

Wilmington City School Initiative: A Primer

Governor John Carney and Secretary of Education Susan Bunting have placed a priority on improving educational outcomes for students who attend schools in the City of Wilmington, as evidenced by their dedication to working with the Christina School District and Education Association on developing a plan to do just that. The Department of Education's new Office of Innovation and Improvement, a Wilmington-based arm of the Dover oversight agency, is headed by Dorrell Green, former Christina teacher and administrator and just-past Assistant Superintendent of the Brandywine School District. Recently, CEA was given a letter of intent that was to be distributed to district staff and parents; in an effort to keep members aware of the process and timeline, CEA will be publishing periodic updates using multiple communication outlets. The basic points of focus for the school improvement initiative are:

- Trauma-informed supports, based on the existing Compassionate Connections Partnership between DSEA and the Office of the Child Advocate;
- Meeting student needs by ensuring basic needs closets exist at all schools;
- Opportunity Grant, which Christina has received to assist in delivering the trauma-informed supports, and;

- Two-generation center, a collaboration with Governor Carney's Family Services Cabinet Council that will provide support to both parents and pre-school aged children.

At this time, the Governor and Department of Education have established town halls and held a Facebook live event, all intended to generate questions, ferret out ideas, and provide information to interested parties throughout the process. Educators will soon be called upon to craft plans that will address the needs of the students, and the Christina community will be entering into a memorandum of understanding that will ideally reflect a commitment to the true needs of these targeted populations. The local community will retain control over the process by way of the established elected leadership team of the CSD School Board. The timeline for completion of the MOU is the end of the calendar year, and implementation of several of the focus points has already begun.

CEA remains dedicated to ensuring that this process is fair and equitable for our membership in the greater lens of enhancing learning environments for our students. Please stay tuned for additional information to come, and send any questions, comments, or concerns to christinaeducationassociation@gmail.com

CEA Times

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Up Coming Events

CEA Rep. Assembly Meetings

Members are welcome to attend these monthly meetings. All meetings are held at the DSEA building in Newark at 4:30.

4135 Olgetown Stanton Rd., Newark, DE 19713

December 20, 2017

January 17, 2018

Board of Education Meetings

Stay informed as to what is happening in our district. Meetings are open to the community. Please be an active voice in the progress our district makes.

Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.

December 12, 2017 at Gauger-Cobbs Middle School

January 9, 2018 at Sarah Pyle Academy

Important Events

December 8, 2017 - Movie Night

December 20, 2017 – Winter Social 6:00 to 8:00
Dinner – RSVP required (stay tuned for more information)

JANUS v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31

It's a case that has organized labor reeling; [Mark Janus](#), an Illinois government worker, has claimed that the money collected from non-members in lieu of dues – often called agency fee or fair share – is inseparable in use from the political activism of the union, and that it is therefore a violation of the First Amendment for this money to be extracted from those who opt not to allow the union to advocate for them. Like 2016's [Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association](#), or 1977's [Abood v. Detroit Board of Education](#), *Janus* is seen by some to be nothing short of blatant union-busting, a case poised to dramatically, negatively alter the landscape of union funding and activism.

Others see it as a tremendous opportunity.

Friedrichs ended in a Supreme Court deadlock, heard at a time when then-President Obama's Supreme Court nominee appointment was being blocked by a GOP-controlled Senate. *Abood* was decided in favor of unions, provided that the dues collected are not used for political activism. With a seventh Supreme Court Justice, President Trump-appointed Neil Gorsuch, likely to vote against continued agency fee collection, unions like the nation's largest – the [National Education Association](#) – are preparing for a worst-case scenario when the 23 states currently allowing fair share dues initiate regulations blocking this long-standing practice.

In an era of service and [social justice](#) more so than the traditional bread-and-butter issues of labor organizations, the NEA has never been more relevant to the lives of educators, who seek more than just pay raises and [high-quality benefits](#). Today's educator wants well-resourced classrooms, policies that provide equality for all students, academic freedom, and support for this important work. It has become vital for the union to present its work in line with the needs of its members, so that all members see themselves as part of the work of the organization. One need not be an elected leader to participate in union activities, and there is truly something for everyone to become involved with.

If *Janus* dominates the Supreme Court, the way unions do business will be altered. However, this may just be the impetus education unions need to really focus on the key tasks necessary to truly improving the working – and learning – conditions in all schools, gaining members who want to be part of a network of supportive, goal-oriented professional educators.



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What You Need to Know

Fair share dues, a practice common to most NEA local affiliates here in Delaware, are a portion of the full membership fee that fluctuates annually and is based on the percentage of reported time elected union leaders spend on various activities of the organization. In Christina, this runs around 85% of full membership dues.

Political action funds are completely separate from membership dues, with all political expenditures coming from a different budget in a different fund than membership. These are collected via free will donation from interested members. Delaware holds the per-member record for political action fund donations in the country, with over \$11 collected annually per member in the state. The next nearest state affiliate is usually \$3 or more behind Delaware.

In Christina, the agency fee works out to about \$4 per pay less than full membership. While some educators are grandfathered in prior to fair share, the majority of Christina educators eligible for union membership opt to become members, with greater than 90% of new hires joining during orientation week and new membership applications turned in monthly.

Further questions? Please contact us at ChristinaEducationAssociation@gmail.com. Remember: We work for you!

CEA Leadership School Visits

CEA President Darren Tyson has been taking time to visit each school in the district. These visits are a great opportunity to see and hear from our membership. We want your honest feedback about how your year is going. What works well in your building? What would you like to change? How can CEA help to facilitate those changes?

Did you miss Darren's visit? Not to worry! Didn't get a chance to share? There's still a way! We want to hear from you and get your (anonymous) feedback! Please take a moment to submit a form using a link below.

<https://goo.gl/forms/KxARaxTL5cAVvi4p1>



NEA RA: Resolutions

by: Michael Kempski

Resolutions are the formal expressions of opinion, intent, belief or position of the National Education Association. State associations sent representatives to Washington, DC in early March to review current resolutions and to add new ones. Delegates receive a report of their work and a hearing is held before the RA general business meetings to begin to ask questions. During the general business meeting, Amendments to the resolutions are presented, debated and voted on by the entire delegation.

I found the discussion and the voting regarding Amendment 7 particularly noteworthy.

The Resolutions Committee made recommendations that added statements regarding Racial Justice resolutions. Amendment 7 if approved would add the following language:

New I. Racial Justice

Amend by addition on page 24, line 15 of the yellow book:

The National Education Association acknowledges the existence of, and will actively advocate for, the construction of social and educational strategies whose goal is the elimination of institutional racism, white privilege, and white supremacy.

White supremacy is here defined as an institutionally perpetuated system of overt and covert exploitation and oppression of people of color by white people for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.

White privilege is here defined as, "An invisible package of unearned assets," a set of advantages white people benefit from that are automatically conferred irrespective of wealth, gender, or other factors and that are severely limited or withheld from people of color.

NEA Convention 2017

Boston, MA



Delegates that spoke against Amendment 7 did not want the terms white privilege and white supremacy in the resolution. There were discussions on how to reword the Amendment to avoid the use of those terms and still keep the intent of the maker's additions. The debate was cut off before it could develop when a motion to refer the resolution to committee was made. The vote to refer was close and contentious, but it eventually passed. I wanted to see more debate and a vote of the RA on the Amendment itself. That did not happen. I am looking at that disappointment as an opportunity to hear from more members as to what they think about the terms white privilege and white supremacy being in the belief documents of their organization. DSEA has an elected representative that serves on the NEA Resolutions Committee. I will take member comments at kempskim@comcast.net. I will also bring up Amendment 7 when doing visits with members in their buildings. I will share what I learn with Jeanette Wilt our representative on the Resolutions Committee.

News Worthy

"My City Needs Something"

Students from Bancroft Elementary School made a YouTube rap video called "My City Needs Something" as part of the Beyond Those Bars Program as they shared their experiences growing up amid gun violence. The video can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Os5pXBv2W_0

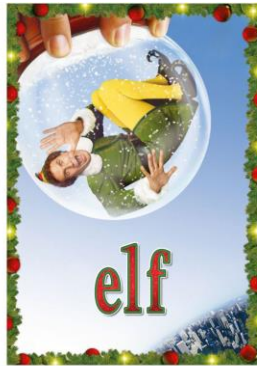


CEA Movie Nights

Throughout the year CEA will be hosting movie nights. On October 13th we had an exclusive screening of "Paper Tigers". We'd like to thank everyone that came out and invite you all to join us at future events. Mark your calendars!



October 13th ✓



December 8th



February 9th



April 13th

CEA Back to School Gathering



On September 28, members were welcomed back to school in style with gatherings at the DSEA Building in Newark and at Sarah Pyle Academy in Wilmington. Great food and fellowship was enjoyed by all as we feasted on Chick-Fil A sandwiches, cole slaw, cookies, and great conversation. Attendees included staff from Newark HS, Marshall, Bayard, Downes, Pulaski, Brennen, Shue-Medill, Brader, Sarah Pyle, and Networks. DSEA giveaways (who doesn't love a pen that has a highlighter on the other end?!) were received by everyone and some people won \$10 gift cards as raffle prizes. Comments and concerns were collected on the raffle tickets. Some of the concerns reported were: time and additional support needed for math planning with new curriculum, information needed on how to get involved, class sizes, negative publicity about the district, and the dress code. Some of the suggestions included: find a way to rebut negative or vague publicity with clear facts, encourage principals to compromise on staff attire, pushing district to close choice when schools are at capacity, include class size cap in our contract, redistricting schools to address class size, and to have more social gatherings like the CEA Back to School event. One teacher wrote that she appreciated and enjoyed having our president visit her school. All of this feedback is appreciated by the CEA Executive Board and we will be using it as we go forward with our strategic plans. We look forward to having more events like this (see article on upcoming CEA movie nights) and to be working with our colleagues to create a more welcoming, safe and effective educational environment for staff, students, and families!

Knowledge is Power

Know Your Contract

Being able to navigate your contract is a necessary skill. The entire contract is available at: <http://www.christinak12.org/pdf/HR/Contracts/Teachers/CEA-2016-2019.pdf>

In each issue of the CEA Times we are going to address a few issues you or your colleagues may come across throughout the school year. We encourage you to use these questions as a starting point to explore your contract and know your rights.

What kind of notice should be given to a teacher if a student is being added to their roster?

Article 4:7

Students shall not be removed from, added to, or transferred to an employee's classroom without 12 hours' notice. Notification can be in the form of an email to the teacher. Educational information concerning a student transfer shall be provided to the classroom teacher. Teachers will be provided educational and medical information on all students with special needs with whom they have contact as soon as it is available. As used in this paragraph, "medical information" means that data necessary for the teacher to accommodate or adequately respond to known medical or health conditions.

Can teachers use their own life's experiences to enrich the materials and academic content for courses they teach?

Article 9:3.1

Employees are encouraged to develop and utilize innovative practices from life experiences, connections to previous careers and outside resources/ancillary materials that are aligned to the common core standards, to enrich academic content for courses.

Go! Fight! Win!

The CEA is always looking for opportunities to improve and grow. We strive to meet the needs of our members and we'd like to share some "wins" we've had recently.

Snow Hours

Each year we face the possibility of inclement weather and school closings. The policy in the past has been that staff can start "collecting" snow hours after an official hour count has been released by the state. The problem with this process is that at the end of the year there are not as many opportunities to acquire time. CEA recognized this issue and pushed to allow snow hours to be "banked" throughout the school year. The period to collect snow hours began October 23, 2017 and you may collect a maximum of 22.5 hours. The letter sent to staff can be viewed on our website under "News & Info".

Half Day Grading

The recent contract put all schools on the same grading schedule. This change presented a great opportunity to include time in the calendar for a half day of grading. On October 27th all staff members should have been provided a half day for the purpose of organizing and inputting grades. We'd like to hear how that change worked for you. Please use the link below to share what worked, what didn't, and any suggestions you have for the future. Click the link or picture below to send us your feedback.



<https://goo.gl/forms/D7A2rtvYzCozzDZ92>

We want to hear from you!

Visit our website at: christinaea.dsea.org

Join us on Facebook: Christina Education Association (closed group; contact to be added)

Email us at: christinaeducationassociation@gmail.com

YouTube: Christina Education Association

Christina Education Association Contact Information

President - [Darren Tyson](#), Newark High School

Vice President - [Jackie Kook](#), Kirk Middle School

Secretary - [Mary Pieri](#), Gallaher Elementary School

Treasurer - [Najma Landis](#), Sarah Pyle Academy

Membership Chair – [Mike Kempinski](#), Shue-Medill Middle School

Liaison Chair – [Leslie Footman](#), Elbert-Palmer Elementary School

Communications Chair – [Jennifer Dalgarn](#), Gallaher Elementary School

Political Action Chair - [Woody Woodruff](#), Newark High School

Area A Director (High Schools) - [Dave Kohan](#), Glasgow High School (Christiana, Glasgow, Newark)

Area B Director (Middle Schools) - [Donya Crichlow](#), Gauger-Cobb Middle School (Gauger-Cobb, Kirk, Shue-Medill)

Area C Director (Special Schools) – [Vacant](#) (Adult Ed, Brennan/DAP, DSD, Eden, Networks)

Area D Director (City-Secondary) – [Michael Herring](#), Sarah Pyle Academy (Bayard, Douglass, Sarah Pyle)

Area E Director (City-Elementary) – [Tonya Frazier](#), Pulaski Elementary School (Bancroft, Palmer, Pulaski, Stubbs)

Area F Director (Elem-Outskirts) - [Jessi Smeigh](#), Gallaher Elementary School (CEEC, Gallaher, Jones, Smith, Wilson)

Area G Director (Elem-Newark) - [Ariel Hardy](#), Downes Elementary School (Brookside, Downes, Maclary, McVey, West Park)

Area H Director (Elem-Rt. 40) - [Belinda Young-Payne](#), Marshall Elementary School (Brader, Keene, Leasure, Marshall, Oberle)

DSEA UniServ - [Julie Harrington](#)