



# The Bureau of Special Education's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Back to School Meeting



## *Resilience, Renewed Accountability & Results*

**Friday, September 8, 2023**  
**The Connecticut Convention Center**  
**9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Check-in/Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m.

### **COFFEE/TEA WILL BE AVAILABLE/LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

*The Connecticut Convention Center does not allow event attendees to bring in any type of food.  
We apologize for any inconvenience.*

### **Registration Information**

Register online at <https://BTS2023.eventbrite.com>. Please register for the general session and two afternoon sessions if you plan to stay (see page 2 for session descriptions). The closing date for registration is September 1, 2023.

### **General Session Presentations**

Live stream will be available for the morning session only; more details to follow.

- Student Performances
- Welcome from Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education
- Introducing new Deputy Commissioner Sinthia Sone-Mayano
- Bureau of Special Education Update from Bryan Klimkiewicz, Special Education Division Director
  - Special Education Policy Updates
  - Legislative Updates
  - State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report
- Message from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) from Director Valerie Williams
- Supporting Special Educators (Procedures, Practices, Responsibilities): Nathan Levenson, President, New Solutions K12

### **This is a paperless event.**

Event materials will be available at <https://ctserc.org/bts23>

Participants may choose to download materials or print copies beginning on **Monday, August 28**. Materials will also be accessible online during the event and will remain accessible after the event.

### **Additional Information**

For registration questions, or to request a disability-related accommodation, contact Linda Adorno, Project Specialist at SERC, email: [adorno@ctserc.org](mailto:adorno@ctserc.org)

For program-related questions, contact Nicole Hendry, Education Consultant at SERC, email: [hendry@ctserc.org](mailto:hendry@ctserc.org).

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### Afternoon Sessions

PM Session A: 1:15 pm-2:00 pm (45 minutes)

PM Session B: 2:15 pm-3:00 pm (45 minutes)

\*Session Offered during A and B (repeated)

#### 1) PM Session A1/B19: Supporting Special Educators (General Session Extension)\*

**Facilitator/Presenter:** *Nathan Levenson, SERC Representatives, CSDE Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

This session will build upon Dr. Levenson's morning presentation. Being a special educator has always been a hard job. The pressures of the job have led to staff shortages in all 50 states, special educators leaving the field faster than other roles and fewer people entering the profession. This session will share practical and impactful strategies to make the work of special educators, and student support services professionals, more manageable, rewarding and more impactful. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions.

#### 2) PM Session A2/B20: Effective Systems to Support CT-SEDS Implementation\*

**Facilitator/Presenter:** *Local School District Panel, PCG Representatives, CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives, CPAC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Local school districts will participate in a panel discussion/presentation to share the successful systems and structures that were put into place to support the implementation of CT-SEDS. Panelists will also share effective strategies and recommendations for building local capacity to support and train staff on the IEP process within the system. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions.

#### 3) PM Session A3/B21: Getting to Effectiveness: General Monitoring and Supervision\*

**Facilitator/Presenter:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, PCG Representatives, CPAC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** Special Education Directors/Supervisors, General Education Administrators

There are more than 755 process requirements in IDEA '04 regulations and compliance with all 755 requirements does not provide assurance of results. The CSDE and PCG will provide a general overview of the revised Federal Differentiated Monitoring System and Connecticut's system of General Monitoring and Supervision. The CSDE will communicate how each of the eight components is aligned to improve student outcomes, how the state incorporates stakeholder feedback (including reestablishing LEA Advisories), and the use of data to inform our targets. Participants will also hear from national experts about how this shift towards effectiveness is manifesting itself in classrooms across the nation, how the new IEP and CT-SEDS system support this shift locally, and how district leaders might cultivate their people, processes, and cultural mindset using proven actionable steps.

#### 4) PM Session A4/B22: What's New with CT-SEDS: Support and Enhancements (Help Desk)\*

**Facilitator/Presenter:** *CSDE Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives, SERC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

During this session, participants will receive an overview of the recent enhancements to CT-SEDS as well as new modules/features that will be released in the future. The presenters will also share how systems of support have been adjusted and expanded, including training and technical assistance during the second year of implementation. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions and provide suggestions for future systems of support.

5) **PM Session A5/B23: Legislative Update – Secondary Transition\***

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience: All**

Presenters will share information and new requirements that have resulted from the recently passed Public Act 23-137 as well as strategies for school districts to support secondary transition within their school, district, or program with the goal of improved outcomes for students with disabilities.

6) **PM Session A6/B24: CT-SEDS: Access and User Type Selection\***

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** Special Education Data Managers, Special Education Directors/Supervisors

The CSDE Performance Office will provide an overview of the current CT-SEDS User Types and the various functions/functionality controls within these options. This session will provide you with information to better inform your decisions on selecting the best user type for your staff members. Additionally, a review of the Aggregate and Site user roles will be provided. Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions.

7) **PM Session A7/B25: Top 5 Takeaways from CT-SEDS In-Person Trainings: What All Directors Should Know\***

**Facilitators:** *PCG Representatives, CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** Special Education Directors/Supervisors, CT-SEDS Expert Trainers

Regional and district-level in-person trainings provided valuable opportunities to deliver training on targeted topics. The trainings allowed presenters to glean insights about how staff approach IEP planning and development, identify CT-SEDS components where users were struggling (e.g., workspace) and other valuable feedback that will inform future communications, support and potential enhancements. This session will share important takeaways from the in-person training series and create a forum for sharing ideas about how LEAs, CSDE and PCG will work together to build system knowledge and LEA capacity moving forward.

8) **PM Session A8/B26: Networking Session 1: Special Education and Related Services Recruitment and Retention Efforts\***

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience: All**

Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.

9) **PM Session A9/B27: Networking Session 2: Collaborative Conversations with the Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities\***

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience: All**

The CSDE will introduce the new Office of Dyslexia and Reading Disabilities (ODRD): staff, mission, charges, initiatives and opportunities for stakeholder engagement. Participants will also learn about how the ODRD and the Bureau of Special Education (BSE) are collaborating on initiatives related to dyslexia and reading disabilities, including those associated with disability identification, educator development, and family engagement. ODRD staff will facilitate roundtable discussions designed to provide participants with the opportunity to share their pressing needs and concerns regarding dyslexia and reading disabilities and share their thoughts about how they would like the ODRD and districts to collaborate and communicate in the future.

**The following sessions will be offered once:**

**PM SESSION A: 1:15 pm-2:00 pm**

**10) PM Session A10: Understanding Accessibility Features, Designated Supports, and Accommodations for Statewide Testing**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** Special Education Directors, PPT and Section 504 Coordinators, CT-SEDS Data Managers

This session provides a high-level overview of accessibility features, accommodations, and newly developed resources that support the appropriate identification of accessibility features and accommodations available to eligible students on statewide testing.

**11) PM Session A11: CSDE/OEC Partnerships (Connecticut Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT-DOTS), Birth to Three Transition)**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, OEC Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** Early Childhood Coordinators/Educators

During this session, participants will be provided with an overview of the expansion/revision process related to CT-DOTS and our statewide Early Childhood Outcome data collection process. The CSDE and OEC will also share information regarding an additional collaborative partnership to support recent legislative mandates and federal Child Find responsibilities.

**12) PM Session A12: Networking Session 3: Family/Parent Partnerships (Alternative Options to Formal Dispute Resolution)**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.

**13) PM Session A13: Networking Session 4: LRE and Inclusive Building Based Leadership**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.

**PM SESSION B: 2:15 pm-3:00 pm**

**14) PM Session B14: Creating Actionable Change in the Least Restrictive Environment**

**Facilitators:** *PCG Representatives, SERC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Since the passage of Public Act 94-142 over 45 years ago, students with disabilities have had the legal right to receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Decisions regarding how and where best to serve students with disabilities must be determined on an individualized basis, and there is now a stronger call for districts to provide greater access for students with disabilities to the core curriculum and general education settings, implement evidence-based practices, improve efficiencies, and provide greater accountability on key performance indicators that support successful academic and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. This session introduces a data use theory of action that can help administrators examine patterns within their district and take steps to impact quality, capacity and culture at the local level.

**15) PM Session B15: Understanding the Connecticut Alternate Assessment of English Language Proficiency (CAAELP)**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** District administrators, particularly those supporting special education students identified as English Learners/Multilingual Learners (EL/ML)

This session is designed for participants to gain a greater understanding of the CAAELP. The session will provide information on eligibility, staff training and resources, and applicable data from the 2022-23 administration. As time allows there will be an opportunity for feedback and discussion.

**16) PM Session B16: Networking Session 5: School Climate / Student Discipline / Safety Plans**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.

**17) PM Session B17: Networking Session 6: Paraeducator Training/Onboarding**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

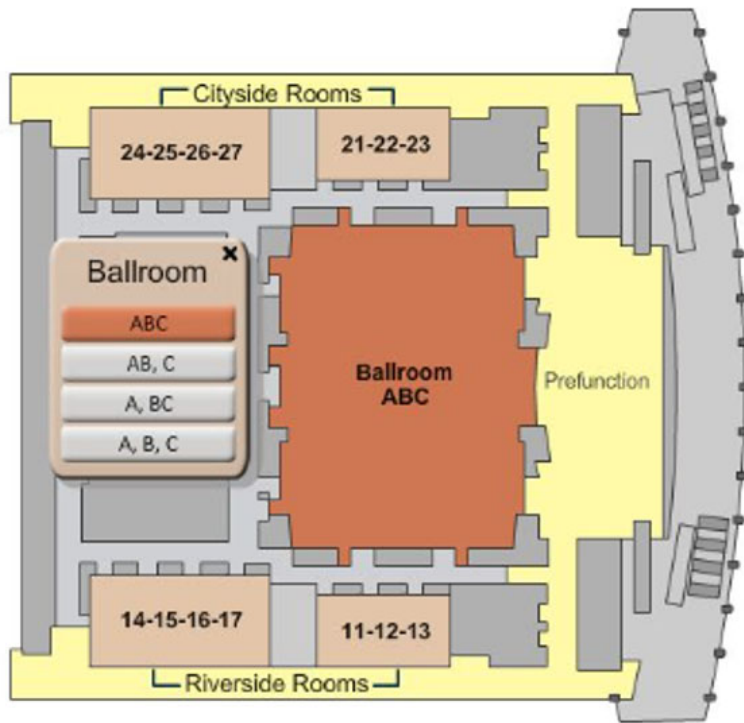
Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.

**18) PM Session B18: Networking Session 7: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism**

**Facilitators:** *CSDE Representatives, SERC Representatives, RESC Alliance Representatives*

**Recommended Audience:** All

Facilitators will share current data and information that will allow participants to network with one another through a facilitated process in order to share their challenges, successes, and best practice strategies related to the subject area.



**Session Locations**

General Session  
9:30 am - 12:00 pm  
Ballroom ABC

Afternoon Sessions  
(45-minutes)  
1:15 pm – 2:00 pm  
2:15 pm – 3:00 pm

Sessions will be held in the Cityside and Riverside meeting rooms. See session location schedule upon arrival.

**Sample Lunchtime Food Venues (On Your Own)** – *The Hartford Convention Center does not allow event attendees to bring in any type of food. We apologize for any inconvenience. Event attendees may wish to make advance reservations or place advance orders for those venues that accept them.*

- **The Capital Grille** - 44 Front St. ([The Capital Grille \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://TheCapitalGrille(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 244-0075 – Opens at 11:30 am – Upscale Steakhouse
- **Arch St. Tavern** - 85 Arch St. ([Arch Street Tavern \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://ArchStreetTavern(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 246-7610 – Opens at 11:30 am – American cuisine
- **El Pollo Guapo** - 26 Front St. ([El Pollo Guapo \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://ElPolloGuapo(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 246-2800 – Opens at 12:00 pm – Mexican cuisine
- **Bear's Smokehouse** - 89 Arch St. ([Bear's Smokehouse BBQ \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://BearsSmokehouseBBQ(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 785-8772 – Opens at 11:00 am – BBQ
- **Front Street Bistro** - 39 Front St. ([Front Street Bistro \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://FrontStreetBistro(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 785-8772 – Opens at 11:00 am – Mediterranean cuisine
- **Rush Bowls** - 15 Front St. ([Rush Bowls \(frontstreetdistrict.com\)](http://RushBowls(frontstreetdistrict.com))) (860) 993-1747 – Opens at 7:00 am - fruit bowls/smoothies
- **Hartford Steam Boiler/One State Street Café** – One State St. (<https://racafes.compass-usa.com/hsb/Pages/Menu.aspx?lid=b2>) (860) 722-5359 – Opens 11:30 am – Global food choices & deli
- **Saigon Kitchen** – 40 Temple St. (<https://thesaigonkitchen.com>) (860) 244-2511 – Opens at 11:00 am – Asian cuisine

**Parking Information and Rates**

Included. Take ticket upon entry to garage and bring to registration table for voucher. Attached to the Connecticut Convention Center is a covered eight-floor parking garage with 2,600 parking spaces. The parking garage also has areas dedicated to charging stations where customers with electric-powered vehicles can plug in and charge for free. The garage is open 24/7.