



STATE OF  
CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION



**Connecticut State Advisory Council for  
Special Education**

**Full SAC Virtual Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 26, 2025**

**9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

**Zoom Meeting:**

**<https://ctserc.zoom.us/j/95172955236?pwd=dHHNOnygKvXVb5l7Ad4mQD2dDdfTVV.1>**

**Meeting ID: 951 7295 5236 / Passcode: 795808**

(Conference Call Information included below)

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Allison Kopie, Brandalyn Williams, Brian K. Smith, Catherine Summ, Dan Gajewski, Dimpy Malvania, Goviana Morales, Jake Shumbo, Jeffry Spahr, Jennifer Lussier (Vice Chairperson), Jonathan Metcalf, Joshua Martin, Lena Esposito, Lori Fortuna, Louis Tallarita, Mary Beth Bruder, Michael Scanlon, Missy Wrigley, Nachi Bhatt, Robin Comey, Stacey Palker, Susan Yankee (Chairperson), Tom Cosker, Sean Cronin (CSDE), Bryan Klimkiewicz (CSDE)

**Members Absent:** Amy Messinger, Ana Wittig, Cassandra Reilly, Denise Drummond, Evan Simlack, Kim Williamson, Mia Giantonio, Nancy DeCrescenzo, Rita Halkias, Tylar Young

**SERC Administration:** Holli Ryan, Christine Kuehlewind

**I. Call to Order and Welcome (9:01 a.m.)**

**II. Council Purpose and Function**

**III. Introductions/Roles**

**III. Public Comment (9:09 a.m.)**

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

Call In: 305-224-1968

Meeting ID: 951 7295 5236

Participant Code: 795808

- a. Lisa Naughton (Speech Pathologist, Waterbury Public Schools)- School speech pathologists are facing a critical shortage and need to fill positions, interested in finding out about finding ways to strategize and fulfil this unmet need of a shortage area. Attention needs to be brought to SLPA licensing process.

## **V. Consent Agenda**

- a. February 26, 2025, Full Council Minutes for Approval- Missy motions to approve meeting minutes, Lena seconds, Representative Gaiewski abstains, vote unanimous in favor of approving minutes.

## **Old Business**

## **VI. Executive Committee Report/Updates (9:13 a.m.)**

- a. TOW Institute update (Susan and Tom)- review one page Venn diagram on Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Policy and Planning (TCB) and State Advisory Council for Special Education (SAC).
- b. Ad Hoc By-law Committee (Susan)- Jennifer, Susan, and Sean are members already. A few more members are needed. This is a temporary committee. Great avenue for potential leadership position on SAC.
- c. Unified Programming update (Tom and Susan)- Tom and Susan met with unified programming to get information on more programming and granting. The area of unmet need is how unified sports, and programming can be integrated in the transition planning process for students. Special Olympics, Unified Sports, and others were reviewed so that communication could be spread on their offerings. The Back-to-School event was mentioned so that they could participate in this event to show their offerings. Missy mentions that Special Olympics did a lunch presentation at the Transition Symposium yesterday, and it was a great presentation with lots of information. They're looking for opportunities to speak and get the word out. Bryan mentions that the upcoming Back-to-School (2025) is looking for groups to present or share information, so please send communication to Bryan and Jay Brown at CSDE.

## **VII. Membership Committee Report/Updates (9:23 a.m.)- Catherine updates that SAC has 2 new members.**

- a. Representative Dan Gaiewski has joined SAC as a legislative appointment.
- b. SAC has a potential new student member, Evan Simlick, an adult student in Stafford's transition program.
  - i. Membership committee members commented that they are highly supportive and enthusiastic about Evan as a potential SAC student member.
  - ii. Missy Wrigley makes a motion to vote to accept Evan Simlick's application as a SAC student. Member, Jennifer Lussier seconds, vote unanimous in favor to accept Evan Simlick's application.
  - iii. Special thank you to Lori Fortuna for assisting in bringing Evan Simlick and his application to SAC as a potential SAC student member.
- c. If a SAC member's circumstances have changed and they can't continue with their role on SAC, then please send Catherine an email by end of month to let her know so that they can move forward with filling seats by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Motion to move the Nominating Committee before the Legislative Committee Report- Catherine motions, Brian seconds, unanimous in favor.

### **VIII. Nominating Committee (9:29 a.m.)**

- a. Brian reports that the committee is interested in receiving nominations for chair and vice-chairperson. Keep in mind that Susan and Jen will be there as mentors to support the new chairperson and vice-chairperson. Thank Susan and Jennifer for their commitment to their leadership roles. Catherine reminds SAC that at least one of these leadership roles needs to be filled by a parent member. Please consider nominations and email Brian K. Smith. SAC members are encouraged to speak to Susan and Jennifer about the role and function of leadership roles.

### **IX. Legislative Committee Report /Updates (9:34 a.m.)**

- a. Jeff provided a presentation of raised bills that SAC might be potentially interested in supporting, providing ideas or suggestions. Representative Comey clarified the process of the bills as they come out of committee and are sent to appropriations. Tom mentions that the collaboration with the Special Education Task Force has been very helpful, especially with SAC's voice being heard.

### **New Business**

### **IX. BSE Updates (9:55 a.m.)**

- a. Bryan introduces Alycia Trakas, BSE Education Consultant/IDEA Fiscal Manager. Alycia presents to the SAC members on "FFY25/FF26, IDEA Part B, Section 611/619, State Application Process & Subrecipient Application Review". Tom asks for more detail in some of the allocations. Bryan mentions that the efforts within the professional development and technical assistance align to the state's strategic plan and indicators. One suggestion is to tie least restrictive data to achievement data. This is an ongoing conversation and process and will continue throughout the year. Susan references the SAC annual report being utilized for consideration to activities. Alycia mentions that BSE monitors the activities, including attendance in trainings/professional learning and surveys for feedback.

### **X. Round Table (10:21 a.m.)**

- a. Agency/Parent Updates
  - a. Jeff Spahr- April is Autism Acceptance Month, is it possible for BSE post something about this month? Bryan mentions to send anything along and will be able to possibly post in BSE Bulletin.
  - b. Missy Wrigley- Secondary transition programs and events, encourage members and districts to get communication and word out to families.
  - c. Tom Cosker- inquiries about UCONN/CSDE study on outplacement. Bryan informs members that 5-6 states are being researched to see their process, systems, and experiences with rate setting for private outplacement programs. Report should be completed soon with pros and cons. It will be shared with next steps with SAC.
  - d. Lena Esposito- announces that today at 6:30 pm will be a virtual workshop for students with disabilities on microbusinesses and how to create a product.
  - e. Lori Fortuna- building on Missy's comments on transitions. There are many programs and resources out there, but outplaced students and families aren't hearing about it. How to get the information and communication out there? Missy mentions that SERC sends the information and resources out to districts about transition 101 sessions with an accessible Google Drive. There's also a Transition Community of Practice that is mostly virtual and open to everyone. Missy is happy to share all this information with anyone interested and

go to SERC's website where all this information can be found. Bryan shared CSDE Secondary Transition Website. Also, the BSE Special Education Call Center could be utilized and communicated out, the number is 860-713-6966 and attendants are there 5 days a week during business hours.

**XI. Adjourn (10:34 a.m.)- Missy motions to adjourn**

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

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
1.	September 18, 2024	9:00-10:30 pm	Virtual Meeting
2.	October 16, 2024	10:00-2:00 pm	CREC, 111 Charter Oak Avenue, Room 202, Hartford, CT
3.	November 20, 2024	2:00-3:30 pm	Virtual Meeting
4.	January 15, 2025	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
5.	February 26, 2025	10:00-2:00 pm	CREC, 147 Charter Oak Avenue, Hartford, CT
6.	March 26, 2025	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting
7.	April 23, 2025	10:00-2:00 pm	CREC, 111 Charter Oak Avenue, (The Council Room), Hartford, CT
8.	May 21, 2025	9:00-10:30 am	Virtual Meeting