



News Release

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Accomplished Leader, Education Champion Retiring from State's Largest Teacher Organization

After nine years at the Connecticut Education Association, and a long and distinguished political career in the Connecticut legislature where he served as Senate President, CEA Executive Director Donald Williams is officially retiring.

Throughout his career Williams has shown unwavering dedication and exemplary leadership in his commitment to improving public education in Connecticut. His 22 years of direct legislative policy experience in the State Senate have been invaluable in his role as executive director at CEA, where he helped advance important legislation that will have a lasting impact on Connecticut's education system.

Williams was instrumental in leading the nearly 50,000-member association through the highs and lows of the past decade, including navigating the challenges of the pandemic, securing improvements to teacher evaluation, stopping proposed cuts to education funding, highlighting growing attacks on curriculum and educators, securing resources to combat student mental health issues, addressing the current teacher shortage crisis, celebrating 175 years of CEA advocating for public education, and advocating for sweeping changes that have helped elevate the teaching profession.

"It has been a privilege and a pleasure to work alongside Don during his tenure as executive director," said CEA President Kate Dias. "I have appreciated his counsel, experience, and most of all, his kindness. Don has served the state of Connecticut and CEA members for many years and has dedicated his life to leaving our state stronger and better than ever. He has left his mark on this association, and we will be forever grateful for his contributions. I look forward to hearing about his many adventures in retirement and wish him all the best."

Williams said, "I have enjoyed my years at CEA and the ability to utilize my policy and outreach skills, combined with my legislative and legal background, to ensure that the teaching profession in Connecticut thrives. I've been passionate about defending our public schools as engines of opportunity and equality for all children. It has been an honor to help support our teachers, strengthen our traditional public schools, and ensure that educators' voices are heard and their issues addressed."

He added, “Thank you to the staff, governance and members of CEA—it’s been my privilege to work with dedicated educators and advocates who care deeply about improving public education. When we lift up teachers and what they do in the classroom, we lift up the future of our children, our communities, and our country. That mission is more important now than ever before. CEA and Connecticut’s teachers do their work with dedication, integrity, and joy. Retiring brings a new chapter for me, and I leave knowing that CEA is strong, its advocates are smart and effective, and the challenges ahead will be met with creativity and resolution.”

“We extend our best wishes to Don for a well-deserved and fulfilling retirement with his wife, Laura,” said Dias. “CEA will certainly miss him, but we are confident that he will continue to make a positive impact in all of his future endeavors.”

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The Connecticut Education Association is Connecticut’s largest teachers’ union, representing active, retired, and aspiring educators across the state. For further information contact Nancy Andrews at 860-725-6317, nancya@cea.org.