanine LaBrosse, Avon Teacher

## Local, State, and National Strength

As a CEA member, you have the power of three unions behind you—your local, statewide, and national education associations—amplifying your voice at the school and district levels, at board of education meetings, before the state legislature and State Department of Education, and in the halls of Congress.



# Legal Protection

Educators rarely anticipate needing employment-related legal protection, but a surprising number of circumstances—from false allegations to work-related injuries—can jeopardize your career.

CEA's experienced legal team is here to help. They resolve hundreds of cases each year, protecting members against loss of income, unfair working conditions, health and safety risks, and more.

In addition to in-depth training in matters regarding everything from FOI requests to teachers as mandated reporters, CEA's team of attorneys provides members with free, expert legal representation in key areas:

- Workers' compensation
- DCF investigations
- Tenured teacher terminations
- Certification issues and revocations
- Unemployment denial hearings
- Unfair labor practices



Meet CEA's legal team, General Counsel Adrienne DeLucca (foreground) and Legal Counsel (left to right) Rebecca Mitchell and Melanie Kolek.

## Chalk and Order: Legal ABCs for Educators

CEA's legal team provides free workshops for CEA members examining your rights and responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting laws, DCF investigations, Weingarten meetings, physical assaults on teachers, and more.

Knowledge is your best protection. Visit [cea.org/professional-development](https://cea.org/professional-development) and attend a free workshop or ask your local president to schedule one in your district.

# Financial Security

CEA works to ensure your retirement is secure.

You dedicate your life to public education, and the state has an obligation to provide you with the support you need to retire with dignity. CEA is committed to protecting your retirement by

- Ensuring the long-term solvency, stability, and benefit structure of the State Teachers' Retirement System
- Requiring the state to fulfill its obligation to fund the State Teachers' Retirement System
- Advocating for appropriate funding for the Retired Teachers' Health Insurance Fund

CEA also led a successful national campaign to repeal federal laws that had cut educators off from Social Security benefits they and their spouses earned. Retired educators collectively are now receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars in Social Security payments.

## Understanding and Planning your Retirement

It's never too early to start planning for your retirement. CEA offers members-only workshops that explain the State Teachers' Retirement System and the steps you should take to set up a smooth retirement in the future. Topics include

- Retirement eligibility and benefit calculations
- Purchasing additional service credit
- Social Security issues
- Retiree health insurance
- Disability benefits

Retirement workshops are free. For more information, visit [\*\*cea.org/retirement-information\*\*](https://cea.org/retirement-information).



# Professional Learning

CEA's Professional Learning Academy offers a wide variety of training aligned with Connecticut's professional development standards to improve teaching practice and enhance student learning. Available online and in person, all workshops are developed by experienced educators, administrators, and experts in law, special education, and other fields.

Visit [cea.org/professional-development](https://cea.org/professional-development) for a complete list of offerings, which are continually updated to include new strategies and address evolving needs.

CEA also hosts several annual conferences, open to all members, that offer free, timely professional development on a range of topics, including

- Classroom/behavioral management
- Artificial intelligence
- Educators' legal rights and responsibilities
- Retirement planning for educators
- Social justice
- Play-based learning
- Preventing and responding to student assaults
- Social media safety

CEA's Professional Learning Academy is a Connecticut State Department of Education designated professional development program.





# Shape The Future of Your Union

## Get Involved with a CEA Committee or Commission

Member involvement and input are vitally important to the daily activities of CEA. When you join a CEA commission or committee, you can share your ideas, work with colleagues from across the state, and help shape your education association for years to come. Consider serving on one of these commissions or committees. Learn more at [cea.org/commissions-and-committees](https://cea.org/commissions-and-committees).

### CEA Pride Committee

Advocates for LGBTQ+ educators and allies through collaboration, support, resources, and professional development, promotes a culture of equity and inclusivity, and is committed to providing a safe space for all students, families and educators

### Commission for Instruction and Professional Development

Examines educational and professional development issues and develops policies, activities, and materials to assist CEA members

### Constitution Revision Committee

Reviews CEA's constitution and bylaws for proposed changes

### Elections Committee

Reviews and enforces all CEA election procedures and policies, including the certification of candidates

### Finance Committee

Reviews all financial matters relating to CEA's operation, including policies and annual budget development

### Human and Civil Rights Commission

Proposes policies and activities that advance equity and social justice in Connecticut public schools and within CEA

### Legislative Commission

Helps develop CEA's legislative agenda based on a review of CEA's issues, positions, and priorities that would improve the quality of education in Connecticut, and submits the agenda to the CEA Board of Directors

### Member Benefits Committee

Reviews, endorses, and monitors CEA's Member Benefits program, including insurance and members-only discounts

### Membership Training Conference Committee

Plans, develops, and coordinates events, programs, and leadership training activities for CEA members (e.g., Summer Conference, Early Career Educator Conference)

### Public Relations Commission

Works with CEA's Communications Department to develop public relations programs and social media outreach, offers input to the *CEA Advisor* editor, and judges submissions to CEA's grants and awards programs

### Racial and Ethnic Diversity Affairs Commission

Promotes ethnically diverse participation in all areas of CEA by mentoring, providing training, and encouraging member advocacy

### Representative Assembly Planning Committee

Plans and coordinates all activities relating to the CEA and NEA Representative Assemblies

### Retirement Commission

Monitors the State Teachers' Retirement System, the State Treasurer's Investment Advisory Council, and legislation concerning retirement issues

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Integrity

One of an educator's most important roles is that of an ally.

Our work includes helping our students and colleagues recognize their value and reach their potential. To that end, we address inequities in our schools, create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments, and strive to build a teaching force that reflects the diversity and experiences of the communities we serve. In addition to CEA's legislative efforts at diversifying the profession, the association's Racial and Ethnic Diversity Affairs Commission actively amplifies the voices of teachers of color.

As a collective force, we have tremendous capacity to stand up for social justice, equitable access to resources, and age-appropriate communication about race, gender, and other issues that are salient to our students' lives, their understanding of the world they live in, and their place in it.

We know the positive and lasting influence teachers have on their students when we engage in authentic and meaningful ways. We must stand together to protect those relationships, uphold fact-based curricula, and encourage critical thinking and civic engagement.



**"In public education, as elsewhere, diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives are a tremendous asset. CEA is committed to ensuring our association and profession not only support diversity, equity, and inclusion and celebrate the communities we serve but also reflect them."**

Todd Jaeck, CEA Executive Director

When groups looking to attack the school curriculum in Greenwich, Guilford, and other towns targeted teachers, local education association members and CEA leaders and staff publicly demanded a stop to the harassment, affirmed their support of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and got out the vote. With our union organizing to protect public education, groups such as these attempting to gain seats on local boards of education were defeated, and teachers' rights were preserved.

After being asked to remove pride flags from their classrooms, the Stonington Education Association swiftly came together with CEA's assistance not only to bring back these symbols of inclusion but also pass a formal board resolution affirming support for LGBTQ+ students and staff, creating a safe, welcoming environment for all students, and having nondiscrimination language added to teacher and other education staff contracts. This model contract language is now being used by local teachers' unions across the state and is available at [cea.org/pride](https://cea.org/pride).



**"CEA is there to help us at every turn. We had a rally to defend our curriculum and uphold the safety of our teachers, and CEA ensured we were successful."**

Lillian Perone, Greenwich teacher



# CEA Member Benefits

Not only does being a CEA member afford you the professional network, development, support, and protection you need and deserve, but membership also includes deep discounts and exclusive offers on a wide variety of attractions, activities, products, and services, making it easy to save money and get great deals on the things you do and love.

Our members save on

- Admission to theme parks, museums, and adventure parks
- Theater and concert tickets
- Sporting events, including professional and college-level baseball, basketball, hockey, and soccer
- Groceries, gifts, and household items
- Cafes, restaurants, and breweries
- Car buying and rentals
- Tires and auto repairs
- School supplies
- Health products and services
- Fitness, yoga, and wellness programs
- Travel
- Insurance
- Home heating, solar energy, and septic tank pumpouts
- Furnishings and appliances

New discounts are always being added, and member appreciation events are frequently offered at ballgames, arenas, theme parks, and more. Visit [cea.org/discounts](https://cea.org/discounts).





## NEA Complimentary Life Insurance

To help give your family members the insurance protection and added peace of mind they deserve, NEA offers complimentary life insurance to Active, Staff, Reserve, and Life members.

Complimentary coverage includes

- Up to \$1,000 of term life insurance
- Up to \$5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) coverage
- \$50,000 of AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs on the job or while serving as an association leader
- \$150,000 of life insurance for unlawful homicide while on the job

For more information, visit [neamb.com/products/nea-complimentary-life-insurance](https://neamb.com/products/nea-complimentary-life-insurance).





# Resources

Teaching comes with tremendous rewards but also high expectations and demands. CEA helps you manage them all.

## **New Member Guide**

*It's Your Union* is CEA's guide to the benefits of union membership as well as your rights and responsibilities in the areas of certification, school safety, contractual hours and other aspects of your collective bargaining agreement, student information and privacy, DCF reporting, free speech, professional records, tenure, dismissal, retirement, and more. Download the guide at [cea.org/new-teacher-resources](https://cea.org/new-teacher-resources).

## **CEA Advisor**

Published throughout the school year and in the summer, CEA's award-winning publication celebrates our members, reports on their challenges and accomplishments, delivers education-related news, and shares the association's goals and achievements. Stay up to date at [cea.org/publications/cea-advisor](https://cea.org/publications/cea-advisor).

## **CEA Daily**

Your source for time-sensitive offers, announcements, and important education developments at the local, state, and national levels. Sign up for daily or weekly delivery to your inbox at [cea.org/daily](https://cea.org/daily).

## **CEAGo**

Our digital newsletter covers legislative and education news, events, member benefits, and more. Never miss a beat. Go to [cea.org/publications/cea-go](https://cea.org/publications/cea-go).

## **CT Ed Watch**

Your time is valuable. Subscribe to [ctedwatch.org](https://ctedwatch.org) and get all your education news headlines in one place.

## **Two T's in a Pod**

Available wherever you get your podcasts, hear interviews with educators, elected officials, and others who help shape public education in Connecticut.

## **Building Rep News**

A digital newsletter tailor-made for school union leaders with 10-minute meeting ideas, printable tips and announcements, and more.

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Questions about your CEA membership  
**[membership@cea.org](mailto:membership@cea.org)**

Professional development and other workshops  
**[myprofession@cea.org](mailto:myprofession@cea.org)**

Legislative and election-related questions  
**[myvoice@cea.org](mailto:myvoice@cea.org)**

