

Connecticut Education Association

SUMMER CONFERENCE

Foxwoods Resort Casino

August 5-6, 2026



Together We Rise

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow



REGISTRATION

Participants may register at cea.org under Events Calendar. 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—double occupancy 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 10. Reservations will not be accepted after July 10. Conference registration closes on Friday, July 31, 2026.

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, \$197.74 (includes \$12.95 reduced resort fee and 15% tax). Single rooms are limited and on a first-come, first-served basis; room reservation closes on July 10.

*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 \$197.74.

CONTACTS

For any workshop or registration questions or changes, contact Lisa Bickford at lisaab@cea.org or 860-725-6387.

For hotel questions or if you require special accommodations to fully participate in this conference, please contact Angela Spinnato at angelas@cea.org or 860-725-6338.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Devin Siebold

*Educator and Bored Teachers
Comedian*

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 5

- 8:00 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast
Bring a valid photo ID
- 8:45 a.m. Welcome and Keynote Speaker
- 10:15 a.m. Workshops
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Workshops
- 2:45 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. Workshops
- 5:00 p.m. County Forums
- 5:45 p.m. Hotel Key Pickup
- 6:15 p.m. Day Concludes/Dinner on Own
- 8:00 p.m. Networking Activities

Thursday, August 6

- 8:00 a.m. Breakfast
- 9:30 a.m. Workshops
- 11:15 a.m. Break
- 11:30 a.m. Workshops
- 1:15 p.m. Lunch and Conference Conclusion

SESSIONS

5h 15m Workshops

Can be combined with 3.5-hour and/or 1.45-hour sessions.

- Beginning Negotiations
- Building Reps/Emerging Leaders
- Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract
- New Local Presidents

3.5h Workshops

Can be combined with 5.15-hour and/or 1.45-hour sessions.

- Aspiring Educators Chapter Leaders
- Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct
- Engaging All Your Members in the Bargaining Process

1h 45m Workshops

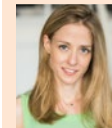
Can be combined with 5.15-hour and/or 3.5-hour sessions.

- A Teacher's Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security
- Advanced Insurance Bargaining: Underwriting and Budgeting
- 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
- Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age
- Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators
- Collaborative Support in Action: Navigating Connecticut's Tiered Support and Corrective Action Process
- Confronting the Sunday Scaries
- Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation
- Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract
- Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today
- Fireside Chat – *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*
- From Classroom to Chambers: Educators Leading in Government
- Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power
- Futureproof: Making Sure Your Local Is Ready for Anything
- Gimme a Break! How to Take Time Off the Right Way
- How to Build a Successful Communications Campaign
- Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success
- 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
- Let Go of Your Stress
- Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations
- Local Presidents Roundtable
- Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy
- Navigator: One-on-One with an Expert
- No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining
- Organizing to Pass a Local Budget
- Progress Through Legislative Advocacy and Organizing
- Social Justice Unionism
- Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments
- 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 6
7:00–7:45 a.m.



Mel McGuire
NSCA-CPT, ACE-MES

SCHEDULE

DAY 1				DAY 2	
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	County Forum	Session 4	Session 5
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.

5h 15m Workshops					
Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract		County Forums			
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders					
New Local Presidents					
Beginning Negotiations					

3.5h Workshops			
	Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct	County Forums	Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session*
Engaging All Your Members in the Bargaining Process			Employee Discipline & Just Cause: Defending Teachers Charged with Misconduct

*See disclaimers in description



DAY 1				DAY 2	
Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	County Forum	Session 4	Session 5
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
1h 45m Workshops					
Am I in Trouble? The Union Game Show	Let Go of Your Stress	Let Go of Your Stress	County Forums	Fireside Chat – <i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i>	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference
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 ABCs for Educators	Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations	Gimme a Break! How to Take Time Off the Right Way		Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Local Presidents Roundtable
Progress Through Legislative Advocacy and Organizing	Navigator: One-on-One 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
Social Justice Unionism	Beyond Taking Notes: When Administration Investigates	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Social Justice Unionism
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power	Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation	Bargaining Insurance		What Would You Do? Understanding CEA's Toughest Cases	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget	Futureproof: 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
Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments	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	It's My Money, and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators
A Teacher's Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	A Teacher's Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments		Advanced Insurance Bargaining: Underwriting and Budgeting	Treasurer/Membership Chairs Workshop
		True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Collaborative Support in Action: Navigating Connecticut's Tiered Support and Corrective Action Process	Building a Better Union
				Beyond Taking Notes: When Administration Investigates	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	From Classroom to Chambers: Educators Leading in Government
				How to Build a Successful Communications Campaign	Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age

Summer Conference is filled with sessions that vary 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 5 10:15 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 5 1–2:45 p.m.	August 5 3–4:45 p.m.	August 5 5–5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30–11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
A Teacher’s Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	A Teacher’s Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	Let Go of Your Stress	County Forums	Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session* (mandatory)	
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Let Go of Your Stress	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher’s Guide			
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Navigator: One-on-One With an Expert	Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments			
Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference			
Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments					

*See disclaimer in description

2. If you are an Aspiring Educator:

Aspiring Educator					
August 5 10:15 a.m.–12 p.m.	August 5 1–2:45 p.m.	August 5 3–4:45 p.m.	August 5 5–5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30–11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.–1:15 p.m.
A Teacher’s Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	A Teacher’s Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security	Let Go of Your Stress	County Forums	Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference
Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Let Go of Your Stress	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher’s Guide		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	Let Go of Your Stress
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Navigator: One-on-One With an Expert	Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments		Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher’s Guide
Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference		Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior
Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments					It’s My Money, and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators
				Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age	

3. If you are a New Local President:

New Local President					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
New Local Presidents			County Forums	Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Local Presidents Roundtable
				Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Social Justice Unionism
				Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior
				Collaborative Support in Action: Navigating Connecticut's Tiered Support and Corrective Action Process	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining

4. If you are interested in organizing:

Organizing					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Engaging All Your Members in the Bargaining Process		Building a Better Union	County Forums	Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Social Justice Unionism
Social Justice Unionism	Crafting Your Ideal New Educator Orientation	Futureproof: Making Sure Your Local Is Ready for Anything		Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	Building a Better Union
Progress Through Legislative Advocacy and Organizing	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget	Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments		Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power				How to Build a Successful Communications Campaign	
Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments					

5. If you are a New Building Rep:

New Building Rep					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 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			What Would You Do? Understanding CEA's Toughest Cases	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior
Am I in Trouble? The Union Game Show	Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior	
	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates			Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates	

6. If you want to increase your bargaining skills:

Bargaining					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Beginning Negotiations			County Forums	Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships	No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining
Engaging All Your Members in the Bargaining Process		Bargaining Insurance		Advanced Insurance Bargaining: Underwriting and Budgeting	
Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power	Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations				

7. If you want work-life balance:

Work-life Balance					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference	County Forums	<i>Choose the best session for you!</i>	Let Go of Your Stress
	Let Go of Your Stress	Confronting the Sunday Scaries			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
		It's My Money, and I Want It Now! Financial Literacy for Educators			True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference

8. If you are an Early Career Educator:

Early Career Educator					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders			County Forums	Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	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		Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	Let Go of Your Stress	Let Go of Your Stress		Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract	Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age
Am I in Trouble? The Union Game Show	Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract	Confronting the Sunday Scaries			True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference
		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
Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success		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 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Building Reps/Emerging Leaders			County Forums	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	True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference
Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age		Confronting the Sunday Scaries		Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior	Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age
Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success				Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	
			Fireside Chat – <i>On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century</i>		

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

Know Your Rights					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 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 ABCs for Educators	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide		Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today	Surviving Teaching in the Age of Social Media: A Teacher's Guide
				Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights with Challenging Student Behavior
				Knowledge Is the Best Protection: Understanding Your Rights With Challenging Student Behavior	Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates
				Unionism in the Eye of the Hurricane: Navigating the Culture Wars	
				Beyond Taking Notes When Administration Investigates	
				Chalk & Order: The Legal ABCs for Educators	

11. If you want to strengthen your political muscle:

Political Advocacy					
August 5 10:15 a.m.-12 p.m.	August 5 1-2:45 p.m.	August 5 3-4:45 p.m.	August 5 5-5:45 p.m.	August 6 9:30-11:15 a.m.	August 6 11:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m.
Progress Through Legislative Advocacy and Organizing	Organizing to Pass a Local Budget	<i>Choose the best session for you!</i>	County Forums	Navigating the Waters of Union Advocacy	From Classroom to Chambers: Educators Leading in Government

5h 15m Workshops

Beginning Negotiations

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

Building Reps/Emerging Leaders

Building representatives and local leaders are teachers' frontline protectors. Members depend on them to listen, inform, and assist. If you are a new representative, a local officer, or a rep who wants to hone your skills, the case studies, simulation, and large- and small-group discussion in this session will help you run meetings efficiently, present information, interpret contracts, advocate for members, handle difficult administrators, deploy CEA resources, organize around hot topics, and more.

Grievance Processing: Your Guide to Enforcing Your Contract

Are you new, or do you have limited experience on your grievance team? Come learn the fundamentals of grievance processing, starting with what a grievance is and moving through the procedures for effective grievance filing. You'll leave with a solid foundational overview of key concepts and strategies, how to address workplace issues through grievance advocacy, and what alternative methods lead to resolution for issues that are not technically grievances. Interactive exercises and practical exposure to topic-based learning modules will broaden your knowledge of the most important grievance subjects and prepare you to become a successful grievance advocate. As a culminating activity, you can see how you do, guessing how real-life arbitrators ruled on various grievance arbitration cases.

New Local Presidents

Aimed at new local presidents, this nuts-and-bolts session examines the day-to-day pinch and crunch of running a local association. Designed by experienced local presidents for those leading small, medium, or large locals, this training covers crisis management, committee roles and functions, organizing your local to be effective, and working efficiently with your UniServ representative. Learn from those who've been there. Various resources and sample communications will be shared to help you have a successful first year and beyond. Walk away inspired and ready to lead!



3.5h Workshops

Aspiring Educator Chapter Leaders Session*

The CEA Aspiring Educator Program executive board* will participate in leadership development activities, learn more about 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 are crucial times to activate union advocacy and representation. A thorough understanding of employee rights and a building representative's role in defending teachers charged with misconduct are essential to navigating potential pitfalls that can 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 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.

Engaging All Your Members in the Bargaining Process

Negotiating your contract is the most visible activity your union engages in. The final contract impacts every member of the bargaining unit, yet most locals plan and prepare for negotiations the same way for each contract, and most negotiations happen behind closed doors. We will look at various strategies to build your story, power, and cohesiveness as a bargaining unit; explore ways of knowing your audience; make negotiations more transparent; develop strategies to increase member involvement in the bargaining process; and prepare members to share their stories as they advocate for better working, living, and learning conditions.



REGISTER AT CEA.ORG

1h 45m Workshops

A Teacher's Roadmap to Pension Planning and Retirement Security

Whether you're an early career educator or a veteran, your retirement security depends on your ability to understand the State Teachers' Retirement System, retired health insurance, and Social Security benefits so that you can integrate these into your overall financial plan. It's never too early to prepare for your future!

Advanced Insurance Bargaining: 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.

Am I in Trouble? The Union Game Show

Do you have what it takes to win the UniServs' most famous game show? Participants will be quizzed on a variety of scenarios you might encounter in your career, and for each one, you and your fellow contestants will try to determine, Am I in trouble? The objective is simple; the scenarios, anything but. Whether you want to prove or improve your knowledge of union rules, labor law, and your contract, this fun and raucous track is for you!

Bargaining Insurance

A lot is 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 the best practices and strategies for handling these meetings and advising members? This hands-on workshop will discuss these questions and more.

Building a Better Union

There are concrete steps you can take to make your union a more effective advocate and a more powerful voice in your community. We will look at how to identify your union's objectives and achieve them by engaging members, planning, and making the best use of resources. Be ready to discuss how your union operates and what you'd like to do better.

Building Bridges: Creating Lasting Community Relationships

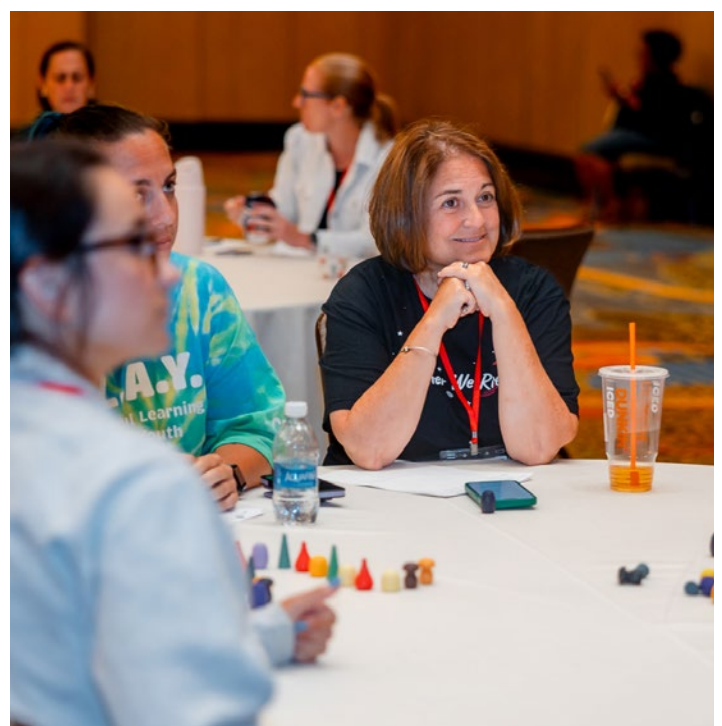
Strong schools thrive when they connect with their communities. This session explores how local teachers' unions can build meaningful, lasting relationships with parents, community members, and grassroots organizations. Learn proven strategies for outreach, trust-building, and collaboration that go beyond 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 strengthening existing ties, this session offers practical tools for creating partnerships that endure.

Building More Resilient Brains: Executive Function Skills at Every Age

This interactive workshop focuses on research-based strategies across all grade levels to strengthen executive function skills. Collaborative problem-solving activities will model ways to support working memory, self-regulation, organization, and cognitive flexibility in the classroom. There will also be dedicated time for participants to share practical tools to foster the executive function skills that are the foundation for lifelong learning and success.

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.



1h 45m Workshops (cont.)

Collaborative Support in Action: Navigating Connecticut's Tiered Support and Corrective Action Process

Facilitated by CEA's teacher evaluation specialist, a CEA UniServ representative, and a local union leader experienced in TEVAL, this session provides a clear overview of state educator evaluation requirements related to tiered support and corrective action plans. Collaborative approaches to protecting and supporting educators struggling with evaluation are highlighted. Participants will engage in practice scenarios, exchange tips and strategies, and walk away with a working approach to tiered supports and corrective action that can be adapted and implemented in their own districts.

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, or 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 are often the first experience potential members have with their local and state unions and are a powerful opportunity to showcase the value of union membership. In this session, local leadership teams will learn how to host welcoming, affirming, empowering orientations for potential members in the 2026-2027 school year, complete with materials, agendas, and programming.

Decoding the Secrets of Your Contract

Let's face it—we all appreciate having a union contract, but how much of it do we really know and understand? What benefits, protections, and provisions do most contracts contain that you aren't aware of? Come together with colleagues to navigate the ins and outs of your contract and ensure you get the most out of it.

Educating with Pride: LGBTQ+ Rights in Education Today

In recent years LGBTQ+ issues have become a spotlight of controversy in education. 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 will 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!



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 the current 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.

From Classroom to Chambers: Educators Leading in Government

Are you a teacher elected to a town board, city council, or statewide office? Are you curious about what it takes to run? This workshop brings together public school teachers who have stepped into public leadership to share with colleagues practical strategies, lessons learned, and the unique power educators bring to local government. Learn how to turn your teacher voice into policy impact while staying grounded in your union values.

Fundamentals of Organizing to Build Local Capacity and Power

We talk a lot about "organizing" in our union, but what does it actually mean in practice, and what does it look like in your local? Once you learn the basics, organizing can become a powerful framework for change. Come learn the fundamentals of organizing, tactics that work, and putting the principles of organizing into action to build community, capacity, and local union power.

1h 45m Workshops (cont.)

Futureproof: 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 tackle them? This session explores ways to build common values and structures ahead of time so that when crisis hits, everyone is ready to respond.

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

Whether it's to spend time with a loved one, care for your family, address a medical issue, or attend to your mental health or personal needs, sometimes you need time off. But what are the rules for taking time off? This session takes you through the dos and don'ts of workplace leave in a variety of situations, from personal and sick leave to FMLA.

How to Build a Successful Communications Campaign

Do you ever feel like you're screaming into the void? Build power in your local's messaging with this unique look inside how CEA Communications creates successful campaigns through powerful words, strategic messaging, gripping graphics, and a better understanding of your audience. Trainers will give examples of what success looks like and show you how to apply winning principles to your own campaigns.



Inside the Praxis Program: Tools, Data, and Strategies to Support Candidate Success

Are you working toward certification or looking to cross-endorse? Join us for an interactive session focused on passing the Praxis! This session breaks down everything you need to know in a clear, supportive way. You'll learn how the Praxis is designed, what to expect on test day, and how to confidently navigate registration and testing options. We'll walk through helpful tools like study guides, practice questions, and personalized plans so that you can prepare in a way that works for you. We'll also look at common challenges test-takers face and share practical strategies to avoid them. Plus, you'll see how to use real data to focus your studying and make the most of your time. Whether you're just starting or getting ready to retake an exam, this session will give you the tools, confidence, and support you need to succeed.

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

A lot of conditions specific to educators make mastering your finances difficult: obscure contract provisions, your salary schedule, managing student debt—the list goes on! Come learn the basics of owning 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 is vitally important that all teachers are informed of their legal rights and duties related to challenging student behavior.

In this timely workshop, you will learn

- What procedures you can and should take in the event 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 can help address behavior issues
- What your association can do to protect your rights as an employee, including measures to provide a safer workplace for everyone in the building
- What safety provisions related to challenging student behavior can be negotiated in your collective bargaining agreement

1h 45m Workshops (cont.)

Let Go of Your Stress

Data collection, PPTs, 504s, team and faculty meetings, and more mandates with fewer resources! Ever feel like you're on a treadmill moving so fast you don't have time to focus on or complete the many obligations placed on you? Time to hit the reset button. While your union is fighting to make our profession more sustainable, we're also sharing tools such as meditation, mindfulness, tai chi, and yoga to help you recapture your inner peace and clear your mind. Learn techniques that, for thousands of years, have helped us become more productive and mentally prepared to meet even the toughest challenges. This program is hands (and feet and everything else) on, so please wear clothing that is comfortable for tai chi and yoga.

Leveraging Statewide Trends to Maximize Your Negotiations

This workshop covers basic negotiation concepts and trends. 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, modifying salary schedules, and remote instruction. The target audience for this workshop is negotiators with minimal bargaining experience.

Local Presidents Roundtable

Every local and town is unique, but the opportunities and challenges they face are often similar: budget issues, working with administrators, engaging members, and building capacity, just to name a few. 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 union representative, member of your local's executive board, or thinking about stepping into one of these 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 you are protected while protecting others!

Navigator: One-on-One with an Expert

Educators know better than anyone the power of 1:1. Returning to Summer Conference this year is a unique opportunity for 1:1 dialog with a variety of experts on everything from certification to career moves, health insurance, TEVAL, how to get involved as an early career educator, supporting LGBTQ+ students and peers, and more. 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 might use what you've learned.

No More Stale Contract Proposals: Fresh Ideas for Bargaining

Stuck in a rut with your contract proposals? Sure, you want more money and good healthcare. But what else can make your work life better? With many contracts revolving around the same set of provisions, coming up with fresh ideas can be tricky. This track explores new ways to make your contract better.

Organizing to Pass a Local Budget

Learn the essentials for getting local budgets passed! Gain invaluable insights into navigating the budgetary process, advocating for 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 the education dollars you need.

Progress Through Legislative Advocacy and Organizing

Learn the basics of legislative advocacy and how to build a winning campaign. We'll explore the steps in developing and prioritizing a legislative agenda, and small-group exercises will focus on identifying pressing issues in public education and constructing campaigns around them.

Social Justice Unionism

How do we move from flashpoint arguments about race, gender, book bans, and bathrooms to building the schools our students and members need? With social justice at the forefront of attacks on public education, learn how to engage in real change focused on creating teaching and learning environments that are equitable, supportive, and inclusive.

Stay Calm and Stay Safe: De-Escalation Skills for High-Tension Environments

Tensions can escalate quickly in public settings, including on school grounds. This practical workshop equips participants with simple de-escalation strategies to protect your students' safety and your own when situations become unpredictable or emotionally charged. You'll learn how to recognize early signs of discord, use calm communication and body language to defuse tense situations, and make safe decisions in rapidly changing environments. The session also emphasizes situational awareness and ways to support others' safety without endangering your own. Through discussion and real-world scenarios, participants will leave with practical tools and greater confidence to navigate and respond safely in crowded or high-stress settings.

1h 45m Workshops (cont.)

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

Social media is part of everyday life, but for educators, personal use can come with unexpected risks. This session helps you confidently navigate social media, avoid common missteps, and protect your professional reputation.

Treasurer/Membership Chairs Workshop

Local leaders are essential to the success of our union. Ideal for new and returning treasurers, membership chairs, and local presidents, this workshop delves into practical, year-round skills such as enrolling members, managing changing rosters for accurate billing, preventing fraud, and navigating tax filings to keep your group's finances and membership rosters secure and stress-free.

True Colors: Using Your Personality Type to Make a Difference

Team dynamics can be tricky. True Colors is an easy-to-use framework for understanding yourself and the personalities, motivators, and behavioral styles of others—and, therefore, the best ways to communicate and collaborate. At school, in your union, or in any other context or role you find yourself in, you'll have 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 to guide you in 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.

