



Connecticut Education Association

# SUMMER CONFERENCE

Foxwoods Resort Casino

August 6-7, 2025





## TOGETHER WE RISE

### Planning for the Road Ahead

## REGISTRATION

Participants may register at [cea.org](http://cea.org) under Upcoming Events. You will need your membership ID to register. If you do not know your ID number, you can find it on the mailing label of your CEA Advisor.

Attendance is FREE. Registration includes:

- All sessions
- Breakfast and lunch both days
- Networking event Wednesday night
- Overnight accommodations with another conference participant (Active members only\*)

Conference activities, including meals and any non-training activities, are open to registered participants only.

Room reservations must be made by July 15. Reservations will not be accepted after July 15. Conference registration closes on Wednesday, July 30, 2025.

## OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS

- Double occupancy with another Summer Conference participant is free for Active members only\*. If you do not have a roommate, one will be assigned.
- Single occupancy: registrant pays their own overnight accommodation costs, \$195.80, including a reduced amenity fee of \$12.95 and taxes. Single rooms are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis; room reservation closes on July 15.

\*Reserve and Retired members are responsible for making and paying for their own hotel accommodations through a separate link provided at registration at a cost of \$195.80.

## CONTACTS

For any workshop or registration questions or changes, contact Lisa Bickford at [lisaab@cea.org](mailto:lisaab@cea.org) or 860-725-6387.

If you require special accommodations to fully participate in this conference, please contact Angela Spinnato at [angelas@cea.org](mailto:angelas@cea.org) or 860-725-6338.

## REGISTER AT CEA.ORG

When registering for Summer Conference, after you select your local, you will be automatically registered for your county forum.

## AGENDA

### Wednesday, August 6

- 8:00 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome
- 10:00 a.m. Workshops
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Workshops
- 3:00 p.m. Break
- 3:15 p.m. Workshops
- 5:30 p.m. County Forums
- 6:15 p.m. Day Concludes/Dinner on Own
- 8:00 p.m. Networking Activities

### Thursday, August 7

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m. Workshops
- 11:00 a.m. Break
- 11:15 a.m. Workshops
- 1:15 p.m. Lunch and Conference Conclusion

# SESSIONS

## Six-Hour Workshops

*Can be combined with four-hour and/or two-hour sessions.*

- Beginning Negotiations
- Building Reps/Emerging Leaders
- Mental Health First Aid
- New Local Presidents

## Four-Hour Workshops

*Can be combined with six-hour and/or two-hour sessions.*

- Aspiring Educators Chapter Leaders
- Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct
- Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract
- Leveraging Your Local's Story to Enhance Your Bargaining
- Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining

## Two-Hour Workshops

*Can be combined with six-hour and/or four-hour sessions.*

- Advanced Bargaining Insurance: Underwriting and Budgeting
- AI, Play, & Self-Care for PreK-6 Success
- Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show
- Bargaining Insurance
- Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates
- Building a Better Union
- Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships
- Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators
- Confronting the Sunday Scaries
- Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation
- Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract
- Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today
- Empowering Educators in Local Elections
- Fireside Chat – *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*
- Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power
- Future Proof: Making Sure Your Local Is Ready for Anything
- Gimme a Break! How to Take Time Off the Right Way
- It's My Money, And I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators
- Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior
- Legislative & Political Organizing for the Win
- Let Go of Your Stress
- Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations
- Local Presidents Roundtable
- Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy
- Navigator: 1 on 1 With an Expert
- No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining
- Organizing to Pass a Local Budget
- Playful Pathways: An Early Learning Toolkit
- Social Justice Unionism
- Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
- Treasurer/Membership Chairs Workshop
- True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference
- Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars
- What Would You Do? Understanding CEA's Toughest Cases

### Simple Sweat

Dynamic, total-body workout, designed

to increase strength, improve metabolism, optimize flexibility and promote healthy aging. All levels will be challenged and feel great!

**August 7**

**6:30-7:15 a.m.**

**Celebrity A&C**



**Mel McGuire**  
NSCA-CPT, ACE-MES





# SCHEDULE

DAY 1				DAY 2	
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	County Forum	Session 4	Session 5
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

Six-Hour Workshops			
Mental Health First Aid	County Forums		
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders			
New Local Presidents			
Beginning Negotiations			

Four-Hour Workshops			
Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract		County Forums	Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session*
	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct		Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining
Leveraging Your Local's Story to Enhance Your Bargaining			Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct

\*See disclaimers in description



**REGISTER AT CEA.ORG**

DAY 1				DAY 2	
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	County Forum	Session 4	Session 5
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Two-Hour Workshops					
Am I in Trouble? The Union Game Show	Let Go of Your Stress	Let Go of Your Stress	County Forums	Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show	Fireside Chat – <i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i>
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Decoding The Secrets of Your Contract	Confronting the Sunday Scaries		Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Let Go of Your Stress
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators	Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations	Navigator: 1 on 1 With an Expert		Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators
Legislative & Political Organizing for the Win	Navigator: 1 on 1 With an Expert	Building a Better Union		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Gimme a Break! How To Take Time Off The Right Way
Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Educator's Guide	No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Educator's Guide		AI, Play, & Self-Care for PreK–6 Success!	Social Justice Unionism
Social Justice Unionism	Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation	Bargaining Insurance		Building a Better Union	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Educator's Guide
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget	Future Proof: Making Sure Your Local is Ready for Anything		Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior
Bargaining Insurance	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators		Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	Navigator: 1 on 1 With an Expert
Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates		Empowering Educators in Local Elections		Advanced Bargaining Insurance: Underwriting and Budgeting	Treasurer/ Membership Chairs Workshop
		True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Local President Roundtable	What Would You Do? Understanding CEA's Toughest Cases
				It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates
				Treasurer/ Membership Chairs Workshop	No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining
				Decoding The Secrets of Your Contract	Playful Pathways: An Early Learning Toolkit

Summer Conference is filled with a variety of sessions—both in content and length. Below are suggested tracks based on different membership backgrounds and interests; these tracks offer an idea of how to schedule your sessions based on your specific goals for the conference and your professional growth. These are suggestions and are not mandatory by any means. We hope you have a wonderful conference!

1. If you are an Aspiring Educator **chapter leader**:

Aspiring Educator Chapter Leader					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Mental Health First Aid			County Forums	Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session* (mandatory)	
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference			
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators	Let Go of Your Stress	Confronting the Sunday Scaries			
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power		Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide			
Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators			
		Let Go of Your Stress			

\*See disclaimer in description

2. If you are an Aspiring Educator:

Aspiring Educator					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Mental Health First Aid			County Forums	Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Fireside Chat – <i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i>
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Building a Better Union	Let Go of Your Stress
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators	Let Go of Your Stress	Confronting the Sunday Scaries		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Social Justice Unionism
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power		Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators
Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Educator's Guide
		Let Go of Your Stress			

3. If you are a New Local President:

New Local President					
August 6 10 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 6 1-3 p.m.	August 6 3:15-5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30-6:15 p.m.	August 7 9-11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
New Local Presidents			County Forums	Local President Roundtable	Let Go of Your Stress
				Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Social Justice Unionism
					Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior
					Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates
					No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining

4. If you are interested in organizing:

Organizing						
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.	
Social Justice Unionism	Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation	Building a Better Union	County Forums	Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining		
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget			Future Proof: Making Sure Your Local is Ready for Anything	Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	Social Justice Unionism
Legislative & Political Organizing for the Win						

5. If you are a New Building Rep:

New Building Rep					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders			County Forums	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct	
Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract				Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct			Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show	
Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show	Decoding The Secrets of Your Contract				
Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates					

6. If you want to increase your bargaining skills:

Bargaining					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Beginning Negotiations			County Forums	Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining	
Leveraging Your Local's Story to Enhance Your Bargaining		Building a Better Union		Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power	Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations	Bargaining Insurance		Advanced Bargaining Insurance: Underwriting and Budgeting	
	No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining			Decoding The Secrets of Your Contract	
	Decoding The Secrets of Your Contract				

7. If you want work-life balance:

Work-life Balance					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
<i>Choose the best session for you!</i>	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	County Forums	It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators	Let Go of Your Stress
	Let Go of Your Stress	Confronting the Sunday Scaries		AI, Play, & Self-Care for PreK–6 Success!	Gimme a Break! How To Take Time Off The Right Way
		Let Go of Your Stress			
		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators			

8. If you are an Early Career Educator:

Early Career Educator					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Mental Health First Aid			County Forums	Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show	Let Go of Your Stress
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators	Let Go of Your Stress	Let Go of Your Stress		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Confronting the Sunday Scaries		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators	Playful Pathways: An Early Learning Toolkit
		Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide			
		It's My Money and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators			



9. If you want to level up your teacher-leader skills:

Teacher Leadership					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Mental Health First Aid			County Forums	Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining	
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders				Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Social Justice Unionism
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Fireside Chat – <i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i>
		Confronting the Sunday Scaries		Building a Better Union	Playful Pathways: An Early Learning Toolkit
		Future Proof: Making Sure Your Local is Ready for Anything		Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	
				AI, Play & Self-Care for PreK–6 Success!	
				Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	

10. If you want to know your rights as an educator:

Know Your Rights					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct		County Forums	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct	
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators		Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Chalk & Order: The Legal ABC's for Educators
Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide				Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates				Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior
				Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates

11. If you want to strengthen your political muscle:

Political Advocacy					
August 6 10 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 6 1–3 p.m.	August 6 3:15–5:15 p.m.	August 6 5:30–6:15 p.m.	August 7 9–11 a.m.	August 7 11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
Legislative & Political Organizing for the Win	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget	Empowering Educators in Local Elections	County Forums	Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	<i>Choose the best session for you!</i>

## Six-Hour Workshops

### Beginning Negotiations

This workshop is for negotiators who have no bargaining experience or want a refresher on the nuts and bolts. We will cover the basics of negotiations: forming bargaining teams and roles, requests for information, engaging members through surveys and other means, the timeline and phases of negotiations/mediation/arbitration, permitted vs. mandatory subjects of bargaining, and the Teacher Negotiations Act. Trainers and guest speakers will discuss trends, bargaining goals, researching/developing/costing proposals, salary schedules, and bargaining health and other insurance benefits.

### Building Reps/Emerging Leaders

Building Reps and local leaders are the critical frontline protectors of the teaching profession. Members depend on them to listen, provide information, and help. If you are a new representative, a representative who wants to hone your skills, or a local officer, join us for this interactive, informative session. You will learn: how to communicate with members, present information, advocate for members, deal with difficult administrators, and reach out for other CEA resources. Through case studies, simulations, and large and small group discussions, you will learn how to run meetings efficiently, interpret contracts, organize around hot topics, and much more.

### 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 911. Too few of us, however, know how to respond to someone having a panic attack or what to do if a friend or colleague shows signs of substance abuse. 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. To receive certification for this workshop, participants must complete approximately 2-3 hours of self-paced pre-work and pass an exam at the end.

### New Local Presidents

The "pinch" and "crunch" of being an elected leader is tough but vital work. This session is designed for new local presidents and is a nuts-and-bolts, practical application of running a local on a day-to-day basis. Experienced local presidents have designed this training to meet the needs of small, medium, and large locals. This workshop covers organizing your local to be effective, committee roles and functions, crisis management, and working efficiently with your UniServ Rep. Various resources and sample communications will be shared to help you have a successful first year and beyond. Be inspired and get ready to lead your members in this challenging environment.



## Four-Hour Workshops

### Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session\*

The statewide CEA Aspiring Educator Executive Board will participate in leadership development activities, learn more about AE program opportunities, review and approve the calendar for the year, and begin planning state-level and campus events.

*\*This track is mandatory for ALL chapter leaders (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, public relations, and any other officers voted in).*

*\*This track is NOT open to AEs who are not in leadership positions within their chapter. Those AEs should choose a different track for day 2.*

### Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct

One of the most harrowing workplace experiences occurs when a teacher is charged with misconduct. The investigation and resultant disciplinary process is a crucial time to activate union advocacy and representation. A thorough understanding of employee rights and a Building Rep's role in defending teachers charged with misconduct is an essential component in navigating through potential pitfalls that may lead to serious professional consequences. This session will arm you with the tools necessary to provide zealous advocacy of your teachers with special emphasis on topics such as Weingarten, Loudermill, and Garrity rights, progressive discipline, just cause and related topics. This program is open to all teachers interested in learning more about employee discipline, representation, and defense of teachers charged with misconduct.

### Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract

This workshop provides a solid foundational overview of strategies for identifying and addressing workplace issues through grievance advocacy and alternative resolution methods of resolution for issues that are not really grievances. Several interactive exercises combined with practical exposure to topic-based learning modules will broaden your knowledge of the most important grievance subjects and prepare you to become a successful advocate. As a culminating activity, we'll present real-life grievance arbitration cases, where you'll have the opportunity to guess and learn how arbitrators ruled. This workshop is great for a new grievance team member or those with limited experience to learn effective grievance filing and processing.

### Leveraging Your Local's Story to Enhance Your Bargaining

Do you prepare to bargain the same way every negotiation? We will look at various strategies to build your story, power, and cohesiveness as a bargaining unit, question whether using the same strategy every negotiation is the best way for your bargaining unit to make progress, explore ways to know your audience, and learn to prepare your members to share their stories in advocating for better working, living, and learning conditions.

### Removing the Cone of Silence: Engaging Members Around Bargaining

Negotiating your contract is the most visible activity your union engages in. The final contract impacts every member of the bargaining unit, yet most of our negotiations are done in secrecy. This session will introduce participants to a variety of ways to make negotiations more transparent, develop strategies to increase member involvement in the bargaining process, and create a calendar that provides for planned member involvement throughout the bargaining process.



**REGISTER AT [CEA.ORG](https://cea.org)**



## Two-Hour Workshops

### **Advanced Bargaining Insurance: Underwriting and Budgeting**

Do you like math? This session is for people who want to learn basic underwriting concepts and methods to determine insurance costs and budgeting. We will look at claims experience, enrollments, and renewals, and calculate allocation rates. You **MUST** be comfortable with data and Excel and have a laptop with you!

### **AI, Play, & Self-Care for PreK–6 Success**

Join this lively, teacher-led session to explore how AI, playful approaches to the science of reading, student engagement, and self-care can power up your preK–6 classroom. Through rotating conversations led by members of CEA's Commission on Instruction, you'll discover time-saving tech tips, creative engagement ideas, and joyful reading strategies—all while learning how to take better care of yourself. Walk away with practical tools to boost student success and your own well-being.

### **Am I In Trouble? The Union Game Show**

Do you have what it takes to win CEA UniServ Rep's most famous gameshow? Participants will be quizzed on all kinds of scenarios you might encounter in your career, and for each one, you and your teammates will try to determine, Am I in trouble? The objective is simple; the scenarios are anything but. Whether you want to test or prove your knowledge of union rules, labor law, and your contract, come be a part of this fun and raucous track!

### **Bargaining Insurance**

There is a lot happening with health insurance in Connecticut. This session shows what's going on nationally, the patterns of health insurance of CEA groups, and helpful tips on bargaining insurance through the lens of common management proposals.

### **Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates**

Union members have the right to representation at any interview or meeting that could lead to discipline. This workshop prepares Building Reps for their role in these meetings. What rights do you have as a Building Rep? What rights do members have? What are best practices for handling these meetings and advising members? This hands-on workshop explores these questions and more.

### **Building a Better Union**

In this session we will look at concrete steps to better engage members, use resources more effectively, and make our unions more powerful voices in their communities. We will look at best practices to identify and achieve union objectives. Participants should be ready to discuss how their unions work and what they want their unions to do better.

### **Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships**

Strong schools thrive when they have strong connections with their communities. This session will explore how local teachers unions can build meaningful, lasting relationships with parents, community members, and grassroots organizations. Learn effective strategies for outreach, trust-building, and collaboration that go beyond one-time events. Participants will hear success stories from locals that have deepened their impact by working with their communities—not just in them. Whether you're starting from scratch or looking to strengthen existing ties, this session will offer practical tools for creating partnerships that endure.

### **Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators**

This presentation examines the rights and responsibilities of educators regarding a variety of legal issues, including DCF and state mandatory reporting laws, DCF investigations, Teacher Dismissal Law, Hold Harmless Law, Weingarten Law, FOIA and personnel files, and other related matters.

### **Confronting the Sunday Scaries**

While Friday is most people's favorite weekday (TGIF!), Sunday can bring about feelings of stress, anxiety, and dread as the start of the workweek draws near. This session is geared toward getting the Sunday Scaries (also known as the Sunday Blues) under control through proactive and responsive planning, organizing, and stress-management techniques—all designed to make sure you have a great week and a great weekend.

### **Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation**

New educator orientations—often the first experience potential members have with their local and state union—are a powerful opportunity to communicate the values of our union. This session walks local leadership teams through best practices for NEOs, including programming, materials, and agendas that welcome, affirm, and empower potential members. Come get inspired and plan your NEO for the 2025-2026 school year.

### **Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract**

Let's face it—we all appreciate having a union contract, but it can feel like it's written in code. What provisions are in most contracts that you don't know about? Are you missing out on important benefits and protections? In this track, you'll learn the ins and outs and get the most out of your hard-won contract.



## Two-Hour Workshops (cont.)

### Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today

In recent years LGBTQ+ issues have become a cultural lightning rod. The goal of this workshop is to educate LGBTQ+ educators and their allies on their rights in and out of the classroom and discuss how best to support themselves, colleagues, and students. We'll discuss the current state of LGBTQ+ issues in education, real-world cases and examples, and what rights you have in navigating complex issues. We will show you how to start becoming the best ally you can be!

### Empowering Educators in Local Elections

Join us for a practical, action-oriented session on how educators can make a powerful impact in this fall's municipal elections and beyond. Learn how local races for offices like board of education, town council, boards of selectmen, mayor, and more directly affect your classroom, your contract, and your community. Discover strategies to mobilize, advocate, and lead as we build educator power where it matters most.

### Fireside Chat – *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*

Join us for a thought-provoking discussion of *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, by historian Timothy Snyder. This brief yet powerful book draws on lessons from the rise of authoritarianism in the 20th century to provide practical guidance for defending democracy today. Snyder distills history into 20 clear, actionable lessons, encouraging readers to be vigilant, informed, and courageous in the face of modern threats to freedom and civil society. In our discussion, we'll explore the relevance of Snyder's lessons in today's political climate, reflect on historical parallels, and consider how individuals and communities can uphold democratic values in everyday life. Please join us for this timely and engaging conversation.

### Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power

We talk about "organizing" in our union a lot, but what does it actually mean in practice and look like in your local? Well, it's certainly easier said than done—but once you learn the basics, organizing can become a powerful framework to advocate for and create change. Come learn about the fundamentals of organizing, different strategies and tactics, and how to put the principles of organizing into action in your local to build community, capacity, and power.



### Future Proof: Making Sure Your Local Is Ready for Anything

How do we expand from winning grievances to winning the changes our members need? It's easy to talk about organizing and union values, but what do we do when problems come at us faster than we can dodge them? This session explores ways to build common values and structures ahead of time so that when a crisis hits, you're ready to respond.

### Gimme a Break! How to Take Time Off the Right Way

Sometimes you need time off, whether for medical reasons, mental health and wellness, or spending time with family. But what are the rules for taking time off? This session takes you through the dos and don'ts of taking leave in a variety of situations, from personal leave to sick leave to FMLA.

### It's My Money, And I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators

There are many things specific to educators that can make mastering your finances difficult. Obscure contract provisions, your salary schedule, managing student debt—the list goes on. Come learn the basics of how to own your finances, not the other way around. You can't afford not to learn how to set yourself up for financial success!

### Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior

As the demands to address all of a student's academic and emotional needs have increased, it's vitally important that educators are informed of their legal rights and duties related to challenging student behavior. In this timely workshop, you will learn:

- What steps you should take if you are threatened or injured by a student.
- Why it's important to report any injuries or threats of harm to your principal and what reporting options are available to you .
- How the new challenging behavior law may help address behavior issues.
- How your association protects your rights and safety as an employee.
- What safety provisions can be negotiated in your collective bargaining agreement related to challenging student behavior.



## Two-Hour Workshops (cont.)

### Legislative & Political Organizing for the Win

Wondering how you and your fellow members can make a difference in getting a bill passed? What about electing local-friendly board of education members or a fellow CEA member running for state office? When it comes to lobbying and elections, we are stronger together. Get the inside view of these processes and learn about the strategies that effectively build our power on a local and state level.

### Let Go of Your Stress

Data collection, PPTs, 504s, team and faculty meetings... ever feel like you're on a treadmill moving so fast that you don't have time to completely focus on or finish anything? It's time to hit the reset button and slow it all down. Use tools such as meditation, mindfulness, tai chi, and yoga to recapture your inner peace and clear your mind. Learn techniques that have existed for thousands of years to become more productive and mentally prepared to meet even the toughest challenges.

### Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations

This workshop covers trends in negotiations and basic negotiations concepts. We will examine the Teacher Negotiations Act timelines and impact on the process as well as issues we can expect to negotiate in the future, such as health insurance plans and modifications to salary schedules. The target audience for this workshop is negotiators with minimal bargaining experience.

### Local Presidents Roundtable

Every local and town is unique, but often the opportunities and challenges that come up are similar: budgets, working with administrators, engaging members, and building capacity are just some of the many issues you are faced with as a local president. Come discuss current issues and opportunities in a moderated format alongside other local presidents to learn, engage, and build community with one another. The goal of this session is to learn from others who are in your exact role!

### Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy

Are you a Building Rep, member of your local's executive board, or considering running for one of those positions? Union advocates can always be counted on to fight the good fight as they protect our members and their rights. Learn more about the dos and don'ts when serving as a union advocate to ensure that you are protected while protecting others!

### Navigator: 1 on 1 With an Expert

New this year at Summer Conference is a unique opportunity to have 1-1 conversations with various experts to share their skills, knowledge, and expertise on different subjects. In this session, you will select at least

three 1-1 conversations to participate in and will have the opportunity to debrief and plan how you would like to use the knowledge and information you gained.

Topics will include: setting up a local REDAC, career moves from union member to union staff, certification, social justice unionism, health insurance, teacher evaluation, free speech as an educator, membership chair best practices, teachers and politics, using social media as a union, recent retiree insights, early career educator insights, supporting LGBTQ+ educators and students, DCF questions, organizing best practices, how to move between school districts, and working with your local Board of Ed, local budget organizing, and accounting and taxes for your local.

### No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining

Are you stuck in a rut with your contract proposals? Sure, you want more money and good healthcare, but what else would make your working life better? Since many educators have contracts that have been around for a long time, it's common to be at a loss when thinking up new proposals. This track explores new ideas to improve your contracts beyond the same proposals made year in and year out. Don't settle for just maintaining benefits; let's improve them!

### Organizing to Pass a Local Budget

Join us and learn the essential strategies for getting local budgets passed! Gain invaluable insights into navigating the budgetary process, advocating for essential resources, fighting back against proposed cuts, and amplifying the voice of educators in local decision-making. Don't miss this opportunity to discuss how to make a real difference for your students and fellow educators by getting your budget passed.

### Playful Pathways: An Early Learning Toolkit

In the age of AI, the skills that make us human—including the ability to empathize, think critically, and collaboratively problem-solve—are more important than ever. These are the kinds of skills children learn first, and best, through play. Unfortunately, children in the U.S. spend far less time at play than children in other developed countries, contributing to an increase in childhood anxiety and mental health issues. Fortunately, Connecticut passed legislation that requires the integration of play-based learning (PBL) in preK and kindergarten. This session will provide a brief overview of the new law, along with indicators to determine whether your district is in compliance. We'll also share talking points about the cognitive, social emotional, and academic benefits of play that can be used to guide conversations with administrators and parents/guardians. The session will also include time for participants to share PBL strategies, tips, and lesson ideas.

## Two-Hour Workshops (cont.)

### Social Justice Unionism

How do we build the schools our students and members need? Issues of social justice have moved to the forefront of attacks on public education. We'll look at how to move from the flashpoint arguments about CRT, LGBTQ rights, book bans, and bathrooms to create teaching and learning environments that are inclusive, supportive and equitable.

### Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide

Social media is everywhere in our lives. While it can connect, entertain, and inform, it's full of risks and pitfalls. We'll look at how to use social media responsibly and safely so that it doesn't derail your teaching career.

### Treasurer/Membership Chairs Workshop

Local association leaders are essential to the success of our union. This workshop focuses on membership processing requirements and how to use JOIN NOW to enroll your new members. You will also be informed on how to properly handle your financial records and collect dues.

### True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference

True Colors is an easy-to-use framework to understand yourself and others; through better understanding comes better communication and collaboration. Whether working in your school, union, or elsewhere, this workshop will give you a simple but powerful set of tools to improve the way you work with those around you.

### Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars

In a time of deep political division, local unions face tough questions around immigration, community tensions, and member disagreements on controversial issues. This session offers practical strategies and real-world examples for responding with unity, integrity, and effectiveness. Learn how to navigate internal conflicts, engage (or not) in national debates, build community trust, handle public statements, and support vulnerable students—all while staying grounded in shared values.

### What Would You Do? Understanding CEA's Toughest Cases

Your UniServ Reps have seen it all. Arrests, television appearances, severed limbs: you name it, it happens. But what if you were the Building Rep? How would you handle the oddball situations that come up in the line of duty? Come to this interactive session detailing the tough cases that are bound to happen eventually.

