



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT**  
*DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION*



**Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education**

**Wednesday, April 26, 2023**

**\*\*\*\*\* 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. \*\*\*\*\***

**State Education Resource Center (SERC)  
175 Union Street  
Waterbury, CT 06706**

(Conference Call Information included below)

**Minutes**

**Members Present:** Bryan Klimkiewicz (non-voting), Sean Cronin (non-voting), Jolie Medina (non-voting), Susan Yankee (Chair), Jane Hampton Smith, Nachi Bhatt, Catherine Summ, Jennifer Lussier, Tom Cosker, Thomas Melillo, Kim Williamson, Lena Esposito, Goviana Morales, Amy Messinger, Ana Wittig, Brian K. Smith and Missy Wrigley.

**Guest:** Natalie Jones (Bureau of Special Education – Due Process)

**Members Absent:** Kevin Keating, Denise Drummond, Lori Fortuna, Jeffrey Spahr, Nancy DeCrescenzo, Allison Kopie, Jake Shumbo, Cassandra Reilly, Dimpny Malvania, Jon Metcalf, Tammy Raccio, Louis Tallarita, Michael Scanlon and Marisa Mascolo-Halm (At-Large)

**I. Call to Order and Welcome (9:00 a.m.)**

Susan Y. calls meeting to order at 9:21 a.m. Jane Hampton made motion.

**II. Introductions/Roles**

**III. Council Purpose and Function**

**IV. Public Comment (9:10 a.m.) Moved to later in the agenda. N/A**

SAC meetings are public meetings; members of the public may participate by calling in:

- Call-In Number: 1-866-880-0098
- Participant Passcode: 89689633

**Old Business**

**V. Consent Agenda:**

- a. Approval of the full Council March 29 Meeting Draft Minutes

Motion made by and seconds. All in favor.

Jolie M. will have the draft minutes posted.

**VI.** Executive Committee Report (9:15 a.m.)

Susan Y. provides update on Committee matters.

a. Special Education Task Force

Bryan K. reviews the task force work in relation to special education/ legislative bills.

**VII.** Membership Committee Report (9:30 a.m.)

Catherine S. provides update to the Council members.

a. Attendance Update

b. Membership Update

i. Nominee for Full Council Consideration

Catherine S. presents members to the Council.

Council members vote for appointment.

Motion made by and seconds. All in favor.

**VIII.** Legislative Committee Report (9:40 a.m.)

Bryan K. provides an update on current bills that the Committee is working on in Jeffrey Spahr's absence.

The Council members asks questions and/or for clarifications, and Bryan K. responds.

a. Legislative Update

**IX.** Dispute Resolution Ad Hoc Committee (9:55 a.m.)

Bryan K. talks about BSE Call Center.

**New Business**

**X.** Special Education Division Director Report (10:00 a.m.)

a. Dispute Resolution Data (Table 7)

Natalie J., Due Process Consultant, reviews data with the SAC. The members ask questions.

b. Bureau of Special Education Update

Bryan K. reviews PowerPoint email to members in advance.

**XI.** Round Table (10:45 a.m.) 11:30 am

a. Agency/Parent Updates

Kimberly W. (Speech Pathologist):

- Community of Practice meetings and Neurodiversity

Brian Smith. (DDS):

- Agency monitoring House Bill 5001.
- Partnering up with Bureau Rehabilitation Services expected for the summer months (Work Based Learning Exploration).
- Trying to get youth to explore employment at younger age. Members ask questions.
- Director of Assistive Technology appointed recently.

Lena E. (Parent) Talks about workshops in regard to Domestic Violence. Autism Awareness at the State Capitol on Friday. Adds additional comment on mental health.

Amy Messinger (Parent): talks about what is going on in West Hartford with family focus groups, parent organizations and secondary transition. Wants to encourage more families of color to get involved.

Jane Hampton Smith (CPAC):

- Unmet needs,
- safety: suspension/expulsion, behavior, restraint seclusion and general injuries.
- Placements, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) current issues.

Goviana Morales (Parent):

- Staffing issues
- Unmet needs
- Homebound tutoring and homebound placement.

Tommy M. (Student):

Missy W. (Parent):

- SEAC – Special Education Advisory Council will be meeting next week
- Middle school principal has invited Missy to set up transition table at the High School night.
- There is a Secondary Transition Community of Practice- last meeting is June 1st: 9:00-11:00. Virtual meeting focus on Postsecondary Education/Training. Families, Educators, Students can register on SERCs website:  
<https://ctserc.org/events?trumbaEmbed=view%3Devent%26eventid%3D162635213>

Susan Y. (Parent):

- June 3rd at 9:30 am is the HLAA Walk4Hearing.
- April 30th applications are due for Hear Here Hartford college scholarships for Deaf and hard of hearing students.

Catherine S. (ADS-BESBE):

- Children’s Services Program held its annual Parent Education Program on 4-25-23. This was a virtual evening event and the theme was communication.
- We have a number of Expanded Core Curriculum related events planned for this spring. For example, this coming Saturday our Leap into Life group, which is for transition age students, will have a theater event.
- Also, this coming Saturday we have a family event for preschool age families at the Beardsley Zoo.
- We are seeing an uptick in the number of children who are blind and require specialized instruction from a certified teacher of the visually impaired, and who have measurable goals and objectives, being put on 504 plans. My staff and I are addressing this issue.

Ana Wittig (CAPSEF):

- CAPSEF had our first in person annual conference in a few years. It was sold out and our educators are looking forward to utilizing learned strategies. Participants truly enjoyed coming together to learn.
- We are very eager to work together with our colleagues to address teacher and paraeducator shortage.
- Our national association is in the midst of strategic planning and holding focus groups to learn how to better support state associations. Karen Helene, CAPSEF president, participated in one of the focus groups.
- Ana Wittig, CAPSEF past president and board member, will be joining National Association of Private Special Education Centers (NAPSEC) public policy committee in Washington DC in a couple of weeks to outline “asks” for federal legislators in support of our efforts.

**XII.** Break (15min) Held at 11:15 am after Bureau of Special Education update.

**XIII.** SAC Priorities (Continued) (11:30 a.m.) 12:15

The Council members work on priorities group activity.

- a. Special Education Teacher/Related Service Provider/Paraeducator Shortages
- b. Least Restrictive Environment
- c. Student Voice
- d. Special Education Role in Social Emotional/Behavioral Support
- e. Employment opportunities for Students with Exceptionalities

**XIV.** Adjourn (1:00 p.m.)

Meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm with breakout session following.

**State Advisory Council Meeting Dates/Locations:**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
1.	September 28, 2022	9:00-12:00 pm	Virtual Meeting
2.	October 26, 2022	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
3.	November 30, 2022	9:00-1:00 pm	Legislative Office Building: Hartford, CT
4.	January 11, 2023	9:00-1:00 pm	Change to Virtual Meeting
5.	February 22, 2023	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
6.	March 29, 2023	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
7.	April 26, 2023	9:00-1:00 pm	In-Person Meeting State Education Resource Center (SERC) 175 Union Street Waterbury, CT 06706
8.	May 24, 2023	9-10:30 am	Cancelled