

CEA PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ACADEMY

YOUR DISTRICT RESOURCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CEA's Professional Learning Academy offers a wealth of professional development opportunities for teachers, aligned with Connecticut's professional learning standards.

Benefits:

- **Developed by educators** with teaching and administration experience, and other experts in law and special education
- **Delivered on-site**—no costly conference attendance
- **Designed to provide practical tools** and build immediately useful skills
- **Customizable to your local needs**, groups, environment, and circumstances
- **Continually updated** to include new strategies and address evolving needs

For more information or to schedule a professional development workshop, contact CEA's Professional Learning Academy at 860-725-6340 or myprofession@cea.org, or visit cea.org/professional-development.

CEA is a Connecticut State Department of Education designated professional development provider.



KEY

CEA workshops address six professional learning tracks

LDR = Leadership and Collaboration

TEV = Teacher Evaluation, Support, and Growth

IPE = Instructional and Professional Enhancement

LAW = Education Law and Legal Considerations

SJE = Social Justice and Equity

HWB = Health and Well-Being

SEL = Social Emotional Learning

Workshops are 1½ hours long unless otherwise noted.

Scan here for the newest PLA offerings



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Active Listening Skills: Strategies for All Grade Levels

As a society, we tend to talk more than we listen. Listening, despite being an essential life skill, is often not explicitly taught. While communication skills are often taught in school, the focus tends to be on classroom participation or effective public speaking. Strong listening skills are needed now more than ever and can be systematically taught. Listening to others not only helps students master content, it also promotes understanding of different perspectives, fosters civility and respect, helps students make friends, reduces conflicts, and improves collaboration. This workshop provides tips and strategies to foster effective listening skills at all grade levels. **SEL IPE**

Bloom and Beyond: HOT Questioning Techniques that Promote Total Class Participation

This interactive workshop is appropriate for teachers of all subjects and grade levels and is designed to foster higher-order thinking and total participation from all students. It offers practical tools and strategies to encourage students of all abilities and temperaments to think deeply about a topic and feel confident making contributions that enrich class discussions. Tools include Bloom's Taxonomy, Depth of Knowledge Charts, Socratic Questioning, and Dialogic Methods, all of which are designed to promote imagination, wonder, creativity, and collaborative problem-solving. Participants will role-play to practice strategies with their peers and will leave the workshop with practical tools they can begin to use immediately to elevate class discussions. **IPE TEV**

Building a Culture of Empathy

Appropriate for teachers of all grade levels and subjects, this workshop focuses on systematically building empathy for others. Included are practical techniques and strategies that can be easily integrated into existing lesson plans that encourage students to listen to others, appreciate different perspectives, and be sensitive to the feelings of others. **IPE SJE SEL**

Building Community Using Relational Circles in Your Classroom

Circles have been a way for groups to connect, solve problems, and build community since prehistoric times. Learn how to use relational circles with your students to reduce off-task behavior, explore implicit bias, enhance interpersonal skills, and promote healthy conflict resolution strategies. **IPE SJE SEL**

Classroom Management

There are so many things new educators need to know and be able to do, but perhaps the most important is how to manage a classroom. This interactive workshop addresses seven practical and immediately actionable aspects of classroom management, including cultural responsiveness and—everyone's favorite—dealing with difficult behaviors. **IPE TEV SJE**

Constructive Feedback Strategies

This workshop is designed for complementary evaluators, peer coaches, department chairs, TEAM mentors, and anyone who wants to improve on giving and receiving feedback. Constructive feedback encourages reflection and creates reciprocal pathways to improved performance. This workshop provides educators with specific, practical questioning strategies to build collegiality and empathy, encourage self-reflection, and help teachers enrich their practice and enhance student achievement. This session will be highly interactive, and participants will practice constructive coaching with several different partners. **IPE TEV LDR**

Cultural Competence in Lesson Planning

Cultural competence involves awareness and understanding about cultural diversity in the classroom, school building, and community. The information and learning tasks in this workshop are designed to help you enhance your lesson plans through systematic exploration of racial and cultural bias and incorporation of culturally sensitive activities and questioning strategies. Also included are strategies to help students and families feel welcome and part of the school community. **SJE IPE TEV**

Dealing with Secondary Trauma: Self-Care Strategies for Teachers

Teachers care deeply about their students and take their "in loco parentis" responsibilities quite seriously. So when a student endures a traumatic event, the experience of trying to help the student cope may cause distress for the teacher as well. This phenomenon is called secondary trauma, and it can have serious physical and mental health repercussions if left unaddressed. Teaching is widely regarded as one of the most stressful occupations in the country, and it is also one of the most emotionally exhausting. This workshop provides an overview of the causes and symptoms of secondary trauma, self-care strategies for teachers looking to restore their emotional balance, and resources for those seeking additional information or professional support. **HWB**

Developing Meaningful Social-Emotional Learning Goals

Student mental health and emotional well-being were a serious concern before the pandemic, but levels of anxiety and feelings of alienation and loneliness have since skyrocketed. Fostering SEL is now a top priority for educators across the country, and many districts are now encouraging educators to adopt an SEL goal rather than a purely academic one. Learn how to set SEL goals that are meaningful to students and teachers and embedded within the curriculum. SEL is inherently difficult to measure, and this workshop will provide practical, holistic strategies to help make SEL progress visible to students, educators, and parents/guardians. **TEV SEL**

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Developmentally Appropriate Instructional Strategies for Students in Grades K-2

Cognitive science suggests that children learn best through experiential, hands-on activities and that their brains develop at very different rates in the early grades. Play is an important stress reliever for young children, but it also teaches important interpersonal skills and is considered essential for healthy brain development.

Surveys conducted by CEA's Commission on Instruction and Professional Development found that children in grades K-2 are under significantly more pressure than in the past. Demanding academic programs coupled with increasing time on direct instruction in the early grades has resulted in less time for play and hands-on learning. This shift appears to be contributing to unprecedented levels of stress, anxiety, and aggression in young children, especially among boys, low-income students, EL students, and students with disabilities.

This research-based workshop reviews developmentally appropriate instructional strategies for students in the early elementary grades and provides practical examples of hands-on, play-based learning activities that reduce stress, develop executive function, and enhance the learning environment for our youngest learners. **IPE** **SJE**

Difficult Conversations

In this interactive session, participants will learn how to recognize when it is time to have a difficult conversation, how to initiate one tactfully, and simple strategies for conducting the conversation calmly and respectfully. The tools and strategies presented in this workshop will help maintain healthy collegial relationships, address problems proactively, settle differences amicably, and contribute to a positive school climate. **IPE** **LDR**

Dispute Resolution Strategies for Teacher Evaluation

This highly interactive workshop is designed to provide teachers with practical strategies and structures to defuse and resolve disputes in an impartial, healthy, transparent way. Useful for department chairs, PDEC representatives, dispute resolution committee members, and classroom teachers, these strategies can be applied to a variety of situations and contexts. Disputes resolved openly and fairly help foster trust and collegiality and promote a positive school culture. This workshop will involve role-play, and participants will practice resolving common disputes. **TEV** **LDR**

Effective Feedback Strategies

This workshop is designed for TEAM mentors but may also be useful for peer coaches, department chairs, or anyone who wants to improve their skills at giving (and receiving) feedback. Effective feedback is specific, actionable, and encourages reflection, leading to improved performance

in the classroom. This workshop provides several different questioning strategies that, when coupled with empathy and compassion, can guide teachers toward deeper reflection on their practice and encourage them to find ways to enhance student learning and well-being. This session is interactive and includes role-play that allows participants to practice feedback strategies with various partners. **TEV**

Emotional Regulation: Practical Strategies for Students of All Ages

This workshop provides an overview of emotional regulation and offers an array of simple, research-based strategies teachers can use to help students manage strong feelings more effectively. The workshop is appropriate for all grade levels. **SEL**

Executive Functions 101

Executive functions are a set of mental processes that allow us to connect past experiences to present and future action. Executive functions also help us plan, organize, strategize, focus, remember, manage time and space, and regulate emotions and impulses. Students with strong executive functioning perform better in school, have better attendance and behavior, and are more likely to achieve long-term goals they set for themselves. This workshop provides tools and strategies to help teachers systematically improve students' executive functioning skills at all grade levels. **SEL** **IPE**

Exploring the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility

All teachers, especially preservice teachers and those going through TEAM, must demonstrate knowledge of the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility. This highly interactive workshop delves into relevant competencies and themes, including building relationships and fostering student well-being and community engagement. Public school teachers are vested with the public's trust, their responsibilities to their students extending to the community as a whole. Maintaining the highest ideals of professionalism, as outlined in the code, reinforces the professional status of teaching and serves as a building block to success in the classroom. **IPE** **TEV**

Implicit Bias 101: Its Powerful Effect on Instruction and Learning

Social psychologists and scientists have found that all of us, regardless of race, have cognitive biases that influence how we perceive and make decisions about other people. Implicit attitudes regarding race, stereotyping, and prejudice are a few of the many factors that can prevent Black, Latinx, and EL students from achieving in school at the same level as their white counterparts. This workshop will raise participants' awareness of unconscious bias and its powerful effect on student learning and teacher/educator performance while

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explaining how unintended thoughts can contradict our beliefs and how acting according to our values can require more than good intentions. (4 hours) **SJE** **IPE**

Implicit Bias – Beyond the Privilege Walk

Designed to accommodate 5–20 people, this participant-driven session is thought-provoking and will generate conversation on privilege, implicit and institutional biases, stereotypes, and microaggressions, with an eye toward ensuring that schools are welcoming places for children of color to learn, and teachers of color to work. **SJE**

Implicit Bias – Whole-Day Workshop

This is a full-day, in-depth exploration of implicit bias that incorporates the same information as the 4-hour session but with time built in for additional activities, deeper discussion, and thought-provoking videos. This session examines school practices, policies, and curricula through the lens of cultural responsiveness, racial equity, and social justice and challenges participants to effect changes in their classrooms and districts with the goal of ultimately impacting larger cultural and societal institutions. (8 hours) **SJE** **IPE**

Implicit Bias – World Café

This discussion-based session is good for anywhere from 10–60 participants. Participants will begin by reading two articles on bias and stereotypes and then answer thought-provoking questions in small groups based on those articles, with time left after each question for whole-group discussion and debriefing. **SJE**

Introduction to Student Trauma: Developing a Trauma-Sensitive Classroom

Nearly 7 out of 10 children experience trauma, and many experience multiple traumatic experiences. The impact of trauma on children and adolescents is pervasive and presents challenges in every school and community in the state. We are collectively learning more about the challenges trauma presents to classroom teachers and how to help those who experience trauma overcome its effects. Developed in partnership with Hartford Behavioral Health, JoAnn Freiberg of CSDE, the Traumatic Stress Institute, and CSI, this workshop is the first step on a continuum of becoming a skilled practitioner in a trauma-informed school community. Participants will learn how to identify the signs of trauma and better understand its impact on students and the school community. Participants will also learn practical skills and where to access additional resources and training that can help educators master strategies to address student trauma. **IPE** **SJE** **HWB**

Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Preventing and Responding to Aggressive Student Behavior

As the demands to address all of a student’s academic and emotional needs have increased, it is vitally important that all teachers are informed of their legal rights and duties related to aggressive student behavior.

In this timely workshop, you will learn

- What preventive actions you should take to protect yourself and your students before an incident occurs
- What procedures you can and should take in the event you are assaulted by a student
- Why it’s important to report any assaults or threats of assaults to your principal—and the reporting requirements of principals if there is an assault
- What your association can do to help you take whatever steps are appropriate to protect your rights as an employee, including measures to provide a safer workplace for everyone in the building
- What safety provisions can be negotiated in your collective bargaining agreement related to aggressive student behavior **LAW** **HWB**

Making the Most of Home–Teacher Communication

Home–teacher communication can be stressful. This session provides tips to help you develop and promote a working partnership with families prior to parent–teacher conferences, review different types of conferences, assist you with strategies to use during the conference itself, and provide ideas for sustained family contact and engagement throughout the year. You will also learn valuable approaches for handling conferences where student misbehavior or challenging parents are a factor, with lots of time built in for discussion and perhaps even some role-playing. **IPE** **TEV**

Managing Workplace Conflict Effectively

Teaching is stressful enough, but when conflicts arise at work, that stress can become toxic. Learn to identify the underlying causes of workplace conflict, distinguish between types of conflict, and practice selecting and employing appropriate strategies to manage conflicts effectively. This interactive workshop includes role-play and sample scenarios in which participants practice and refine their skills in managing conflicts with grace and confidence. **LDR**

Mentoring Strategies to Support Beginning Teachers

This workshop focuses on building supportive relationships between mentors and educators in their first three years in the profession. Research shows educators who feel supported and have trusted colleagues they can turn to are significantly more likely to remain in the profession for more than five years. Beginning teachers who are well supported also have better annual evaluations, and their students have

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higher academic outcomes. Whether you are a TEAM mentor or a caring colleague who just wants to help, this workshop will provide simple, practical strategies to support teachers during the first few difficult years in the classroom. **TEV**

Mind the Moment: Practical Mindfulness Activities for Students and Teachers

Mindfulness is receiving much-needed attention right now, in part due to the pressures of living in an increasingly complex world. Smartphones, busy schedules, and a 24-hour news cycle can be distracting for even the most focused individual. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter connect us with strangers around the world but also threaten to isolate us from those closest to us. You may find yourself spending more time worrying about the future or dwelling on something that happened in the past rather than on fully experiencing the present moment. This is also true for our students, many of whom struggle to concentrate in class and have difficulty learning as a result. Learn how to integrate mindfulness activities into your existing classroom routines without losing instructional time or sacrificing the curriculum. Mindfulness activities can enhance the quality of life for young and old, improve mental focus and classroom behavior, and enhance learning outcomes. **IPE HWB**

Mental Health First Aid

Most of us would know how to help if we saw someone having a heart attack—we'd start CPR, or at the very least, call 9-1-1. Too few of us, however, know how to respond to someone having a panic attack or what to do if a friend or colleague might be showing signs of alcoholism. Mental Health First Aid takes the fear and hesitation out of starting conversations about mental health and substance use problems by improving understanding and providing an action plan that teaches people to safely and responsibly identify and address a potential mental illness or substance use disorder. When more people are equipped with the tools they need to start a dialogue, more people can get the help they need. Mental Health First Aiders can even save lives.

- Mental Health First Aid: Just the Basics (2 hours)
- Mental Health First Aid Full Training (full day—results in certification but requires approximately two-four hours of self-paced pre-work) **HWB**

Mythbusters: Understanding Your Legal Rights and Responsibilities in the Special Education Process

This workshop focuses on the laws regarding special education, with a particular emphasis on regular and special education teachers' rights and responsibilities when participating in the special education process. Participants will learn what the law requires of them as well as what they can and cannot do in such areas as PPT meetings, drafting IEPs, and

accommodating students in the regular education environment. The impact of special education laws on teachers' working conditions will be integrated throughout the workshop. **LAW**

IPE

New Directions in Educator Evaluation

Learn tips and strategies from a former evaluator on how to score proficient or higher on your annual evaluation. In addition, get an early glimpse into the new directions Connecticut's Educator Evaluation Guidelines may be taking in the future and what these changes will mean for teachers in different roles and at different stages of their careers. In addition, resources and strategies will be shared on incorporating SEL into classroom activities and learning goals.

TEV

Parent Teacher Home Visits: Educators and Families on the Same Team

CEA offers you and your colleagues an introductory workshop on the Parent Teacher Home Visits program, a proven, cost-effective, and replicable preK-12 family engagement strategy transforming public schools across the U.S. Developed in partnership with local unions, the home visitation model has become a proven strategy to increase students' academic and developmental growth and cultural competence; improve school climate, behavior, and attendance; and enhance community support for public education. Key characteristics of the program include voluntary participation, paid stipends, and visits done by pairs of educators.

To learn more, CEA provides two levels of training. CEA will provide an introductory workshop on how the program works, how to assess its potential value for students in your classroom, and how your school can adopt the program. CEA has partnered with the Capital Region Education Council (CREC) to also provide deeper training to districts that seek to implement the program in one or more of their schools.

IPE SJE

Promoting Student Autonomy in the Classroom

This workshop is designed for teachers of all levels and focuses on encouraging students to gradually take ownership over their learning goals and take a more active role in achieving them. Practical classroom tools include total class participation strategies, student-generated performance rubrics, student-led parent conferences, and more. **IPE TEV**

Reworking Homework: Maximize Student Achievement and Minimize Stress on Students and Families

Homework is a hot topic. When relevant, carefully designed, and given in moderation, homework has been shown to increase student achievement (at the high school level). It can also, however, contribute to high levels of

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stress, anxiety, and family discord. This workshop provides an overview of the extensive research into the subject of homework and offers practical tips for minimizing the harmful impact while maximizing the positive outcomes. Designed for middle and high school teachers, this workshop can be customized for any grade level. **IPE**

Section 504: An Emerging Issue for Educators

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is receiving increased attention in schools as more teachers than ever before are working with 504 students on a daily basis. This workshop will provide an overview of this civil rights law, including the 2008 changes, its procedural requirements (with an emphasis on the eligibility process) and relationship to the IDEA, and its applicability to such timely issues as AD(H)D, field trips, and allergies. **LAW**

Social Emotional Learning and Teacher Burnout

Explore how a focus on social and emotional learning can help schools create the structural changes needed to support teacher growth and well-being.

Teacher burnout was on the rise even before the pandemic. While there are many strategies support teacher self-care and stress management, underlying conditions that contribute to high levels of stress are too often ignored or not addressed systemically. Teacher wellness requires ongoing commitments and long-term strategies that address structural change.

This workshop explores the system and school conditions that contribute to educator stress, provides a forum for educators to provide suggestions that could alleviate their stress, and includes research demonstrating both strategies to consider as well as those to avoid in advocating for structural supports. **SEL**

Social Media Safety

Facebook. Instagram. Twitter. Social media is popular not only with teachers but also students, parents, and community members. In this interactive session, participants learn how to keep information private and ensure that they are as protected as they can be if they choose to use social networking sites. **TEV LAW HWB**

Strategies to Foster Social-Emotional Well-Being in School

Students need more than just academic skills to be successful in college and career. While they do need strong content knowledge in core subjects, they also require a wide array of non-cognitive skills, behaviors, and attitudes to help them meet the unknown challenges of the future. Students who are experiencing trauma, poverty, hunger, anxiety, or bullying are unlikely to perform well academically. Learn what school districts in Connecticut and across the country

are doing to promote the social-emotional health of students and how that is translating to improved academic outcomes. Teachers will identify strategies and programs that can be adapted to suit the unique circumstances of the students in their school or district. **IPE SJE SEL**

Strategies to Help New Teachers Survive and Thrive

This workshop is designed for new teachers, mentors, cooperating teachers, instructional coaches, and others who want to learn how to better support and strengthen the practice of early-career educators. Included are useful teacher evaluation tips for new teachers, mentoring strategies, and classroom structures and routines to help new teachers maximize instructional time. **IPE**

Strategies to Reduce Loneliness and Anxiety in School

One of the most common words children choose to describe their emotional state is “lonely.” Feelings of isolation and loneliness were common before the pandemic and have only worsened since. This workshop provides classroom activities and instructional strategies teachers around the state are using to combat student isolation, cultivate community in the classroom, and foster a sense of belonging during these difficult times. **SEL**

Teach Whole: Strategies to Manage Stress, Build Resiliency, and Elevate Ourselves and Our Profession

Teaching isn’t easy. It never was, but it’s become far more difficult in recent years due to COVID, misguided educational policies, student behavior, and the lack of civility that permeates public discourse. Teachers are under the weight of impossible expectations, which has contributed to unprecedented levels of burnout and teacher turnover. Based in part on the books *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* by Elena Aguilar and *Permission to Feel* by Marc Brackett, this workshop, created by CEA members, provides practical strategies to manage stress and enhance your natural resiliency, helping to reinvigorate your teaching practice, energize yourself and colleagues, and elevate the profession.

This workshop was developed by teachers for teachers and is facilitated by CEA members who serve on the Commission for the Improvement of Instruction and Professional Development. **HWB**

Teachers and the Law

This presentation examines the rights and responsibilities of educators regarding a variety of legal issues, including DCF and state mandatory reporting laws, DCF investigations, Weingarten meetings, physical assaults on teachers, FOI, and other related matters. **LAW**

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The Gender Achievement Gap: Why Boys Are Falling Behind and What Can Be Done About It

Boys are falling behind girls academically at every level, from kindergarten through graduate school. Girls dramatically outperform boys on every standardized measure of reading and writing achievement and have reached rough parity with males in math and science, except at the very top of the curve. Boys are also far more likely to get into trouble at school and experiment with drugs, and they are three times more likely to drop out of school. Sixty percent of students graduating from college are now female, and for the first time in history we see more women than men getting advanced degrees. What is the trouble with boys? Learn what schools can do to support males academically and emotionally and begin to close the growing gender achievement gap. **IPE**

Thinking Outside the Clock: PDEC Strategies to Save Time and Promote Collaboration

“We don’t have time for this” is a common refrain uttered by teachers and administrators in school districts across the country. Common Core, standardized test preparation, a complex educator evaluation process, and ever-changing professional development mandates consume so much time that little remains for teachers to engage in meaningful collaboration focused on teaching and learning. This session identifies creative ways to rethink existing time without shortchanging instruction or infringing on teacher prep periods. This session is most useful for PDEC members, as many of the strategies focus on streamlining and simplifying the teacher evaluation process. **TEV LDR**

Wellness Kits & Mini Workshops

CEA offers brief, 20-minute workshops that focus on providing one or two quick, practical strategies to enhance personal wellness. These workshops are designed to provide a few moments of fun and a short respite for teachers after a long day. Each mini-workshop includes a wellness kit for each participant at no cost through generous grant funding. Mini-workshops can be arranged as a surprise for teachers during a PD day, in lieu of a faculty meeting, during an association meeting, or as an event for those who sign up in advance.

HWB

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