



**Connecticut Education
Association**

Governance

Sheila Cohen, President
Jeff Leake, Vice President
Cheryl Prevost, Secretary
Thomas Nicholas, Treasurer
Kathy Flaherty, NEA Director
Pat Jordan NEA Director

Executive Office

Mark Waxenberg
Executive Director

Legal Services

Christopher P. Hankins, Esq.
Melanie I. Kolek, Esq.
Adrienne R. DeLucca, Esq.
Capitol Place, Suite 500
21 Oak Street
Hartford, CT 06106-8001
860-525-5641, 800-842-4316
Fax: 860-525-8818
Fax: 860-725-6304
www.cea.org

Affiliated with the
National Education Association

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF

SUE FULLETON, DIRECTOR OF AFFILIATE MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

AND

CHRISTOPHER P. HANKINS, LEGAL COUNSEL

BEFORE THE

CHILDREN COMMITTEE

REGARDING

PROPOSED SENATE BILL NOS 169 AND 651

Our names are Sue Fulleton, Director of Affiliate Member Development for the Connecticut Education Association and Christopher P. Hankins, Legal Counsel for the Connecticut Education Association. We are commenting on several important aspects of proposed Senate Bill Numbers 169 and 651.

As to proposed Senate Bill No. 169:

The Connecticut Education Association is pleased to be able to support this ambitious effort to assess all children for social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health to ensure the delivery of necessary services and interventions. The Committee is to know we believe that this Bill is a step in the right direction. As the tragedy of Sandy Hook revealed, the need for ongoing support systems for loved ones experiencing mental health issues is a life-long struggle and obligation of their care givers. The testimony heard from families seeking help and support was heart rendering. The desperation voiced was a call to action by the State to address both preventative and ongoing consistent interventions and resources to help those experiencing mental illness and those who care for them.

Equally important and threshold to the support of this Bill by the Association, are the long-standing resolutions of the Association as they relate to social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health services. The Resolutions of the CEA support comprehensive programs for student access to resources in the school environment that promote a safe and supportive learning environment. For example, the Association supports services to include, but not be limited to, guidance counselors with manageable case loads, alternative programs, schools

free of bullying, class size that is manageable in all educational settings, and programs that support a positive learning climate in a partnership among and between all education stakeholders and the parents or guardians of the children we teach.

The Association believes that a discussion regarding the broad based issues raised in this Bill will allow for the possibility of being on the forefront of the crisis related to appropriate services for those challenged by these problems faced by society. The intentions in the Bill reflect our member support for education of the whole child in a holistic and sensitive environment for all.

We join the sponsors of Proposed Bill No. 169 in urging your support of this Bill.

As to proposed Senate Bill No. 651:

Threshold to any successful child care or early education program is a strong nutrition program. The Connecticut Education Association is in favor of standards which assure that children who are participating in such programs receive nutritionally balanced healthy meals, served in a safe environment. Its resolutions promote nutrition standards as a foundation to programs that will insure a lifestyle of sound health practices and ultimately a great chance of achieving success in school. The standards created will assure success in programs which include a strong age-appropriate curriculum taught by certified early childhood teachers in a safe environment.

The regularly scheduled meals provided should include, but not be limited to, to all children in early childhood care settings and programs for at least four hours per day. The meals should be appealing to the age group and demonstrate a nutritious component that is readily available to parents to replicate in the home setting. Food should be properly served in a safe and sanitary environment and be properly stored based on USDA standards. The food should be served to children in a positive, relaxed, and social atmosphere with sufficient time to eat at a reasonable, leisurely rate. No coercive action or denial of food should be allowed in the early childhood care center or early childhood program.

CEA supports standards which adhere to national early childhood standards and nutritional standards required for other similar programs such as Head Start. A collaborative team of experts in all related fields should confirm the standards set and careful monitoring of programs should be instituted.

It is for these reasons that CEA urges your support for Bill 651.