



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Talk Tuesdays

Student Attendance, Engagement, and Support Series

April 18, 2023

Developed by the CSDE in collaboration with Attendance Works & SERC



STATE EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | EDUCATION

# Today's Agenda

## **Welcome**

Stephen Proffitt, Christine Kuehlewind, and Ann Marie Cordisco, State Education Resource Center (SERC)

## **What's New at CSDE and Partners**

Kari Sullivan Custer, Attendance & Engagement Consultant, CSDE

Jay Brown, Bureau of Special Education Consultant (Academic Office), CSDE

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA)/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: A General Overview of Differences**

Jay Brown, Bureau of Special Education Consultant (Academic Office), CSDE

## **Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings**

Christine Kuehlewind, SERC



# What's New at CSDE

**April 17, 2023**

- [New Contact List for District Family Engagement Leaders](#)
- [Grant Opportunity – Career Z Challenge: Expanding Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Gen Z](#)

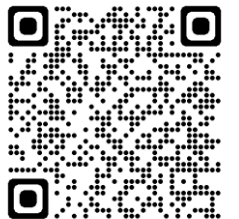
**April 14, 2023**

- [Update: School Mental Health Specialist Grant Application Deadline Extended](#)
- [Annual Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ESSER\) Reporting](#)
- [New Professional Learning Series: Behind the Numbers: From Data to Dashboards](#)

**April 10, 2023**

- [Process to File a Request for an Extension of Time to Implement Connecticut's Approved Reading Curriculum Models or Programs](#)
- [2021-22 Condition of Education](#)
- [Training on Internet Safety for Parents, Teachers, and Child Workers](#)

[Superintendent's Digest  
\(ct.gov\)](#)



# What's New at CSDE

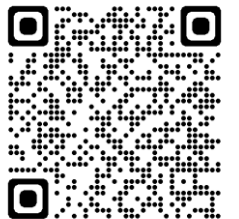
**April 6, 2023**

- [CSDE Ways Series – 15 Ways CSDE is Supporting Workforce Development and Career Readiness](#)
- [\\$56 Million in Grants to Public Schools for Air Filtration System Upgrades](#)
- [\\$5.5 Million Investment To Grow Dual Credit Offerings in High Schools, Expand Pathways to Postsecondary Readiness](#)

**April 4, 2023**

- [2021-2022 Report on Student Discipline in Connecticut Public Schools](#)
- [Important Changes when Accessing State and Federal Grant Funds](#)
- [Financial Literacy and Mathematics and Statistics Awareness Month - PD Playlist](#)
- [Computer Science Summer Professional Learning](#)
- [2023 Connecticut Fire Academy College Fair – Save the Date!](#)

[Superintendent's Digest  
\(ct.gov\)](#)



# Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

## Talk Tuesdays 2022-23 School Year

- Winter sessions will continue to focus on ***strategies that worked in 2021-22*** and feature districts that improved attendance across the district, in a school, particular grade or group of students.
- **May 2<sup>nd</sup>**
- **May 16<sup>th</sup> (Last Talk Tuesday for 2022-2023 School Year)**
- **Please note: Talk Tuesdays will not run in June. The 2023 Summer Series will begin in July (stay tuned for more information shortly).**

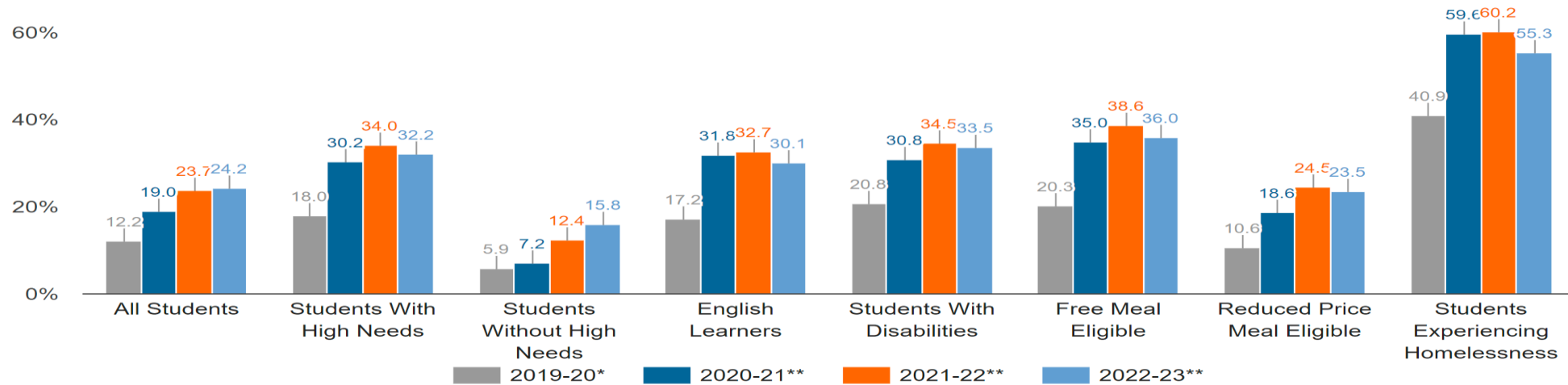




# Chronic Absence Trend Data 2019-20 to February 2023



Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of February 2023 compared to 2021-22, 2020-2021, and 2019-20)



\*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. \*\*Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

Source: CT EdSight, Monthly Attendance Reports, [Supporting Student Participation \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/education/Supporting-Student-Participation)

## Current Data Files

- [Attendance Rates for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab \(.xlsx\)](#)
- [Chronic Absence Rates and Remote Attendance Information for State and Districts, Student Groups by tab \(.xlsx\)](#)
- [Attendance Rates for Schools \(.xlsx\)](#)

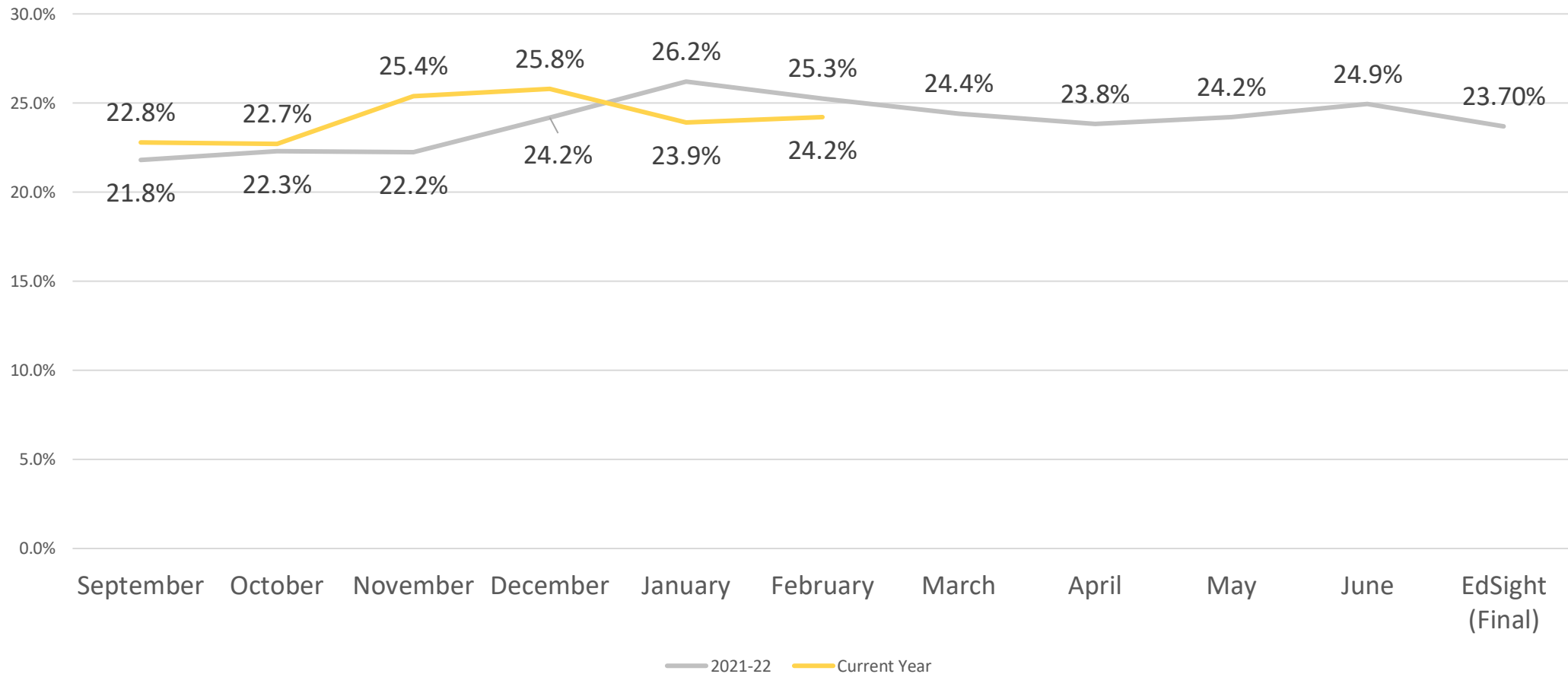




# Comparison 2021-22 and 2022-23



CT Chronic Absence Monthly Trend Comparison 2021-22 to 2022-23



Daily attendance often plummets before and following spring break. Educators can plan ahead and offer activities to encourage attendance and participation, whether school is in person, remote or hybrid. Ask families and students for ideas and help. Local community groups often will provide coordination, volunteers and financial supports.

Choose from the following ideas that are most suitable for your school community and grade levels. Most of these activities can be adjusted so they are streamed online or available to students and families over a computer or phone!

1. **Spirit week:** Engage students through activities (academic or non-academic) and themed days where students dress up as a hero or draw a picture of themselves as the hero. Download our Sprinting Through Spring calendar with sample activities ([on this page](#)).
2. **Spring education events:** Such as [Read Across America Day](#), Million Word Challenge, Pi Day or Earth Day.
3. **Outdoor field day:** Get students and staff moving! Older students can be trained to lead movement or mindfulness activities.
4. **Pop up Saturday festivals:** Involve different area schools – a good use of community partnerships.
5. **Multicultural day or a world music dance party:** Invite students to share from their own cultures or from an area of the world they are interested in.
6. **Shows and showcases:** Hold in-person performances, spotlight activities, or showcase upcoming summer or afterschool expanded learning programs.
7. **Field trips:** Organize opportunities to learn outside the classroom by visiting zoos, planetariums or local farms. Ensure policies are inclusive so that all students can participate. Or plan online field trips, using [zoo webcams](#), locating astronomical features via a [virtual planetarium](#), or delving into biomes with The Nature Conservancy.
8. **Breakfast bunch:** Arrange for a small group of students to have breakfast with the principal or selected favorite administrators or teachers.
9. **College and career spirit:** Take pictures of students in graduation robes. Younger students draw a picture of their future and share online.
10. **For next year:** Create a mentor program and assign 5th-grade buddies to kindergarten students to prepare them for 1st grade, or arrange 5th and 6th grade buddies for next year's middle schoolers.

### Caring Activities

1. **Basic needs:** Provide personal items (hygiene) or free fruit in classrooms several times a week. Invite families to pick up extra groceries the day before spring break.
2. **Appreciation days:** Everyone thanks a particular type of person, (parents/caregivers, teachers, custodial staff, students, etc.).

For more ideas visit our webpage: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/resources/spring-attendance-slump/>

Revised March, 2022

1. **Spirit week:** Engage students through activities (academic or non-academic) and themed days where students dress up as a hero or draw a picture of themselves as the hero. Download our Sprinting Through Spring calendar with sample activities ([on this page](#)).
2. **Spring education events:** Such as [Read Across America Day](#), Million Word Challenge, Pi Day or Earth Day.
3. **Outdoor field day:** Get students and staff moving! Older students can be trained to lead movement or mindfulness activities.
4. **Pop up Saturday festivals:** Involve different area schools – a good use of community partnerships.
5. **Multicultural day or a world music dance party:** Invite students to share from their own cultures or from an area of the world they are interested in.
6. **Shows and showcases:** Hold in-person performances, spotlight activities, or showcase upcoming summer or afterschool expanded learning programs.
7. **Field trips:** Organize opportunities to learn outside the classroom by visiting zoos, planetariums or local farms. Ensure policies are inclusive so that all students can participate. Or plan online field trips, using [zoo webcams](#), locating astronomical features via a [virtual planetarium](#), or delving into biomes with The Nature Conservancy.
8. **Breakfast bunch:** Arrange for a small group of students to have breakfast with the principal or selected favorite administrators or teachers.
9. **College and career spirit:** Take pictures of students in graduation robes. Younger students draw a picture of their future and share online.
10. **For next year:** Create a mentor program and assign 5th-grade buddies to kindergarten students to prepare them for 1st grade, or arrange 5th and 6th grade buddies for next year's middle schoolers.

### Caring Activities

1. **Basic needs:** Provide personal items (hygiene) or free fruit in classrooms several times a week. Invite families to pick up extra groceries the day before spring break.
2. **Appreciation days:** Everyone thanks a particular type of person, (parents/caregivers, teachers, custodial staff, students, etc.).







# Coming Soon - LEAP 101 Trainings



LEAP is a relational home visiting approach that supports and re-engages families and students who are missing too much school. It is a research-based Tier II strategy that improves school attendance and improves a sense of belonging in school along with many other positive benefits.

Upcoming virtual trainings, for any district or community partner, are being planned for:

- May 31
- June 5<sup>th</sup>

For more information, visit the LEAP home page or email Francisco Baires [fbaires@crec.org](mailto:fbaires@crec.org) at the CT Home Visits Hub (CREC),



# Shout Out!



Stamford Public Schools

<https://youtu.be/jJi3PWWlhDc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=jJi3PWWlhDc&feature=youtu.be>

“YOU CAN GO TO CLASS TOO”

Jamar Greene, Dean of Students, Stamford High School

Stamford High School students create a rap video on the importance of going to class.

Rap by Dean Greene

Video produced by Jon Ringel (Coi Leray and Busta Rhymes inspired)

# Poll

- Are you involved in 504's within your school or district?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
- Who oversees the 504 process in your district?



# Talk Tuesday

## April 18, 2023



# Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) / Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

## A General Overview of Differences

Jay Brown, CSDE Bureau of Special Education



# CORE Differences



- Different categories under the law
- Different goal
- Different eligibility criteria
- Different definitions of disability/handicap
- Different evaluation criteria
- Different scope of services





# Different Categories Under the Law

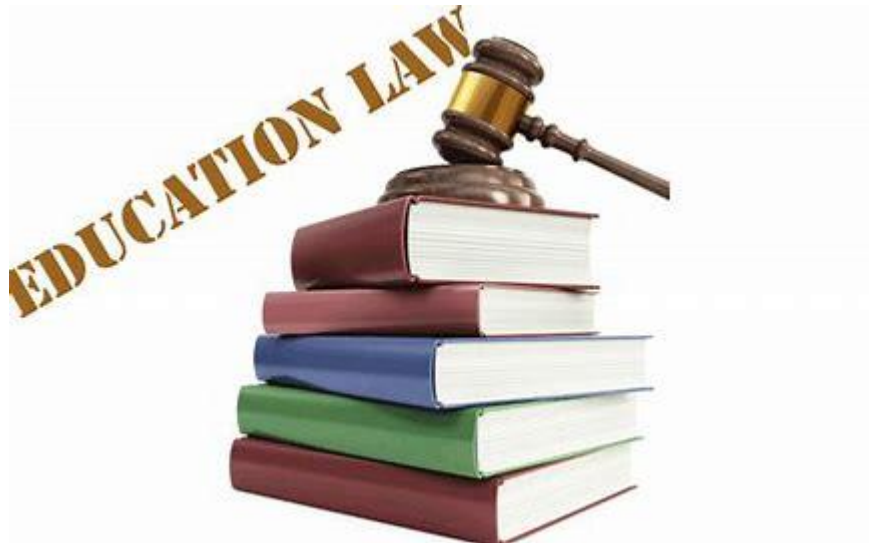


IDEA

Section 504

Educational Act law

Civil Rights law





# Different Goal



## IDEA

Aimed at guaranteeing  
*SUCCESS*



## Section 504

Aimed at guaranteeing  
*ACCESS*





# Different Eligibility Criteria



## IDEA

- Must have one or more of the 13 disabilities identified under IDEA
- The identified disability must adversely affect the student's *educational* performance
- Requires a planning and placement team (PPT)



## Section 504

- Must have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment must substantially limit one or more major life activities\*, child must have a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment.
- Requires a “knowledgeable” team, not a PPT

\*(Major life activities include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working)





# Different Definitions of Disability



## IDEA

Restricted definition of disability

Thirteen specific categories:

- autism,
- deaf-blindness,
- deafness,
- emotional disturbance (CT emotional disability),
- hearing impairment,
- intellectual disability,
- multiple disabilities,
- orthopedic impairment,
- other health impairment,
- specific learning disability,
- speech or language impairment,
- traumatic brain injury, and
- visual impairment

## Section 504

Broad definition of disability

Physical or mental impairment:

- any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory, including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genitourinary; hemic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or
- any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.



# Different Evaluation Criteria



## IDEA

- Specific evaluation criteria
- Requires that the child be fully and comprehensively evaluated by a multidisciplinary team
- Reevaluation every 3 years
- Provides for independent educational evaluations (IEE)

## Section 504

- Broader evaluation criteria
- Evaluation draws on information from a variety of sources and is documented. Decisions about the child, evaluation data, and placement options are made by knowledgeable individuals.
- Reevaluation “periodically”
- No provision for IEE

EVALUATION



# Different Scope of Services



## IDEA

Services offered include individualized, specialized instruction and related services in addition to accommodations and/or modifications

## Section 504

Services offered include appropriate, reasonable adaptations and accommodations





# Potential Legislation



**CT General Assembly Substitute House Bill No. 6644**


Bill Referred to Committee on March 16, 2023

## **AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION REGARDING SPECIAL EDUCATION TO FAMILIES AND STUDENTS.**

Not later than January 1, 2024, the Department of Education shall develop an informational handout for students that explains what it means for a student to have an individualized education program or a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, including what rights such student is entitled to in the classroom under such program or plan.


- CT-SEDS Preview Series >
- CT-SEDS Administrative Training Preview Series >
- IEP Preview Series >
- Restraint and Seclusion Preview Session >
- Section 504 Preview Series >**
- Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Preview Series >

**Search Department of Education**

by Keyword  


## Section 504 Preview Series

To Supplement current and future formal training opportunities, the CSDE is offering a series of brief “Section 504 Preview Sessions” to highlight the new 504 Plan template and how CT-SEDS will support the development and generation of a 504 Plan.



**Section 504 Preview, Part 1**

[Download the slide deck for this presentation](#)



**Section 504 Preview, Part 2**

[Download the slide deck for this presentation](#)

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/New-IEP/New-IEP-CT-SEDS/CT-SEDS-Preview-Series/Section-504-Preview-Series>

# Breakouts

- What kinds of accommodations and modifications does your district provide to support students with issues of chronic absence?
- Are there certain accommodations or modifications that have been more effective at addressing chronic absence than others?
- What strategies can you implement to encourage good attendance?

# Upcoming Attendance & Engagement Meetings

## Talk Tuesdays 2022-23 School Year

- Winter sessions will continue to focus on ***strategies that worked in 2021-22*** and feature districts that improved attendance across the district, in a school, particular grade or group of students.
- **May 2<sup>nd</sup>**
- **May 16<sup>th</sup> (Last Talk Tuesday for 2022-2023 School Year)**
- **Please note: Talk Tuesdays will not run in June. The 2023 Summer Series will begin in July (stay tuned for more information shortly).**



# KEEP IN TOUCH!

**Kari Sullivan Custer, CSDE**

[Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov](mailto:Kari.Sullivan@ct.gov)

860-807-2041

**Christine Kuehlewind, SERC**

[Kuehlewind@ctserc.org](mailto:Kuehlewind@ctserc.org)

860-632-1485, ext. 371

**Stephen Proffitt, SERC**

[proffitt@ctserc.org](mailto:proffitt@ctserc.org)

860-632-1485, ext. 322

**Ann Marie Cordisco, SERC**

[cordisco@ctserc.org](mailto:cordisco@ctserc.org)

860-632-1485, ext. 399

