

CONNECTICUT EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# EARLY CAREER EDUCATOR CONFERENCE

March 23, 2024  
Foxwoods Resort Casino





# AGENDA

## SATURDAY, MARCH 23

### Foxwoods Resort Casino · Ledyard, CT

All workshops are offered twice (once during each session).

8:30 a.m. Registration and continental breakfast

9:00 a.m. Welcome by CEA President Kate Dias/  
opening session

Keynote Speaker: Kiana Foster-Mauro,  
2024 Connecticut Teacher of the Year

10:00 a.m. Session I

11:30 a.m. Break

11:45 a.m. Session II

1:15 p.m. Lunch



**Kiana Foster-Mauro**  
*2024 Connecticut  
Teacher of the Year*

- Register at [cea.org/event/early-career-conference](https://cea.org/event/early-career-conference).
- The conference is designed for educators in their first seven years of teaching, but any CEA member currently employed by a school district may attend. Lunch is included, and attendance certificates will be available at the conference.
- In case of inclement weather, check for updates at [cea.org](https://cea.org) or call 860-525-5641 for the status of this conference.
- If you have questions, contact Lisa Bickford at [lisaab@cea.org](mailto:lisaab@cea.org).

Register for CEA's  
Early Career Educator  
Conference here!





# SESSIONS

## Accessing a High-Quality K-12 STEM Education for ALL Students: Exploring Characteristics of Rock Star STEM Teaching and Learning

Learn about the work of the National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY) National STEM Fellowship in identifying and honing the pedagogical characteristics of “rock star” STEM teachers and bridging the gap between STEM careers and classroom spaces. Investigate barriers for students in finding a sense of belonging in STEM and explore proven strategies for hosting STEM professionals in your K-12 classroom! Walk away with STEM career engagement guides for grades 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12, written for STEM teachers by the National STEM Fellowship cohort. **Elementary, Middle, High**

## Educating With Pride!

In recent years LGBTQ+ issues have become a cultural lightning rod 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 ways they can best support themselves, their colleagues, and students. We will be discussing 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! **Elementary, Middle, High**

## Educator Self-Care & Time Management

As educators, you take care of your students socially, emotionally, and academically every day. But it rings true that you “can’t pour from an empty cup.” Determining what your personal self-care looks like, how you manage your time inside and outside the classroom, and how you will prioritize taking care of yourself is part of ensuring your cup never runs dry. Join other early career educators to learn about self-care and time management strategies and take the time to create a self-care/time management plan for yourself. **Elementary, Middle, High**

## The First Days of School: The Remix—Setting the Stage for Social Justice in the Classroom

Interested in teaching about social justice in your classroom? Looking to encourage your students to advocate for themselves and others? Wondering how to incorporate topics like immigration, gender discrimination, environmentalism, racism, and more throughout the year? Before you can begin diving into these topics, it is important to set the stage at the beginning of the school year by intentionally planning for your students. During this session, we will discuss engaging in identity work with students, building common vocabulary, and creating community expectations related to this work at the start of the school year to support deeper conversations in the future. This work will help you create a classroom community that honors student identities, encourages them to learn about the world around them, and leads them to practice empathy while advocating for themselves and others. **Elementary**





# SESSIONS CONTINUED

## **IDEA, CT SEDS, *Endrew F.*: Oh, My! IEP Goal Writing & Progress Monitoring Tools That Support Quality IEPs for All**

Acronyms, shmacronyms. Today's special educators are tasked with a variety of responsibilities. Among the most critical of these is creating quality, data-based individualized education plans (IEPs) that are appropriately challenging for students and that increase access to the general education curriculum. Participants will discuss foundational principles of IDEA and the *Endrew F.* Supreme Court case along with newer CT SEDS requirements for goal writing and progress monitoring. Attendees will learn a variety of tools for developing solid student IEP goals and progress monitoring them in an ongoing manner and will walk away with both digital and consumable tools, templates, and exemplars. Participants should expect to leave with a greater understanding of how to develop systems to manage the paperwork involved in these tasks and how to thrive in their ability to interpret, present, and utilize their data to develop high-quality plans for their students. ***Elementary, Middle, High***



## **Planning for the Future: Pension Issues for Early Career Teachers**

You may be years away from retirement, but it's never too early to start planning. This workshop provides an overview of the Connecticut Teachers' Retirement System with a particular emphasis on issues of interest to teachers in the early phase of their career. Come and gather the information you need to answer the following questions and more:

- How does the retirement system work?
- Can I get retirement credit for other work I've done?
- What happens if I work part-time or take a leave of absence?
- What are my options if I decide to leave teaching?
- How long do I have to work to collect a pension?
- I have heard that my Social Security benefits may be affected. Is that true?

***Elementary, Middle, High***



## **Playing Games: Using Collaborative Activities to Reinforce Learning**

Let's play! Cooperative learning checks ALL the boxes: it reinforces content, encourages classroom community development, facilitates social skills, and brings joy to the classroom. You will learn cooperative learning strategies, games, and activities as well as figure out how to set up your class to have the most success with these activities. You'll leave with ideas you can use on Monday! ***Elementary***





# SESSIONS CONTINUED

## **Routines to Maximize Instruction and Plan More Efficiently**

Running a classroom can be challenging, but by establishing clear routines and expectations, you can ensure things go more smoothly for you and your students. Think about which activities bring your students joy, and keep doing them! By creating intentional, engaging lessons, you'll be able to maximize planning time by continuously creating a bank of lesson plans you can repeat. You will maximize instructional time, because students will already have an understanding of class expectations. Furthermore, various organizational and technology tips can help create a more efficient workflow. In this workshop you will learn ideas for activities to do within the classroom, tips on how to organize your lesson plans and units, and technology shortcuts that will make your life a lot easier! ***Middle, High***

## **Social and Emotional Learning: It Makes a Difference**

This workshop will provide you with a social emotional learning toolkit you can put into practice in your professional and personal life and share with your students. A mindset and an integral part of education and human development, SEL and self-care help you explore skills, develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals. They are key to keeping the mind and body strong, promoting empathy, maintaining supportive relationships, and guiding us in making responsible, caring decisions for our students and ourselves. ***Middle, High***

## **Teachers and the Law**

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. ***Elementary, Middle, High***

## **Tumbling Down the AI Rabbit Hole**

A comprehensive professional development session designed to equip teachers with the knowledge and practical skills needed to effectively integrate artificial intelligence into their teaching practices, this workshop demystifies AI technology, explores its applications in education, and provides educators with hands-on experience and strategies for leveraging AI tools in the classroom. ***Elementary, Middle, High***

