

# February BEA Bits and Briefs

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[www.blmfldea.org](http://www.blmfldea.org)



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[www.blmfldea.org](http://www.blmfldea.org)



Email us at : [bloomfieldeducationassociation@gmail.com](mailto:bloomfieldeducationassociation@gmail.com)

# BEA Monthly Spotlight

Nominate a co-worker [here](#) to share with us all of the phenomenal work they are doing!



# BEA Monthly Spotlight



Kelly Hughes is 3rd grade teacher at Metacomet and is being recognized by her colleagues for having an amazing sense of humor that brings smiles to both students and staff. They also believe she is an incredible teacher. Great job Ms. Hughes, your genuine personality does not go unnoticed!

# A Penny for your Thoughts

Please take a moment to share your thoughts on the following surveys:

[BEA End of Year Social Survey](#)

[Young and Union Professional Learning Opportunities Survey](#)

# Our Brand New Shiny Contract

It's official, our  
2025-2028 Contract  
has been accepted by  
the Town and has  
been officially  
submitted to the  
state!

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE  
BLOOMFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

AND

BLOOMFIELD EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION

JULY 1, 2025 TO JUNE 30, 2028

← Click the image to  
see it in its entirety!

# Stay in the know!

- Checks should have gone back to normal deductions as of our 1/3/25 paycheck.
- 1/31/25 should have had no deductions due to it being the third paycheck of the month.
- W2's and 1095s were sent out on 1/30/25 and should have been received by you at this point. If you have not received one, please email Tatiana Lourie at [tlourie@blmfld.org](mailto:tlourie@blmfld.org)
- Union Dues for the 2024 fiscal year were \$891.53

# Stay in the know!


- There are presently no updates on the PowerSchool data breach and who, if any, teacher's personal information was breached.
- Our first BEA Bylaws Committee meeting will be taking place on Thursday, February 13 via Zoom 4:30-5:30pm. We are still looking for a representative from GEMS to join the committee, it pays \$50 per meeting and we plan to have 4 meetings this year. Please email [gjorden@blmfld.org](mailto:gjorden@blmfld.org) if interested.

# Stay in the know!

- Please see the updated MOA regarding pay for when students are disbursed to your class in lieu of a sub [here](#). The per diem rate still stands if you take on an entire class, or if you take on a class during your prep period, you should be paid at the \$46.25/hour rate.
- Because we were unable to come to an agreement on the stipends at GEMS, BEA has filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge against the district. More to come.

# Stay in the Know!

Course reimbursement forms are linked below. Prior to being reimbursed, you must first get the planned program of study approved by the superintendent. Once you have the approval, you must submit for course reimbursement within 90 days of passing the course.

 Bloomfield Public Schools

### COURSE REIMBURSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS

**Course Reimbursement**

Each year, the Board allocates \$40,000 for course reimbursement, available on a "first come, first served" basis. Once these funds are depleted, no additional reimbursements will be provided for that year.

- Upon prior approval from the Superintendent/Designee, the Board will reimburse \$1,000 (BEA, BAA, & BSNA members) and \$900 (BFEP members) per course taken at an accredited college or university. The total reimbursement per school year cannot exceed \$2,000 per employee.
- Employees are eligible for reimbursement for a maximum of two courses annually.
- Reimbursement will cover the expenses incurred for the course, minus any grants or scholarships that reduced the cost.

Please refer to your union contract for additional details regarding course reimbursement.

**Before Starting the Course**

1. **Planned Program Application:** The Planned Program Application form must be completed and approved before your Request for Course Reimbursement can be processed.
2. **Submission Timeline:** Please submit your Request for Course Reimbursement before the start date of course. Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within ninety (90) days of successfully completing the course. *Requests submitted more than ninety (90) days after course completion will be denied.*
3. **Form Completion:** Ensure that Part I and Part II of the form are filled out, including the cost of the course (per credit of the course), zip code, and any other required information.

**After Completing the Course**

1. Sign and date the Request for Course Reimbursement Form- PART III- Evidence of Completion
2. Provide evidence of your grade and payment, including copies of the college/university receipt and Grade Report/Transcript.
3. Scan all completed forms and send them to [jsanchez-gary@blmfd.org](mailto:jsanchez-gary@blmfd.org)

If you have any questions, feel free to contact our office at (860) 769-4217.

Thank you for your support and cooperation!

1133 Blue Hills Avenue • Bloomfield, CT 06002 • (860) 769-4200 • Fax (860) 769-4215  
[www.bloomfieldschools.org](http://www.bloomfieldschools.org)  
Revised November 2024

 BLOOMFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Bloomfield, Connecticut

### REQUEST FOR COURSE REIMBURSEMENT

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Each year, the Board will fund \$40,000 towards course reimbursement. Staff will be reimbursed on a "first come, first served" basis. Once the pool has been depleted no additional funds will be provided for that year. Upon submission to and prior approval by the Superintendent of a planned program of study at an accredited college or university, the Board of Education will reimburse up to contractual limits for any and all courses taken during the year. The Board will pay for no more than a maximum of two three-credit courses annually (fiscal year). The total course reimbursement per school year shall not exceed contractual limits. Request for reimbursement must be hand-delivered or submitted to the Superintendent within ninety (90) days of successfully passing the course. Reimbursement will be for the repayment of funds expended on a course less receipt of grants or scholarships that offset, or lowered the cost of the course. **REIMBURSEMENT REQUESTS RECEIVED AFTER MORE THAN NINETY (90) DAYS FROM COMPLETION OF THE COURSE SHALL BE DENIED.**

**NOTE:** PLEASE BE ADVISED YOUR COURSE REIMBURSEMENT WILL NOT BE APPROVED WITHOUT A PLAN OF PROGRAM. **YOU MUST USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH REQUEST FOR COURSE REIMBURSEMENT. PLEASE COMPLETE ALL AREAS OF THE FORM, INCLUDING, COST OF COURSE (PER CREDIT).** ALL REQUESTS CAN BE HAND-DELIVERED OR EMAILED TO THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE.

**PART I - PRIOR APPROVAL:**  
Upon completion of the course listed in Part II, \_\_\_\_\_ (Staff Name) will be eligible for reimbursement not to exceed contractual limits. (All courses must be accompanied with receipt of payment.)  
\_\_\_\_\_(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance)

**PART II - PRIOR APPLICATION FOR COURSE APPROVAL: STAFF COMPLETES**

Staff Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Address/Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Union: BFEP/BEA/BSNA/BAA (Please CIRCLE one)

Course # and Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Accredited College/University Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of Course: Beginning \_\_\_\_\_ Ending \_\_\_\_\_  
FALL: \_\_\_\_\_ SUMMER \_\_\_\_\_ SPRING \_\_\_\_\_ (Please CHECK one)

Cost Per Credit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PART III - EVIDENCE OF COMPLETION:**  
The course listed above has been successfully completed and prior approved reimbursement is hereby requested. Attached are copies of College/ University receipted bill and Grade Report/Transcript.  
\_\_\_\_\_(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Staff Member)

**PART IV - AUTHORIZATION FOR PAYMENT:** Vendor ID # \_\_\_\_\_ . The course listed above has been verified as completed and payment is approved. Amount of authorized reimbursement \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_(Date) \_\_\_\_\_ (Assistant Superintendent of Accountability and Performance)

[ ] APPROVED [ ] DENIED Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Account Number: **100-50-403-1000-03-2500-5** Revised: 9/26/22  
FORMS are located on the S: Drive under District Forms/Instruction

# Stay in the Know!



Bloomfield Public Schools

Tracy A. Youngberg, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## District Immigration Guidance

January 29, 2025

Please select the image above to see Dr. Youngberg's message regarding protocols for handling immigration issues at our schools. This was sent to administrators to be shared out to all staff members.

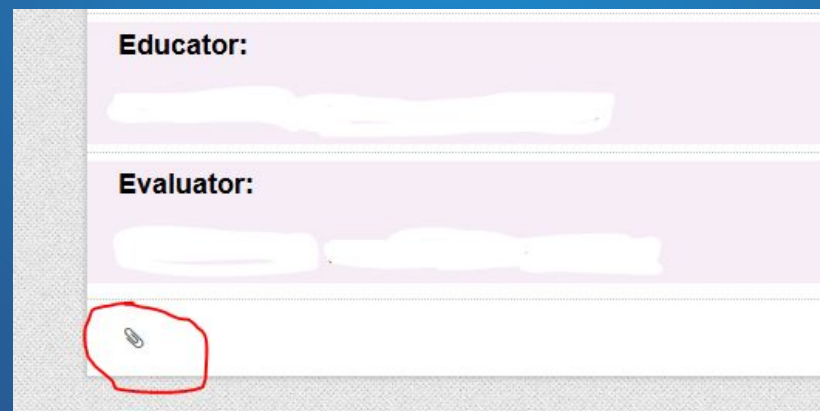
# Teacher Evaluation

This year we have a new evaluation plan. The handbook can be found here: [BPS Teacher Evaluation Handbook](#)

In the event of a dispute, the handbook encourages all parties involved to try to handle it at the lowest level. We first encourage the member to follow up with a post-observation meeting to clarify with the evaluator what they are disputing. Our hope is that this conversation could potentially lead to the evaluator changing their score or the member coming to a more clear understanding for the score they received. If an understanding is not reached, next steps are described on the following slides.

# Teacher Evaluation

In the event of a dispute, members are encouraged to write a statement clearly expressing what part of the evaluation they disagree with and uploading the document on Vector. You can attach the statement to said observation (see image below). If you need assistance with writing a statement please reach out to your building representative. If you have technical questions, I would advise you to reach out to Calla Leonardo, our TEval Coordinator at [criccio@blmfd.org](mailto:criccio@blmfd.org).



The image shows a screenshot of a form interface. It has a light pink background with white text. The first section is labeled "Educator:" and contains a white rectangular input field. The second section is labeled "Evaluator:" and contains two white rectangular input fields. Below these fields is a white rectangular area with a small grey icon of a paperclip, which is circled in red. The form is set against a dark blue background with a pattern of white stars and gold and blue circles.

# Teacher Evaluation

## **Dispute and Conflict Resolution**

The purpose of the dispute resolution process is to secure at the lowest possible administrative level equitable solutions to disagreements, which from time to time may arise related to the evaluation process. The right of appeal is available to all in the evaluation and support system. As our evaluation and support system is designed to ensure continuous, constructive, and cooperative processes among professional educators, educators/leaders and their evaluators are encouraged to resolve disagreements informally.

Ultimately, should an educator disagree with the evaluator's assessment and feedback, the parties are encouraged to discuss these differences and seek common understanding of the issues. As a result of these discussions, the evaluator may choose to adjust the report but is not obligated to do so. The educator being evaluated has the right to provide a statement identifying areas of concern with the goals/ objectives, evaluation period, feedback, and/or professional development plan, which may include the individual professional learning plan or a Corrective Support Plan.

Any such matters will be handled as expeditiously as possible, and in no instance will a decision exceed 30 workdays from the date the educator initiated the dispute resolution process. Confidentiality through- out the resolution process shall be conducted in accordance with the law.

# Teacher Evaluation

## Process

The educator being evaluated shall be entitled to collective bargaining representation at all levels of the process.

1. Within three school days of articulating the dispute in writing to his/her/their evaluator, the educator being evaluated and the evaluator will meet with the objective of resolving the matter informally.
2. If there has been no resolution, the individual may choose to continue the dispute resolution process in writing to the superintendent or designee within three workdays of the meeting with his/her/their evaluator (step 1). The educator being evaluated may choose between two options.

### a. Option 1:

The issue in dispute may be referred for resolution to a subcommittee of the Professional Development and Evaluation Committee (PDEC), which will serve as a neutral party\*. The superintendent and the respective collective bargaining unit for the district may each select one representative from the PDEC to constitute this subcommittee, as well as a neutral party as mutually agreed upon between the superintendent and the collective bargaining unit. It is the role of the subcommittee to determine the resolution of the dispute and to identify any actions to be taken moving forward.

\*In the instance that a district is too small to have a full PDEC from which to select three

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individuals, the superintendent and educator may select three mutually agreed upon persons to serve as the neutral party for resolving the dispute. Each individual must be a Connecticut certified educator and may or may not be from within the district.

### b. Option 2:

The educator being evaluated requests that the superintendent solely arbitrate the issue in dispute. In this case, the superintendent will review all applicable documentation and meet with both parties (evaluator and educator being evaluated) as soon as possible, but no longer than five school days from the date of the written communication to the superintendent. The superintendent will act as arbitrator and make a final decision, which shall be binding.

# Upcoming Events

## CEA Breakfast with Legislators



Join teachers across the state for the third annual CEA Breakfast with Legislators. This unique opportunity will allow you to talk directly with legislators about what's going on in your classroom and share what you and your students need to be successful. You'll also hear from CEA leaders about educator priorities this session and come away with the tools and resources you need to advocate for your students and your profession. Coffee, refreshments, and snacks will be served.

**Saturday, February 8**

**9 a.m. to noon**

**Legislative Office Building**  
300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford

Scan to register



Or register at [cea.org/event/legislative\\_breakfast](https://cea.org/event/legislative_breakfast).

# Upcoming Events

## Retirement Workshop- Virtual

February 10 @ 4:00 pm - 6:15 pm

CEA Retirement Specialist Robyn Kaplan-Cho, will cover a wide range of issues related to the State Teachers' Retirement System and will offer time for questions following the presentation.

[Workshop Registration](#)

[Add to calendar](#) ▾



# Member Champion Deals

## Powder Ridge



Powder Ridge Mountain Park & Resort in Middlefield is offering CEA members 20% off eight-hour lift passes and \$2 off of tubing this winter. To claim your discount, use the following codes for fun in the snow at the Ridge when purchasing online in advance.

**8-hour lift pass:** CEALIFT

**Tubing pass:** CEATUBE

# BEA Officers 2024-2025

President: Gail Jorden

Vice President: Marissa Mancini

Treasurer: Lynn DeBlasio

Secretary: Lynne Dumas

Membership Chair: Melinda Mellady

## BEA Building Reps 2024-2025

Wintonbury (Pre-K)

Lisa Thomas 2024-2025

Amy Lomnicky 2024-2026

Laurel (Grades Pre-K – 2)

Rose Rose - 2024-2026

Melanie Gabel 2023-2025

Metacomet (Grades 3 – 4)

James Verano 2023-2025

Elka Spencer 2023-2025

Carmen Arace (Grades 5 – 8)

Jacqueline Springer 2024-2026

Cheryl Bleiler 2023-2025

GEMS (Grades 6 – 12)

Amelia Dodd - 2024-2026

Thomas Rubino 2023-2025

Bloomfield High School (Grades 9 – 12)

Ross Siegel 2023-2025

Jennifer Neal 2023-2025

Colleen McCaughey 2023-2025

Mary Jarvis 2023-2025

# Chairs, Committees, and Vital Roles 2024-2025

Grievance Chair: Katrina Kucinkas

Grievance Committee:

Marissa Mancini

Melinda Mellady

Rose Rose

Lynne Dumas

Pamela Parker

Racially and Ethnically Diverse Affairs  
Committee Chair: Elka Spencer

Website Design: Lamar Turner

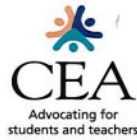
Political Action Chair: Magnolia Coates

Young and Union Ambassador: Michelle Bibeau

CEA is here to help members focus on themselves and their own well-being.



While many factors contribute to the high levels of stress teachers are experiencing, perhaps most significant are the impacts of the pandemic on students, teachers, and their families; the increase in the number of students coming to school with serious mental health and emotional problems, violent outbursts, and withdrawn behaviors; the current political landscape, marked by a lack of trust and respect; and the teacher shortage that has educators working harder than ever.



Have questions? Want more info?  
Email [teacherwell-being@cea.org](mailto:teacherwell-being@cea.org).



Positive Directions is a nonprofit behavioral health organization providing a continuum of prevention, treatment, and recovery supports for mental health and/or substance use challenges. Their state-licensed outpatient treatment clinic consists of a multidisciplinary team of clinicians and prescribers providing individual and group therapy, as well as medical management, to adolescents and adults. Treatment areas include anxiety, depression, grief and loss, trauma, and more.



Register for the free counseling sessions at [cea.org/mental-health-support-group-counseling](http://cea.org/mental-health-support-group-counseling).

## TEACHER WELL-BEING

### Get The Support You Need



CEA has contracted to offer free confidential mental health group counseling for our members to provide support, healing, and innovative strategies that foster wellness and avoid burnout.

CEA has contracted Positive Directions to offer free confidential mental health group counseling for our members. See the enlarged flyer [here](#).



## TEACHER WELL-BEING IS PARAMOUNT

With the right support for managing stress, opportunities to connect with colleagues, and access to counseling experts, CEA is helping teachers focus on their own mental health and wellness.

*"After the past few years, taking care of teachers is vital. Teachers who have strategies to manage their own stress and secondary trauma are in a good place, where they can give their best to caring for and educating their students."*

Kate Dias  
CEA President



## TEACHERS' HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING

If you are feeling overwhelmed or highly anxious, you are **not alone**.

We understand that teaching is difficult work, and the pandemic has put even greater pressure on educators.

CEA, in partnership with Positive Directions, has designed a special program that focuses on your mental health needs and helps prevent burnout.

Licensed clinicians will facilitate two virtual group counseling sessions for CEA members:

- 1. General Support Group**  
Trained clinicians will help educators manage stress and learn effective coping strategies to prevent burnout.
- 2. DCF Support Group**  
When a teacher is accused of improper conduct, it can be scary and stressful. Licensed clinicians will lead this group and provide counseling and support for educators involved in Department of Children and Families investigations. The DCF Support Group will offer tools for building resilience and dealing with the emotional trauma and upheaval caused by accusations of wrongdoing and attacks on a teacher's reputation.

Both groups will be conducted by trained clinicians and are confidential. Only CEA members will participate in these sessions, and space is limited.

Providing these unique counseling sessions will help teachers manage their symptoms and reinforce that they are not alone.



Register for the free counseling sessions at [cea.org/mental-health-support-group-counseling](http://cea.org/mental-health-support-group-counseling).

