



An Open Letter to Connecticut Legislators, Parents, and Voters

Join us in **wearing Red for Ed today** in a show of support for children, teachers, and public education

With just one week left in the 2022 legislative session, we ask you to join us today in a show of support and solidarity by wearing Red for Education for a Day of Action urging lawmakers to pass legislation critical to Connecticut's children, teachers, and public schools.

Throughout the pandemic, educators have been applauded for the vital role they've played in maintaining the highest-possible standards of school safety, social and emotional support, and academic progress despite significant challenges. The pandemic has also raised serious concerns among community members and their elected officials about school staffing shortages and education budget shortfalls that have left students in overcrowded classrooms and in under-resourced, poorly maintained buildings.

The Connecticut Education Association (CEA), representing tens of thousands of professional educators and advocating for the students they serve, urges you to take positive and immediate action.

We are at a pivotal moment for passing much-needed legislation, and the time is now to stand with Connecticut's public schools and the students and educators at the heart of those schools, and to make investments that underscore your support. Three important measures would do just that, and we all need to encourage legislators to take action to:

- 1. Pass the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Task Force proposed in Senate Bill 427 and include incentives to better attract and retain teachers, such as special COVID service credit that recognizes teachers' sacrifices during the pandemic.**
- 2. Prohibit the teaching of remote and in-person students at the same time by a single teacher. Used as a cost-saving measure, this inequitable practice is detrimental to students on both sides of the screen.**
- 3. Support school indoor air quality with bond funding and classroom temperature standards called for in Senate Bill 423. For those who argue that the cost is too high, look no further than the recent \$500K settlement awarded to Wilton families whose children's health deteriorated because of poor ventilation, mold, and substandard air quality in their schools.**

Teachers have gone above and beyond to ensure in-person learning and safe, healthy conditions in Connecticut's public schools, but they cannot do it alone, and they cannot do it without the legislative commitment and funding that makes those achievements possible and sustainable.

Public education is the great equalizer in our society, but only if we invest in it. There has never been a more important time to stand with our educators and their students.

Please wear Red for Ed and stand with us today.

Sincerely,

Kate Dias, CEA President

Joslyn DeLancey, CEA Vice President

