

The Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education

Annual Report 2024



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“Fairness does not mean everyone gets the same. Fairness means everyone gets what they need.”

— Rick Riordan

The **Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education (SAC) 2024 Annual Report** serves as a comprehensive overview of the discussions, priorities, and recommendations developed from our meetings throughout the year as a collaborative platform supporting the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the SAC unites legislators, agencies, students, teachers, parents, advocates, and administrators in addressing the unmet needs of Connecticut's special education students. Through constructive dialogue, we establish our Priorities and Recommendations for the **Connecticut State Board of Education (CSBE)**, the **Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE)**, and the **Connecticut General Assembly**. Our legislative member, Representative Comey, has been an invaluable asset to the SAC. However, since the legislative mandate of the SAC, we have experienced periods where four of the five General Assembly member positions have remained unfilled. Legislative representation is crucial for the success of special education, and without their active involvement, the SAC faces challenges in effectively advocating for the needs of these students.

In our discussions, **Unified Programming** emerged as a significant priority, fostering a true sense of belonging. We advocate for initiatives that extend beyond the classroom and into the community, enabling outplaced students to forge deeper connections with their neighborhoods. Inclusion means that every individual belongs.

This Annual Report highlights critical areas that continue to impact students with disabilities. These recommendations build upon those outlined in our 2023 Annual Report. Additionally, the formation of the **Ad Hoc School Safety in Emergencies** committee has been a crucial development in our special education discussions.

Individualized support is paramount; a one-size-fits-all approach is insufficient. As Angie Chappel aptly states, *“Creating a true culture of belonging needs to extend beyond the classroom and permeate the entire community.”* When students with and without disabilities are provided ample opportunities to interact both within and outside the classroom, misconceptions about disabilities can be transformed simply through shared experiences.

Before you read this Annual Report, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your dedication and service to the students of Connecticut. Together, we aim to create an educational environment that is inclusive, supportive, and transformative for every student, regardless of ability.

Sincerely,



Susan Yankee, Chair, State Advisory Council for Special Education

For additional information, including agendas and meetings scheduled on State Department of Education [website](#).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education ("SAC" or "Council") has established authority under Section 10-76i of the Connecticut General Statutes and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004), Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 34 CFR Section 300.169. The Council's purpose is to advise the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) of unmet needs in educating students with disabilities and to recommend to the General Assembly any changes to the law, regulations, standards and guidelines pertaining to Special Education in the state.

The Council is to report to the General Assembly by February 15 in even-numbered years and January 15 in odd-numbered years.

This annual report reflects Council activity from January 2024 through December 2024. The Council has worked collaboratively with the Bureau of Special Education to address the statutory requirements of the Council. The Council reports to the General Assembly, CSDE, State Board of Education (SBE), Office of Labor Relations, and the State Library.

COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Susan Yankee served as Chairperson and Jennifer Lussier served in the role of Vice- Chairperson from January 2024 through December 2024. The State Advisory Council would like to thank these individuals for their leadership and commitment to this work. The current status of Committee participation is listed below. Committee members are appointed by Susan Yankee as Chairperson to conduct Committee work.

Executive Committee: Chair, Susan Yankee, Vice-Chair, Jennifer Lussier, Bryan Klimkiewicz, CSDE Liaison (non-voting), Nachi Bhatt, Jeffrey Spahr, and Catherine Summ

Legislative Committee: Chair, Jeffrey Spahr, Jennifer Lussier, Ana Wittig, Tammy Raccio, Representative Robin Comey, Goviana Morales, Joshua Martin and Missy Wrigley

Membership Committee: Chair, Catherine Summ, Denise Drummond, Missy Wrigley, Ana Wittig, Brian Smith, Louis Tallarita, Brian Smith, Jennifer Lussier, and Susan Yankee

Nominating Committee: Chair, Brian Smith, Denise Drummond, Missy Wrigley, Ana Wittig, and Louis Tallarita

Ad Hoc School Safety in Emergencies Committee: Chair, Susan Yankee, Co-Chair, Joshua Martin, Dawn Dickau, Ana Wittig, Brian Smith, Representative Robin Comey, Tom Cosker, Jane Hampton-Smith, and Dimpy Malvania

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Council, with the support of the Membership Committee, is pleased to report a minimum number of vacancies and consistent participation of Appointed and At-Large members throughout this reporting period. The Council remains extremely healthy in terms of participation, attendance, and activity. The dedicated individuals currently serving on the Council remain committed and have demonstrated consistent attendance despite their numerous personal and professional responsibilities. In addition to its legislatively required members pursuant to section 10-76i of the Connecticut General Statutes the Council included student member representatives through a by-law revision in 2019 and a para-educator member representative through by-law revision in 2023. The Council is committed to ensuring student voice is represented with up to four student members during a term.

At the time of this report, the Council has the following vacancies: three student representatives and four General Assembly Elected Representatives.

During the past year, Membership Committee has completed the following activities:

- Reviewed applications and presented prospective members to the Executive Committee and Council. Candidate recommendations were considered based upon role, level of interest, and representation of the state of Connecticut with regard to racial/ethnic background, geographic residency/location, and the broadest range of representation of disability categories (parents of child/youth or individual with a disability).
- Recommended for appointment two parent representatives.

AD HOC SCHOOL SAFETY IN EMERGENCIES COMMITTEE UPDATE

A Public Comment from a concerned parent during the March 24th, 2024, full SAC meeting, along with increased threats received by Connecticut School Districts, prompted the establishment of the Ad Hoc School Safety in Emergencies Committee; [March 24, 2024, Full SAC Meeting](#)

[Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Fact Sheet](#)

The newly established committee focusses discussions on the safety of students with disabilities as well as educators and staff supporting our students.

IDEA and emergency plans (federal stance):

“Taking an inclusive and equitable approach to emergency management planning means considering the needs of the most vulnerable populations first. Students with disabilities (SWDs) are entitled to the same emergency services as their nondisabled peers and should be considered and included during emergency management planning. This not only is a best practice and planning principle in the Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (School Guide) but also is supported by multiple federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.”

The Ad Hoc Committee met on May 2, 2024. During the meeting, William Turley, Manager Training and Exercise School Safety Program Lead, and Tanya Iacono from the Connecticut Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation, reviewed the current guidance and requirements for school districts and programs. Based on these presentations and discussions, the Ad Hoc Committee is proposing recommendations in this area.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

The Council has been authorized by the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* since the Act's inception in 1975. The Council is one of 50 “state advisory panels” authorized by the IDEA of 2004 [see regulations in *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)*, 34 CFR Section 300.167]. The Council is also authorized under *Section 10-76i* of the *Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.)* with the express purpose to "advise the General Assembly, the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Commissioner of Education" on special education matters. The Council is specifically mandated by the IDEA and state statute to accomplish the following duties:

State Advisory Council Functional Advisory Areas – per Amendments to *C.G.S. Section 10-76i* (e.g., *P.A. 10-175*) and IDEA State Advisory Panel Duties (34 CFR Section 300.169)

- Advise the CSDE of unmet needs in educating children with disabilities and on the administration of the provisions of sections 10-94f to 10-94k, inclusive.
- Review periodically the laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines pertaining to special education and recommend to the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education any changes which it finds necessary.
- Comment publicly on any new or revised regulations, standards and guidelines proposed for issuance.
- Advise the CSDE in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act.
- Advise the CSDE in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities.
- Participate with the State Board of Education in the development of any state plan for provision of special education.
- Comment publicly on any procedures necessary for distributing federal funds received pursuant to the Education of the Handicapped Act, 89 Statute 774, 1975, 20 U.S.C. Code § 1400 et seq., as from time to time amended.
- Assist the CSDE in developing and reporting such data and evaluations as may be conducted pursuant to the provisions of said act.
- Report to the General Assembly not later than January fifteenth in the odd-numbered years and not later than February fifteenth in the even-numbered years, concerning recommendations for effecting changes in the special education laws.
- Review Due Process Hearing data and discuss findings and decisions (34 CFR Section 300.513(d)) and (34 CFR Section 300.514(c)).
- Receive information regarding the provisions of a Free and Appropriate Public

- Education. Waiver of non-supplant requirement. (34 CFR Section 300.164(c)(4)).
- Advise the CSDE regarding the determination of risk ratio thresholds above which disproportionality is significant (34 CFR Section 600.647(b)(iii)(A)).

PROCESS for DETERMINING the “UNMET NEEDS” of STUDENTS with DISABILITIES:

According to *34 CFR Section 300.169*, the Council’s duties include identifying the “unmet needs” within the state in the education of children with disabilities.

The Council engaged in the following activities to obtain data and information from a variety of stakeholders to assist the Council in determining the “unmet needs.” As with many things, this year continued to be unique and challenging as the needs of students with disabilities, parents, and educators were impacted by the ongoing pandemic. The Council engaged in the following activities to meet this responsibility:

- Council members shared input and provided reports from their representative stakeholder group during Full Council meetings during “Round Table.”
- Reports from the Parent Training Information center, CT Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC).
- Reports from students and the student/youth advisory groups.
- Reports from the Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE) representative.
- Reports from the Approved Private Special Education Programs (APSEPs) representative.
- Reports from agency representatives, including Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)/ Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB).
- Reports from the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Reports from the juvenile justice system.
- Reports from the McKinney-Vento representative.
- Reports from parents and representatives from several local, regional, and statewide parent groups, including the CPAC English/Spanish Parent Leaders Roundtables.
- Reports from students and the student/youth forums (Leadership Training and Symposium).
- Public comment during meetings.
- State Systemic Improvement Plan Presentation (CSDE).
- State Department of Education presentations and reports.
- Special Education Division Director presentations.
- Inclusion of paraeducator (by law revision) to gain perspective/reports from paraeducator representative.
- Reports updates from Special Education Task Force SAC representative.

- Joint report from the [Connecticut Office of the Child Advocate and Disability Rights Connecticut](#).

COUNCIL ACTIVITY

Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the [CSDE website](#)

Full Council Meetings were held on:

- January 24, 2024
- February 28, 2024
- March 27, 2024
- April 26, 2024
- May 22, 2024
- July 10, 2024
- September 18, 2024
- October 16, 2024
- November 20, 2024

The Executive Committee: Reviews Council business and develops the full Council agendas. This committee acts for the Council in all matters requiring decision between full Council meetings.

Executive Committee meetings were held on:

- January 11, 2024
- February 22, 2024
- March 13, 2024
- April 3, 2024
- May 1, 2024
- June 7, 2024
- July 12, 2024
- August 28, 2024
- September 5, 2024
- October 2, 2024
- November 6, 2024

Nominating/Membership Committees: Prepare an annual slate of officers for the Council and monitor Council attendance and advise the Chair on activities related to the process of filling membership vacancies.

Membership Committee meetings were held on:

- April 11, 2024
- June 28, 2024
- October 15, 2024
- November 4, 2024

Nominating Committee meetings were held on:

- April 11, 2024

The Legislative Committee: reviews proposed legislation and summarizes the information to inform the Council, generates testimony, responds to legislation, and assists the full Council in developing priority areas and communication strategies to widely disseminate these priorities.

Legislative Committee meetings were held on:

- December 12, 2024
- March 1 and 8, 2024
- April 13, 2024

Ad Hoc Safety and Emergency Planning: newly established Committee to review and discuss emergency planning in schools for students with disabilities.

Ad Hoc Safety and Emergency Planning meetings were held on:

- May 2, 2024
- October 4th, 2024

COUNCIL PRIORITIES

From January through July, the Council was engaged in many critical issues and topics within special education including but not limited to Advisory activities related to the IDEA Part B 611 and 619 grant, The State Performance Plan / Annual Performance Report, State Systemic Improvement Plan, ESSER II and ARP ESSER funding initiatives, and the CT IEP and Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS). The Council also continued to support the established 2023-24 Priorities (see summary below):

2023-2024 PRIORITIES

The following priorities were identified and established in July 2023 through July 2024. New priorities were generated in July of 2024.

July 2023-July 2024 Priorities

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Special Education Staffing (Recruitment and Retention)
- Student Voice in Education
- Social/Emotional Mental Health and the Emergency use of Restraint and Seclusion

July 2024-July 2025 Priorities

- Individualized Programming
- Special Education Staffing (Recruitment and Retention)
- Planning and Placement Team (PPT) Process / Partnership
- Belonging / Least Restrictive Environment
- Individualized Student Safety Plans for School Emergencies and Drills
- Social Emotional Learning/ Mental Health and the Emergency use of Restraint and Seclusion

COUNCIL RECCOMENDATIONS

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and the Foundational Concept of Student Belonging:

- LRE an important tenant within the IDEA and the Council is committed to supporting districts and schools to ensure students are educated alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible in an inclusive setting. Connecticut had the highest percentage of Students with Disabilities, ages 5 through 21, served in separate schools in the country according to [OSEP data for the School Year 2020-2021](#). During the 2023-24 reporting period, CT reduced the percentage of Students with Disabilities served in separate schools to 5.81% (from 6.40% the previous reporting period). Practices that foster a culture of belonging, operationally defined by students feeling welcomed, invited, supported, accepted, known and cared for are important factors that strengthen a student's connections to their school environment affording them the resilience to thrive in their least restrictive programs. Staffing shortages continue to be an on-going threat to LRE, and the personnel required to support and build positive school climate.

Recommendations for the CT State Department of Education/CT State Board of Education:

- Monitor the high percentage of students who attend programs in separate schools. This can be achieved by prioritizing the funding needed for training and district resources.
- Revise the implementation of the LRE Checklist whereby the PPT is required to actively discuss the key points of LRE as determined by the SWD's IEP.
- Promote and expand Unified Sports Programming and the concept of Unified Programs to other academic areas and study halls. CSDE should work in conjunction with communities to provide Unified Program experiences in the home school district.
- Support the robust integration of Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) models (such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)) for behavioral interventions allowing for staffing to ensure tiered behavioral interventions in the general education environment.
- Ensure training and resources are available to parents and educators regarding trauma informed best practices and de-escalation strategies.
- Train staff on Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind Guidance Document that is in the process of being published by the CSDE.
- Include a statement of justification on the IEP as to why the student was not in attendance at the PPT.

Recommendations for the CT Legislators:

- Additional funding and training to support districts to provide a continuum of placements and supplementary aids and services for students with high needs.
- Provide additional funding/resources (i.e., stipends and competitive grants) to support Unified Programs in districts.

Special Education Staffing (Recruitment and Retention):

The council recognizes that the recruitment and retention of special educators across the state is a fundamental priority, as it serves as a foundational pillar that significantly influences and supports all other areas of focus and concern. The current status of special education teachers, related service providers, and paraeducator vacancies across our state and its impact on IEP implementation is alarming. Understanding that this is a national issue, the Council recommends the following:

Recommendations for the CT State Department of Education/CT State Board of Education:

- Provide additional programs to support alternate paths to certification.
- Review and consider revisions to certification regulations and standards.
- Expand Interstate Reciprocity while still maintaining high quality standards for educators.
- Monitor temporary Durational Shortage Area Permits (DSAPs) and long term substitutes in alignment with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) guidance document.
- Create career pathways and incentives to the special education field for public high school students.

Recommendations for the CT Legislators:

- Provide financial incentives to attract interest in Special Education careers.
- Increase compensation for Special Educators (certified and non-certified staff) to increase retention of certified and non-certified staff (special education teachers, related service providers, paraeducators).
- Promote and pass a new legislative initiative to provide financial assistance to prospective special education teacher candidates/students to increase enrollment in educator preparation programs.

Certification

- Provide additional funding to support alternate path to certification programs.
- Review and consider revisions to certification regulations and standards.

Future Educators

- Provide compensation to individuals during their special education and/or related services internships.
- Consider new and creative incentives for future special education professionals (i.e., school psychologists, social workers, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, school nurses, special education teachers, Board Certified Behavioral Analysts (BCBAs), paraeducators).

Current Educators/Special Education Staff

- Provide programs, incentives and support to increase retention of existing special education personnel.
- Review current administrative requirements for special educators, identify additional resources and consider recommendations to alleviate redundant tasks.

Social/Emotional Mental Health and Restraint and Seclusion “R/S”

In addition to supporting students’ academic needs, this Council understands and emphasizes the importance of supporting student safety, mental health, inclusion and a true sense of belonging. The systemic support of student social emotional functioning will afford students with disabilities the opportunities to achieve academic and social success in their LRE, reducing their placement into more restrictive environments.

Recommendations for the CT State Department of Education/CT State Board of Education

- Develop and implement universal Statewide Dual-Capacity Training on Prevention and De-escalation of dysregulated students for general/special educators, families and relevant staff who work with students.
- CSDE should institute a study with relevant stakeholders to review the Restraint and Seclusion reporting form with the goal of ensuring the information assists teams in programming for student needs.

Recommendations for State Legislators

- Change the current requirement for parent/guardian notification of R/S from within 24 hours to same day notification to parent/guardian in the language of the parent/guardians.
- Require CSDE to increase the level of monitoring to include audits of districts, schools and students with high rates of R/S.

Individualized Student Safety Plans for School Emergencies and Drills

“Students with disabilities are entitled to the same emergency services as their nondisabled peers and should be considered and included during emergency management planning.”- [IDEA and Emergency Plans](#)

CT school districts are required by law to complete the All Schools Safety and Security Template’s Annex M Emergency Plan for students with disabilities. Individualized emergency planning not only increases the chance of survival for students with disabilities, but their teachers and support staff. As CT has had multiple school threats and lockdowns, the SAC is concerned that students with disabilities and/or individualized needs are not being considered during such school emergencies. The SAC believes that the PPT should be responsible for considering and documenting the individual supports needed.

Recommendations for CT State Department of Education/CT State Board of Education:

Communicate to districts free resources such as the CT Center for School Safety, DEMHS (Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security) Go Kits/Bags, and Safe and Sound Schools.

- School Safety Committees, schools and districts prepare first responders for interactions with students with disabilities.
- Sample accommodations for Individualized Emergency Plans for IEP's.
- Sample accommodations for Language and Communication Plans.
- Universal Substitute folders with individualized emergency plans.
- Provide guidance to easy access for emergency medications for school districts.
- Provide written guidance to districts requiring all students with disabilities to be included in safety drills.
- Funding for training of relevant staff in Emergency planning.
- Add school emergency safety planning as a special consideration in the IEP.

Recommendations for the CT Legislators:

- CGS Section 10-231 (fire and crisis drills)
- Addition of accommodations for students with disabilities shall be included in safety drills and parents notified of their participation.
 - CT Statute 10-222m (b) shall be amended to include a person with a special education perspective on the School Safety Committee.
- Funding for training of relevant staff in Emergency planning.
- During the IEP development process the PPT shall determine whether or not the student requires any specially designed instruction and/or accommodations to effectively participate in emergency drills or events. Each IEP should indicate whether or not such instruction was needed and, if so, develop a plan to address and meet those needs.

State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (17 Indicators)

As part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) the state of Connecticut is undergoing the process of reviewing its state performance plan (SPP). Annually the State reports against the targets in the SPP through its annual performance report (APR). This is a process that evaluates the implementation and outcomes for students receiving special education and related services.

There are 17 indicators comprising the key elements of the plan including six compliance indicators and eleven results indicators. The compliance indicators are set at 100% or 0% while the results indicators need to be set. With diverse stakeholder input, result indicators need to include rigor and show improvement over baseline data. Members of the Council continue to provide input on data targets, analyzing options, and making recommendations for improvement activities to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

CLOSING

The Special Education Advisory Council (SAC) remains steadfast in its commitment to providing meaningful Priorities and Recommendations to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), legislators, and the State Board of Education regarding the unmet needs of students with disabilities in Connecticut.

Our focus on individualization and fostering a sense of belonging, addressing critical teacher shortages, enhancing data resources, and prioritizing emergency planning is integral to our mission of improving the educational experiences of students with disabilities.

This Council emphasizes the crucial role of student voice in education, advocating for its integration from the earliest stages. This is especially significant in the context of special education. To effectively meet the needs of those we serve, we must actively listen to their perspectives and experiences. Additionally, it is essential to implement communication support for non-verbal students to ensure their voices are heard. Therefore, incorporating student perspectives and input is essential for increasing engagement and achieving positive outcomes.

The report's emphasis on critical areas such as teacher and staff recruitment, least restrictive environment (LRE), and the well-being of both students and special education staff aligns with our shared objective of creating an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

As we progress, we look to the CT State Department of Education, the CT State Board of Education and the CT State Legislature to translate these Priorities and Recommendations into actionable initiatives.

Thank you for your continued support. We welcome the collaborative efforts of our community to make a positive impact on the educational journeys of our students.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Yankee, Chairperson

dillneryankee@gmail.com

State Advisory Council for Special Education
Connecticut State Department of Education

c/o Bryan Klimkiewicz, Special Education Division Director

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APPENDIX A

State Advisory Council Membership Composition and Vacancies

#	Legislative Reference	SAC Member	Role	Appointment
Nine Members Appointed by the Commissioner of Education				
1	1	Lori Fortuna	Parent	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
2	1	Susan Yankee	Parent	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
3	1	Amy Messinger	Parent	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
4	1	Michael Scanlon IV	Person with a disability	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
5	1	Tammy Raccio (until June 2024) Replaced by Brandalyn Williams Nov. 2024	Parent	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
6	1	Jake Shumbo	Person with a disability	Commission of Education – Parent or person with Disability
7	1	Bryan Klimkiewicz	Connecticut State Department of Education	Commission of Education – Official of State Department of Education
8	1	Louis Tallarita	Connecticut State Department of Education	Commission of Education McKinney-Vento official
9	1	Mary Beth Bruder	Central Connecticut State University	Commissioner of Education-Higher Ed Representative
Other Commissioner Appointments				
10	2	Brian K. Smith	Department of Developmental Services (DDS)	Commissioner of Developmental Services

11	3	Nachi Bhatt	Department of Children and Families	Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families
12	4	Rita Halkias	Department of Corrections	Commissioner of Corrections
13	5	Denise Drummond	Parent	Parent Leadership Training Institute within the Commission on Children
14	6	Jane Hampton Smith (until November 2024, then replaced by Jen Lussier)	Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center	Parent Training and Information (PTI) Center
15	4	Catherine Summ	Aging and Disability Services/Bureau of Ed and Services for the Blind the Blind	Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services

Elected Representatives

16	8	Robin Comey	State Representative	General Assembly- Speaker of the House appointee
17	8	Vacant		General Assembly – Majority Leader of the House of Representatives
18	8	Vacant		General Assembly – Minority Leader of the House appointee
19	8	Vacant		General Assembly – President pro tempore of Senate appointee
20	8	Vacant		General Assembly – Minority Leader of the Senate appointee

Other Legislative Appointments

21	9	Kimberly Williamson	Speech and Language Pathologists	Member of CT Speech-Language-Hearing Association -President pro tempore of Senate
22	10	Tylar Young	Public School Teacher	Public School teacher appointed by Majority leader of the Senate

23	11	Allison Kopie	Aging and Disability Services/Bureau of Rehabilitation Services	Representative concerned with transitional services appointed by Minority leader of Senate
24	12	Joshua Martin	Connecticut Council of Special Education Administrators	Representative of CONNCASE appointed by speaker of the House of Representatives
25	13	Cassandra Reilly	Charter Schools	Representative of Charter Schools appointed by Majority leader of House of Representatives
26	14	Ana Wittig	Oak Hill CAPSEF	Representative of CT Association of Private Special Education Facilities appointed by Minority leader of House of Representatives
27	15	Nancy Decrescenzo	Judicial Department.	Representative of Judicial Department appointed by the Chief Court Administrator

Seven Members Appointed by the Governor

28	16	Jeffry Spahr	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability
29	16	Jennifer Lussier (until November 2024, then replaced Jane Hampton as the CPAC representative)	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability
30	16	Jonathan Metcalf	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability
31	16	Melissa Wrigley	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability
32	16	Goviana Morales	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability
33	16	Dimpy Malvania	Parent	Governor – Parent or person with Disability

34	16	Lena Esposito		Governor – Parent or person with Disability
Other Appointments				
35	17	Tom Cosker	Disability Rights of Connecticut	Representative of CT Protection and Advocacy Center appointed by the Governor
36	18	Matias Casano, Thomas Melillo and John King (until June 2024), Mia Giantonio	Student with disability	Other Members appointed by Special Advisory Council
37		Dawn Dickau	Paraeducator	Other Members appointed Special Advisory Council

APPENDIX B

Qualities of an Effective Student Member of the State Advisory Council for Special Education:

- Honesty; about themselves and about group they represent.
- Willingness to be heard – they shouldn't be intimidated by being a youth working with a board of adults.
- Willingness to work as part of a team – they should have an understanding that their voice is important, and they bring a unique perspective to the team.
- Understand the importance of their role and have the dedication and commitment to be able to attend and participate in the meetings.
- Motivation – they should be motivated to share the student perspective.
- They should look at this role as an opportunity to make a difference and better themselves in the process.