

RHTA meeting minutes

Date: September 28, 2022

Location: Griswold Middle School Rm 708 and virtual

Time: 4:05

1. Presidents' report

Michelle attended a local president meeting on September 12. Here are some highlights.

- a. Please **see attachment #1** from Michelle about CEA strategic objectives. (pg 5 & 6)
- b. Please **see attachment #2** from Michelle about CEA about important meetings (pg 7 & 8)
- c. Please **see attachment #3** from Michelle about the Connecticut Education Foundation kick off of its Holiday Bear Campaign to make the holidays brighter for hundreds of children. Do you have a student whose family may be struggling to afford gifts this year? CEF is accepting nominations and sponsors. **See attachment** at end of these minutes for more information. In addition to nominating, you may make a donation. RHTA will be donating \$100 (pg 9 & 10)
- d. Dual Teaching- CEA is fighting back against new state education guidelines allowing the bad practice of dual teaching, CEA President Kate Dias calls on legislators to double down on the law they passed banning dual teaching in Connecticut schools. **See attachment #4** to read full letter (pgs 11 & 12)
- e. Based on member concerns and interests, CEA has started five new work groups to tackle complex and large-scale issues that are both important and timely. Every member is invited to join one or more of the groups and work together with colleagues to analyze the issues, pool ideas, discuss solutions, and make recommendations to CEA's Board of Directors to address challenges and opportunities facing both our students and our profession. The five work groups are:
 - Special Education
 - Service Providers
 - LGBTQ+
 - Recruitment and Retention
 - Teacher Wellness
- f. The discussion for two years of covid teaching is still on the table. CEA is not asking for two years, but instead is asking for more percentage towards retirement for those two years
- g. Join CEA colleagues November 8 for Redesigning Education: A future Beyond Standardized Tests. **See attachment #5** to read full letter (pg 13)

More president's report

- a) There is a Professional Development committee in the Rocky Hill Public Schools where Darlene starts by consulting with the committee
- b) We will be looking at teacher handbooks for alignment or rules vs contract

2. Committee News

a) Treasurer's Report-Sandy Fravel presented RHTA's annual statement of Cash flow (Aug 21, 2021 to Aug 20, 2022)

b) Grievance Report:

- There are no active grievances
- Reminder: the procedure for grievances is that your grievance first goes to the building rep.
- You may even go to your building rep for advice

c) Membership-

- union roster is updated

- There is a lot of anti-union propaganda floating around. Anti-union email lists have been retrieved and they are emailing members.

Anti-union groups are urging educators to join imposter groups that offer none of the protection or benefits of a legitimate union. They are inviting teachers to virtual "information sessions" deceptively marketed as live webinars to help teachers "understand their options."

The ultimate goal is to trick members into giving up their protections and rights and weaken the strong, collective voice that teachers in Connecticut have through their union. They usually have no staff or presence in Connecticut, no grievance representation for teachers, no support in the certification or evaluation process, no retirement planning assistance, no diversity, and — significantly no advocacy for competitive wages and benefits or legislative accomplishments on behalf of educators and students. What they have is an agenda.

Their goals are to weaken and eliminate teachers' unions in order to privatize schools and maximize profits for their corporate backers. To see what that looks like, look no further than states where teachers' unions have been eroded or eliminated.

d) Social-the social was well attended (\$1221.29 with 54 in attendance)

e) Regarding the sick days: The way that the contract is currently written, central office administration can ask you to provide a doctor's note for an absence if they have a "reasonable suspicion of abuse of sick leave". It's a rather open ended phrase that does not specify any concrete number of absences in a row or other circumstances. That said, if you are asked to get a sick note and your illness or condition did not require a visit to the doctor, by contract, this doctors visit/statement is at the expense of the board. If we are asked under that circumstance, our response can be something like, "which physician would the board like me to use for this visit?" This is addressed in Article 17 clause F in the professional agreement.

f) Red for Ed shirts will be ready soon for new members

g) We still need someone from Stevens School for the Contract Negotiations Committee that will start this summer

H) We still need someone from West Hill School for Building Rep

4. New Business:

1. The RHTA June 2022 scholarship was awarded to Julianna Violette
2. Abandoned Funds-TRB has some Inactive Members with Accounts that do not earn interest. While there are member accounts that are no longer eligible for any additional interest accrual and are deemed abandoned. We ask that you take a moment to review the Inactive Members with Abandoned Accounts list below to **see if someone you know** should apply for a refund. If you see a friend on this list that (or you know they are deceased) then please let them or their relative know that they have a claim to some money that is sitting at Teachers' Retirement Board. Have them contact the Benefits Division at 959-867-6379 or by email at trb.benefits@ct.gov.

ROCKY HILL BD OF ED		
CAREY	ALISON	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
CARON	SHANNON	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
DIGRAZIA	ANTONIA	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
ENGLISH	COURTNEY	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
FOLEY	TREVA	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
GOLDSTEIN	LISA	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
JACOBSON	JOAN	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
LOWREY	ANN	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
MISTERI	CYNTHIA	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
PETRARIO	SARAH	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
RUFFER	SHAWN	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
SCUTT	ELIZABETH	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
WILCOX	JUDY	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
WONG	ERIN	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED
ZIMBLER	REBECCA	ROCKY HILL BD OF ED

5. Upcoming Events:

RHTA MEETINGS

4TH Wednesday of every month at GMS
library media center 4:05

October 26 th	January 25 th
November –no meeting	February 22 nd
December –no meeting	March 22 nd
	April 26 th
	May 24 th ~ Elections

CEA Retirement Workshops

VIRTUAL RETIREMENT WORKSHOPS!

Time: 4:00 – 6:30 PM

Monday, October 3, 2022
Tuesday, October 18, 2022
Thursday, November 3, 2022
Wednesday, December 7, 2022
Monday, December 19, 2022

Limited to the
first 100
registrants per
workshop!

Register on the
CEA website
or call
Heidi Krutzky
860.725.6327

Check the CEA website
for more dates!

➤ RHTA Officers for 2020-2021 are:

Co-President	Doug Russell (RHHS)
Co-President	Michelle Bartha (GMS)
Vice President	Kirsten Hassett (Moser)
Secretary	Adele Gali (RHHS)
Treasurer	Sandy Fravel (Stevens)

➤ RHTA Building reps for 2021-2022 are

RHHS Rep	Dave Fortier & Matt Bennett
GMS Rep	Karla Harding & Michelle Walerysiak
Stevens Rep	Laura O'Brien & Kristen Carter
West Hill Rep	Christina Boucher
Moser School	Carissa Lastrina & Joe Couture

➤ Other RHTA positions 2020-2021:

Grievance Chair	Heidi Kokoska (Moser)
Membership Chair	Sarah Sherman (Moser)
Web Master	Laura Litke (GMS)

Strategic Objectives:

- Goal A – CEA will secure improved salaries, benefits and working conditions for its members.
- Goal B - CEA and its members will be the leading voices on educational issues, directions, and the operations of public schools
- Goal C - CEA will work to ensure that all public schools have the necessary environment, equipment, resources, and personnel to provide each student with a quality education that will allow him or her to be successful.
- Goal D – CEA will encourage membership involvement at all levels of the organization.
- Goal E – CEA will maintain effective administrative and business systems to ensure the successful operation of the Association.

Implementation Plan 22-23

Connect (A, C,D)	Elevate (A, B)	Center (C)	Strengthen (E)
With local leadership to empower their own growth	The profession and status within our communities	Equity and race in our work	The internal work of CEA
Consistent outreach to Local Presidents (LPs): calls, email and meetings	Provide opportunities to highlight members – podcast, videos to be shared on social media – activate PR Committee as social media warriors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate EDEC programs at locals -- where are they thriving, where could they grow? • Faith Sweeney Fellowship 	Follow through on Mission Renewal and Consultant information with action
Site visits – new member meetings, rep council or special events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Aspiring Educator Program • Increase membership • Union 101 program • Build value statement • Organize and communicate calendar of events • Develop sponsor program 	Develop LGBTQ+ Working Group	Provide a clear understanding of the role of the HR Director in supporting staff growth.
Work with Uniserv reps to provide support to LPs and members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Career-Educator support • Conference build-up • Other networking opportunities 	How are we supporting our diverse teachers – Affinity groups?	Analysis of building use and design as well as regional office spaces
Negotiation's outreach: Develop new ideas to address concerns regarding salary schedules and step movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear union identity • Ensure message resonates with membership • Branding reflects up-to-date union values 	Support development of "Grow Your Own" programs – provide resources, programming materials and staff	Review of CEA policies

Connect (A, C, D)	Elevate (A, B)	Center (C)	Strengthen (E)
Welcome notes to new LPs	Outreach to political leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target pension related issues – 37 ½ years, pandemic credit 	How do we make the professional accessible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certification barriers • Academic program barriers • Nurturing diverse staff to retain them 	Provide opportunities for staff to connect and communicate with each other as well as between departments.
Provide retired mentors to new leaders	Work with AFT, CAPSS and CABE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment/retention • TEVAL Improvements • Attacks on Education • Indoor Air Quality • Certification 	Encourage retention in high needs districts through statewide initiatives and legislative efforts	Ongoing fiscal analysis Finance Committee guidance
LP socials twice a year	Research opportunities to provide gap insurance for those wishing to retire before 65.	CEA hiring practices – how are we ensuring we have equitable hiring practices?	Ongoing review of staff work and connections – how do departments work together
All LP virtual meeting twice a year	Early Career Educator support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference build up • Other networking opportunities 	Does CEA support a diverse workforce?	Provide opportunities for staff and membership to engage beyond the Unisersvs.
Keep up to date an accurate and accessible LP directory	Urban Fellows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for Urban Fellows to meet and discuss work • Provide targeted PD for fellows – NEA? 	Review trainings offered and expand to address issues related to DEI as needed.	Increase opportunities for staff to engage with members – beyond the Unisersv.
Boland Fund Equity Pratt Membership Training Committee RA Planning	CEAPAC CIPD (Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Committee) Legislative Commission Member Benefits Public Relations Resolutions Retirement A Better Connecticut Institute	Poverty Task Force EMAC (Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee) HCR (Human and Civil Rights Committee) Equity Task Force NEA Grant to Recruit TOC	Constitution/Bylaws Elections Finance Staff Personnel Review Board

- Highlight indicates a date change since the first calendar release

FALL	
Windham Presidents Forum September 12 Hartford Presidents Forum September 12 Fairfield Presidents Forum September 14 Litchfield Presidents Forum September 14 New London Presidents Forum September 19 New Haven Presidents Forum September 19 Middlesex Presidents Forum September 27 Tolland Presidents Forum September 27	Tolland County Forum October 25 change 9/7 Windham County Forum October 3 Fairfield County Forum October 11 Litchfield County Forum October 12 New Haven County Forum October 17 New London County Forum October 18 Hartford County Forum October 24 Middlesex County Forum October 26
Winter	
New London Presidents Forum December 6 New Haven Presidents Forum December 6 Middlesex Presidents Forum December 8 Tolland Presidents Forum December 8 Windham Presidents Forum December 13 Hartford Presidents Forum December 13 Fairfield Presidents Forum December 14 Litchfield Presidents Forum December 14	Tolland County Forum January 19 Windham County Forum January 25 Fairfield County Forum February 1 Litchfield County Forum January 30 New Haven County Forum January 12 New London/Middlesex County Forum January 17 Hartford County Forum January 23
Spring	
Hartford Presidents Forum February 13 Middlesex Presidents Forum February 13 New London Presidents Forum February 15 New Haven Presidents Forum February 15 Tolland Presidents Forum February 27 Windham Presidents Forum February 27 Fairfield Presidents Forum March 1 Litchfield Presidents Forum March 1	Hartford County Forum March 13 New Haven County Forum March 23 New London/Middlesex County Forum March 27 Tolland County Forum March 29 Windham County Forum April 3 Fairfield County Forum April 4 Litchfield County Forum April 6
<u>Executive Committee Dates</u> August 31, 2022 October 19, 2022 November 9, 2022 January 4, 2023 Virtual February 7, 2023 Virtual March 15, 2023 Virtual April 12, 2023 May 24, 2023	<u>CEA Board of Director's Meetings:</u> September 9, 2022 November 4, 2022 December 2, 2022 January 13, 2023 Virtual February 22, 2023 virtual *(Ash Wednesday) March 31, 2023 virtual April 28, 2023 June 2, 2023

Other Special Meetings

September 28, 2022	All Presidents Meeting Virtual
November 2, 2022	All member business forum – VIRTUAL
November 18, 2022	Local President Social
December 7, 2022	ALL DAY FINANCE AND CONSTITUTION REVISION
January 20 – 21, 2023	Local President and Board retreat
February 28, 2023	Budget Preview for LPs Virtual
March 7, 2023	Budget Review-All members virtual
April 24, 2023	Business Forum
June 6, 2023	NEA New Delegate Social
June 20, 2023	NEA All Delegate Meeting

CEA Representative Assembly, May 12 & 13, 2022 at Mohegan Sun
NEA Representative Assembly, July 2–July 6 – Orlando, FL

HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

Once a teacher nominates a student in need in their class, that student will be paired with a sponsor. The sponsor will get a detailed list (generated by the nomination form) with the student's school, grade, areas of interests, hobbies, favorites, and the types of gifts the student would like for the holidays. Sponsors will also be provided with a Holiday Bear Duffie Bag. This duffie bag is intended to fit all of the gifts purchased for each student. The Connecticut Education Foundation is mindful of equity, and we want to be sure that each student nominated receives quality gifts for the holidays and that it is a fair and consistent experience for all students. We ask each sponsor to provide 10-15 gifts per child sponsored. If you are in a very generous mood, please volunteer to sponsor more students rather than give one student an extra amount of gifts. Once sponsors have purchased and wrapped the gifts, they can return them to CEF for distribution. Preferably, sponsors can participate in the school to school program that allows for one school to partner with and deliver gifts directly to their

CAN I NOMINATE ANY STUDENT?

The Project is geared for our students in most need in the state of Connecticut. Please consider which students in your class are in the MOST need of receiving gifts for the holidays. Please remember the following criteria

- Students in Grades K-12
- Only CEA members can nominate students
- Please do not nominate an entire classroom of students
- Work with school social workers and school counselors to determine who might be in need, and consider talking to colleagues who teach siblings of the students you are putting forward for the program.

HOW DO I NOMINATE MY STUDENTS?

- Go to <https://cea.org/holiday-bear-project/>
- Click on Nominate Students
- Fill out the form with your nomination information (you will need your CEA membership number)
- Fill out information about your student, please be as specific as possible - this will help your sponsor
- Be sure to include 10-15 (no more than 15) possible gift items for your student, be specific, don't go too overboard with suggestions and costs, be sure to include your student's areas of interests/hobbies.

SAVE THE DATE

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE

Holiday Bear Project

September 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022

CEA MEMBERS CAN NOMINATE STUDENTS FOR THE PROGRAM

September 1, 2022 - October 30, 2022

SIGN UP TO BECOME A SPONSOR

Late October/Early November

SPONSORS RECEIVE STUDENT INFORMATION, SHOPPING LIST, AND DUFFLE BAG

Month of November

SPONSORS SHOP FOR AND WRAP GIFTS, DELIVER DUFFLE BAGS TO CEA OR ORGANIZE SCHOOL TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT OF GIFTS

First week in December

GIFT DISTRIBUTION

POSSIBLE WAYS TO SPONSOR STUDENTS

Individual or Family Sponsorship

An individual or family can volunteer to sponsor one or more children in need. As a family or by yourself or group of friends go shopping for those children and enjoy the giving experience.



Representative Council Sponsorship

Your local representative council can sponsor one or more children. Members of the council split up the gift list and have fun shopping. You can come together and have a wrapping party to organize and wrap your gifts and enjoy time together and get into the holiday spirit.

School Sponsorships

A school in your local can sponsor a certain number of students. Split the gift shopping list up among different teachers and staff in your building, then come together for a wrapping party to organize and pack your gifts for each student. You can enjoy time together and get into the holiday spirit.

Classroom Sponsorships

Your class can sponsor one or more student. Split up the gift list among your class and have as many willing participate. You can come together and have a wrapping party to organize and wrap your gifts and enjoy time together and get into the holiday spirit. Make sure you have admin/parent support with this process.

Financial Donations

You can always make a donation to The Holiday Bear Project. This money will go to purchase the duffle bags or buy gifts for students who do not get paired with a sponsor.



Attachment #4(2 pages)

Dear Legislator,

I have been troubled by recent misinformation about a significant accomplishment of the legislature last session—the ban on the harmful practice of dual instruction. I want to thank you for your thoughtful support of that action, and to be sure that you have the facts—not misinformation—about protecting students from that inferior education model.

It is also critical to know that your action *did not ban* remote education for sick or special needs students, or “course sharing,” as some have falsely claimed. Those options can be achieved without the resorting to dual instruction (see below).

To quickly review, dual instruction is when a teacher is required to divide his or her attention between an in-person class of students, and a group of remote students at a different location on a laptop or tablet, at the same time. During the pandemic, teachers experienced firsthand the disruptions and inequities of this bad practice that jeopardized student learning, especially for our neediest students. Dual instruction goes against everything we know about sound educational practice, and studies have documented its shortcomings:

-
- A study on dual teaching by Lora Bartlett at the University of California determined that it led to disengaged students, technology breakdowns, and a chaotic learning environment.
- One year ago, the State Department of Education (SDE) determined that learning declines were *substantially greater* for students in hybrid-remote settings. Dual instruction was proven to be an inferior model that led to greater learning loss during the pandemic.

Your action last session helped to improve student outcomes by banning this chaotic practice. You recognized that a fractured, simultaneous teaching model ensures that neither group of students has their needs fully met.

SDE is now attempting to veto your action and bring back this inferior instructional model. The department is suggesting that the legislature didn’t understand what it was doing when it banned dual instruction.

- SDE claims that adhering to the legislature’s ban on dual instruction would prohibit course sharing, where classes (such as Advanced Placement courses) could be team-taught or remotely taught. This is simply not true and can be easily accomplished through undivided remote instruction (instruction focused on engaging a remote cohort of students) or, when done within a district, by transporting students to a unified location (as is done every day for sports). Both models are far better for student learning than dual instruction.
- SDE says it is concerned with equity, but under its plan to allow dual instruction, many special education students, and students in our most under-resourced schools, would not have a certified teacher in the classroom. This is inequity and second-class education—not what the *Sheff* case intended. The legislature was right to prohibit the failed model that contributed to learning loss in all grade levels, as SDE’s own research noted in their Student Assessment Report of 2021.

- SDE suggests that dual instruction meets the standard of least-restrictive environments, but there is no evidence that this is correct. To the contrary, special needs students require specialized and engaged instruction, *the opposite* of what is provided through dual instruction. A better solution? Homebound instruction or undivided remote instruction. Both are vastly superior to dual instruction for those special needs students who cannot be served in a classroom setting.

If SDE is successful in creating harmful loopholes in the ban on dual instruction, we essentially throw in the towel on equity for all. Best practices for some, and inferior practices for others, is not equity. There are much better, evidence-based solutions, and Connecticut students deserve fairness and effective learning models.

Thank you for protecting student learning with the ban on dual instruction last legislative session. We look forward to working with you in the coming session to ensure that all students receive a quality education.

Sincerely,

Kate Dias

CEA President

Redesigning Education: A Future Beyond Standardized Tests



Join your CEA colleagues and other educators from across the state on November 8 to explore innovative classroom strategies and assessments that build on students' strengths and passions. It's time to reshape education and assessment from a singular focus on measuring students' deficits to building on the assets students have and need to lead joyful, productive lives.

Tuesday, November 8

8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sheraton Hartford South, Rocky Hill

[REGISTER TODAY ►](#)

Our featured speaker is education professor Yong Zhao, author of *Learning for Uncertainty: Teaching Students How to Thrive in a Rapidly Evolving World*. This professional learning event will also include a business panel and practical sessions led by educators.

The event fulfills professional development credit hours and is **free** for CEA, AFT Connecticut, and TLFA members. For all others, the cost to attend is \$80.

CEA, AFT Connecticut, CAPSS, the Teacher Leader Fellowship Academy at Sacred Heart University, and ASCD Connecticut are sponsoring this important event, with support from CAS and CABE.