

GEA NEWSLETTER

January 2018

News from the President

Regina Sullivan

GEA Officers

2017-2018

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GEA 17-18 Dues

**Full Time
Faculty**
GEA: \$145
CEA: \$499
NEA: \$189
TOTAL: \$833

.5 - .26 Faculty
GEA: \$85
CEA: \$249.50
NEA: \$106
TOTAL: \$465.50

.25 - .01 Faculty
GEA: \$85
CEA: \$249.50
NEA: \$64.75
TOTAL: \$465.50

Happy New Year!



I hope you and your family had a very joyous and relaxing holiday break. I wish you a very happy and healthy 2018.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all members who contributed to our annual Holiday Bear project. Each school helped at least one family in need this past holiday season. What another great success this year!

Have you ever asked yourself, "WHAT CAN I DO?" There are many ways to get involved with GEA. I encourage each you to visit www.CEA.org to stay up-to

-date on important issues. It's helpful to attend your building's "10 minute" meetings each month. We need to all stay informed!

Call all NEW teachers (teaching six years or less): SAVE THE DATE - CEA's annual New Teacher Conference will be March 24th at a new location - Heritage Hotel and Conference Center in Southbury.

Please do not hesitate to contact your building representative if you have any questions or concerns. The GEA is here to serve and protect you, our hard working teachers!

GEA News

Preparing for Taxes:

Are you already thinking of gathering the necessary information for your income taxes? Just in case you are looking for your 2016-2017 dues amount! **For the most accurate calculations**, look at your last December (dated 12/18/17) paystub for the year to date deductions for dues.

NEA-RA and CEA-RA:

The CEA Representative Assembly (RA), held each May, is CEA's highest policy-making body. During two days of business, approximately 500 delegates take action to decide Association policies, including adopting amendments to the CEA RA Standing Rules, the CEA Constitution and Bylaws, approving revisions to the CEA Resolutions, and voting on new business items.

Delegates - elected from CEA's more than 160 local affiliates - also vote to approve CEA's fiscal-year budget. The budget is proposed by the CEA Finance Committee and then sent to the CEA Board of Directors prior to adoption by the RA. The budget amount approved at the RA determines the amount of annual CEA membership dues for the fiscal year that runs from July 1 to June 30. The budget supports all the strategic objectives, programs, and services provided to members. This year's annual CEA-RA meeting will be held

May 18th and 19th at Mohegan Sun (<http://www.cea.org/members/about/ceara/index.cfm>). The NEA-RA's annual meeting will be held June 30-July 5 at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. If you are interested in attending either event, let your rep know ASAP.



SARAH Read-a-thon:

Grades K-6 will kick off the SARAH read-a-thon event between the end of January/February. The event will take us through March! Look for more information from your rep! We look forward to another successful year and appreciate all of your support with this event!

County Forum Meeting:

Meet state officers and other teachers! Each dinner meeting starts at 5:00pm (registration start at 4:30pm) and concludes at 7:00pm. This is a great way to get informed. The next meeting for Middlesex County is January 23rd at Waters Edge in Westbrook. You can check all county's dates at <http://www.cea.org/workshops/>. The focus will be on the upcoming Janus Supreme Court case and how it will impact all of us. There will also be a presentation by Robyn Kaplan-Cho on Teachers and Assault.

“That was Friedrichs; This is Janus” Why educators must remain active and engaged

Excerpt from: *CEA Advisor* --<http://www.cea.org/advisor/2017/dec-jan/4/>

A lawsuit making its way through the U.S. Supreme Court, *Janus v. AFSCME*, is designed to weaken unions and erode many of their hard-won benefits, including rights that teachers have enjoyed for decades. The case is expected to be heard in January and a decision rendered by June 2018.

Janus seeks to ban the long-established practice of collecting fair share fees. Under our current fair share system, fees are paid by educators who choose not to join the union but who benefit from union representation. Those fees ensure that teachers who reap the rewards of the union's protection and whose contracts are bargained by their union contribute their fair share for those benefits.

Powerful corporations would like to put an end to the protections that employees receive when they are part of a strong union. By eliminating fair share fees, they hope to diminish unions and tilt the playing field in their favor.

Foregone conclusion? With the new makeup of the Supreme Court, experts say a ban on fair share is inevitable. But that does not mean an end to unions.

A ruling outlawing fair share means unions must work harder than ever to retain members so that their bargaining power does not diminish.

A weaker union is catastrophic not only for public school teachers—threatening working conditions, salaries, and benefits—but also for entire schools and the students they serve. Consider this: Four of the nation's top five states for education—Massachusetts, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Maryland—are also fair share states with top teacher

salaries. On the other hand, in states where fair share is banned and unions are weak, class sizes are higher, teachers' wages are lower, and outcomes for students are often poorer.

It doesn't have to be that way.

Stronger together: Even if fair share is banned, unions can remain strong - **as long as teachers are committed to remaining active and engaged members.** Talk to your colleagues about the importance of union membership. When teachers stand together, they stand stronger.

To understand the difference between the teaching experience in a fair share state and a state that has banned fair share, see “The Union Pay Advantage” at the bottom page 4—<http://www.cea.org/advisor/2017/dec-jan/4/>.

Voices from Wisconsin: In 2011, the lives of Wisconsin teachers changed overnight. Teachers' contracts were replaced with highly restrictive policy handbooks. In one district, female teachers are required to wear heels and skirts or dresses below the knee. In Kenosha, the contract was reduced to a single page. Wisconsin is not alone. Attacks on collective bargaining rights have taken place in Indiana, Ohio, and elsewhere, as have attacks on teacher tenure, healthcare, and retirement. The idea that this could happen in Connecticut might seem far-fetched. But remember, Wisconsin didn't see it coming either. Stay politically active. Build community relations. Learn from your colleagues in other states. Go to cea.org/issues/news/2017/aug/02/voices-of-wcea.cfm and watch a powerful video featuring Wisconsin teachers.

Important Reminders

- **GEA online!** Visit www.gea.yolasite.com.
- **Retirement workshops** are being offered. The CEA offers workshops which help teachers understand the teachers' retirement system and aid in planning for the future. Benefits are fully explained and questions can be answered. **Be sure to register online or call CEA to register.**
- We want to hear from you, our members! Do you have an entry for the “Spotlight” area? Please share ideas for upcoming newsletters by contacting Patty McLaughlin through e-mail or inter-school mail (BMS).

~ Benefits ~

NEA Benefits: Discover all we have to offer you by downloading our Programs & Services booklet. Inside you will find a complete listing of what is offered from NEA Member Benefits as well as other valuable services made available through NEA. Link = <https://www.neamb.com/cps/xbcr/neamb/DOC-SID-C1B46B2E-8625A175-001.pdf>

CEA Benefits:

Check out page 12 of the December/January issue of the *CEA Advisor*. The deals are updated regularly. There are significant savings for Killington and Pico mountains, as well as Ski Butternut, Fields of Fire, Paddle Works, as well as select events at Webster Bank Arena or for Bridgeport Sound Tigers and Hartford Wolf Pack games. CEA also has Appreciation Days for the Bridgeport Sound Tigers (February 10th and March 11th), and the Hartford Yard Goats (May 5th, July 27th and August 24th). Be sure to check out all the discount available to you!



Spotlight: Recognizing Our Members for a Job Well Done



The GEA would like to recognize our GEA Membership Secretary, Anne Lombard, for her countless efforts, but also for her amazing organization and attention to detail. Not many members may realize the amount of time and energy this individual puts forth to help us stay on top of membership details not only at the local level, but at the state level too! THANK YOU!



Please e-mail any newsletter submissions or ideas to Patricia McLaughlin.