

**The Connecticut State Advisory Council
for Special Education**

**Annual Report
2023**



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

“When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become wiser, more inclusive, and better as an organization.”— Pat Wadors.

With a shared optimism for the future of students with disabilities, the Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education (SAC) presents a summary encapsulating the discussions, priorities, and recommendations from the meetings held throughout the 2023 year.

Serving as a distinctive collaborative platform, the Connecticut State Advisory Council for Special Education brings together the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), educators and related services providers, administrators, parents, and students and persons with disabilities, all dedicated to championing the education of students with disabilities. Within the thoughtful exchange of ideas during our meetings, a diverse array of stakeholders functions cohesively to formulate our Priorities and Recommendations for the CSDE and Connecticut General Assembly. The SAC invites the active involvement of Legislators, with four General Assembly positions currently available.

This year, our SAC membership has been enriched by the addition of a special education paraeducator, and it is with great enthusiasm that we welcomed Dawn Dickau, recognized as Connecticut's 2024 Paraeducator of the Year. Dawn's expertise and dedication bring a valuable perspective to the SAC, further enhancing our commitment to advocating for the needs of students with disabilities.

Several key themes emerged during our deliberations, emphasizing the importance of addressing the persistent challenge of teacher shortages, Universal Pre-K for developmental equity, Unified programming, advocating for continued and expanded PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports) and MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Supports) and promoting the centrality of student voice. The SAC underscores that Special Education is not merely a program; it is a welcoming space where students feel a sense of belonging.

Central to our discussions is the recognition of authentic student input as a catalyst for positive change. By fostering partnerships between students and adult educators, we aim to empower students as agents of change. Acknowledging that student voice equates to increased engagement and crucial student outcomes, our focus is on developing strategies to effectively incorporate student perspectives into the educational landscape.

In this Annual Report, our attention turns to critical areas such as Special Education teacher and staff recruitment and retention, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), the Student Voice, Restraint and Seclusion and Social Emotional Learning (SEL), and the mental health of both students and Special Education teachers and support staff. The SAC has meticulously crafted recommendations designed to effect purposeful change.

Before delving into the contents of this Annual Report, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your dedication and service to the students of Connecticut. Together, we strive to create an educational environment that is inclusive, supportive, and transformative for every student, irrespective of ability.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan M. Yankee".

Susan Yankee, Chair, State Advisory Council for Special Education

For additional information, including agendas and meetings scheduled:

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/CT-State-Advisory-Council-for-Special-Education>

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 2023 through December 2023. 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 2023 through December 2023. 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, SDE Liaison (non-voting), Nachi Bhatt, Jeffry Spahr and Catherine Summ.

Legislative Committee: Chair, Jeffry Spahr, Jennifer Lussier, Ana Wittig, Tammy Raccio, Representative Robin Comey, Goviana Morales, Joshua Martin, Dimpy Malvania (until June) and Missy Wrigley.

Membership/ Nominating Committee: Chair, Catherine Summ, Jennifer Lussier, Denise Drummond, Melissa Wrigley, Anna Wittig, Brian Smith, Jonathan Metcalf (until June) and Alison Kopie (until June).

Ad Hoc Due Process Committee: Ana Wittig, Catherine Summ, Jane Hampton Smith, Dimpy Malvania, Cassandra Reilly, Goviana Morales and Jennifer Lussier

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 paraeducator member representative through by-law revision this year. 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: one Department of Corrections representative and four General Assembly Elected Representatives.

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

- Published a Student Recruitment document: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Special-Education/SAC/SAC-Recruitment-Student-Flyer.pdf>.
- Published an informational flyer for State Legislators: [Legislative Recruitment Flyer](#).
- 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 one parent representative, one paraeducator representative and two student representatives.

COUNCIL ACTIVITY

Meeting agendas and minutes are posted on the CSDE website on the following link: <https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Special-Education/CT-State-Advisory-Council-for-Special-Education/Meeting-Agendas>

Full Council Meetings were held on:

- January 11, 2023
- February 22, 2023
- March 29, 2023
- April 26, 2023
- May 11, 2023
- September 13, 2023
- October 25, 2023
- November 29, 2023

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, 2023
- February 22, 2023
- March 22, 2023
- April 19, 2023
- May 8, 2023
- June 7, 2023
- July 12, 2023
- September 5, 2023
- October 11, 2023
- November 17, 2023

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:

- March 17, 2023
- April 18 and 28, 2023
- November 9, 2023

Nominating Committee meetings were held on:

- March 17, 2023
- November 9, 2023

The Legislative Committee reviews proposed legislation and summarizes the information to inform the Council of proposed amendments and legislative initiatives that would impact the broad special education community (including students, families, educators and service providers). The Committee may develop responses to proposed legislation, generate testimony, and assist the full Council in developing priority areas and communication strategies to widely support these priorities. The Legislative Session convened this year on January 4, 2023, and adjourned June 7, 2023.

The Legislative Committee is charged with the responsibility of informing the Executive Committee and the general Council of proposed legislation that may impact the lives, welfare and education of students with special needs and/or learning or other disabilities.

The Committee will also discuss and develop strategies so that the Council's thoughts and concerns can be expressed and heard such that an impact may be had on the proposed legislation as it is being developed.

On a weekly basis the Director and others provided a list of such legislation. These proposed bills were reviewed by the members of the Legislative Committee and discussed. After such review and discussion, those pieces of proposed legislation that were deemed worthy of further scrutiny were listed and monitored as they progressed (or not) through the system. On occasion a bill would progress to the point where it was presented to a committee for review and debate (and, possibly, further progress through the legislative process). The Legislative Committee would, when deemed appropriate, submit written testimony to the Committee expressing its support, points for consideration or observations to the committee. At the end of the SAC's session, a final report was delivered to the entire Council with a recap of the legislation that was presented for consideration and those bills that were ultimately passed.

This year, much attention was paid to Proposed Substitute Bill No. 1200 ('An Act Concerning Special Education'). Much of the focus and debate associated with Bill No. 1200 pertained to the use of 'restraint and seclusion' in our school systems. In its initial form the proposed legislation would bar the use of the 'seclusion' within the schools while promoting the use of a 'timeout' as a "behavior management technique". Other restrictions and requirements were developed and suggested. The SAC expressed an opinion that appropriate and measured techniques might still be available to the Districts as options. The SAC took the position that this matter needed to be more thoroughly reviewed and considered with voices from all perspectives given the opportunity to be heard. Toward that end, the SAC promoted the inclusion of this topic within the charge of the pre-existing Task Force for review. Further, the SAC lobbied for, and received, the inclusion of a member of the SAC to serve on this important Task Force.

The foregoing is just an example of the involvement of the SAC, and the Legislative Committee, in the legislative process.

Going forward, the Legislative Committee will continue to monitor any relevant upcoming legislation and continue to comment and support (or oppose as necessary) any such proposals.

Legislative Committee meetings were held on:

- March 2, 16, 22, and 30, 2023
- April 13, 2023

Ad Hoc Dispute Resolution Committee was established to review data and activity related to Connecticut's dispute resolution system. The Committee also recommends activities to increase knowledge across all special education stakeholders and to establish a foundation of trust and partnership between school districts and parents. The following activities occurred during the previous year:

- Reviewed Table 7 data (Written Complaints, Mediation Requests, Due Process Complaints, Expedited Due Process Complaints).
- Reviewed preliminary data on state special education complaints from the current year.

- Assisted in the launch of the Bureau of Special Education Call Center (CPAC and BSE Collaboration).
- Continued to access to the LRP Special Education Connections.
- Considered alternative strategies for dispute resolutions including, but not limited to, student led PPT meetings and facilitated PPTs.

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 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/UCONN).
- 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.

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 new CT IEP and Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS). The Council also continued to support the established 2022-23 Priorities (see summary below):

2022-2023 PRIORITIES

The following priorities were identified during meetings, the SAC continues to deliberate and refine our Priorities and Recommendations. Many Priorities and Recommendations overlap in the four main categories.

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

COUNCIL RECCOMENDATIONS

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

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 in an inclusive setting. In CT 6.82% Students with Disabilities are served in separate schools for school year 2021-22. Staffing shortages continue to be an on-going threat to LRE.

Future considerations for the CSDE and CT legislators:

- CT needs to monitor and address the fact that it has the highest percentage of Students with Disabilities, Ages 5 through 21, served in Separate Schools in the country. This can be achieved by prioritizing the funding needed for training and district resources.
- Additional funding and training to support districts to provide a continuum of placements, supplementary aids and services for high needs students.
- Expand statewide Dual-Capacity training on inclusive practices.
- Provide additional training on the use of the LRE checklist and consider revisions/updates to the current document.
- Provide additional opportunities for person-centered planning.
- Create opportunities for authentic student voice at Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meetings.

- Expand high-quality LRE training for school districts such as Step-By-Step (Stetson and Associates).
- Provide training and information to build the capacity of General Educators to enable them to appropriately support students with disabilities.
- Provide additional funding/resources (i.e., stipends and competitive grants) to support Unified Programs in districts – Expand Unified Sports and Unified PE to other academic areas and study halls.
- Promote robust SRBI models with funding and resources. Provide opportunities for coaching and mentoring for less experienced teachers.
- Assist LEAs to fund Universal Preschool programs, a necessary initial step toward developmental equity and elementary school readiness for all students.
- Provide instruction/training to newly elected BOE officials and newly appointed administration officials, to understand IDEA requirements and their responsibilities there under.

Special Education Staffing (Recruitment and Retention)

The Council is committed to recruitment and retention efforts for special educators across the state. 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.

Future considerations for the CSDE and CT legislators:

Incentives

- 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 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.

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 therapist, school nurses, special education teachers, BCBA's, paraeducators).

- Monitor temporary permits (DSAPs) and long term substitutes in alignment with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) [guidance document](#).
- Create career pathways to the special education field for public high school students (Unified Programs such as academic study halls).

Current Educators/Special Ed staff

- Provide programs/incentives to increase retention of existing special education personnel.
- Remove administrative duties from special educators by providing clerical support.

Student Voice in Education:

This Council would like to underscore the importance of student voice in education early and often. Student voice is particularly important within the context of the special education process. We need to listen to those we serve in order to clearly define processes that address their needs. (Ensure communication supports are in place for non-verbal students.)

Future considerations for the CSDE and CT legislators:

- Create additional opportunities for Unified Programming (theater/sports/arts/social).
- Promote student voice and participation in all aspects of school.
- Support student led PPT meetings (educate students early about PPT process).
- Support SEPTO's (Special Education Parent Teacher Organizations).
- Provide training to parents and educators about the importance of student voice.

Transition and the Student Voice

- Increase awareness of and support for youth advisory board initiatives and programs, such as Youth Advisory Board (YAB) and Youth Advisory Council (YAC)

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

In addition to supporting students’ academic needs, this Council acknowledges the importance of supporting student safety, mental health, inclusion and true sense of belonging.

Future considerations for the CSDE and CT legislators:

- 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.
- Appropriate documentation of Restraint and Seclusion– uniformity, comprehensive, detailed, useful information is necessary to help teams plan for supporting the student’s behavioral supports and staff training.
- Need for closer monitoring and review of R/S forms – more oversight at local and state levels.

- Opportunity to improve on parental notification of R/S - same day notification via phone/text to parent/guardian.
- Increase levels of monitoring to include audits of districts, schools and students with high rates of R/S.

Recommendations for Equitable Outcomes:

- Pass legislation and provide funding to require districts to provide Universal PreK in support of the equitable affordance of the research on the importance of the SEL (Social Emotional Learning) and academic requirements of Kindergarten readiness.
- CT ought to remain in the vanguard in protecting the rights of parents/students with disabilities by maintaining the burden of proof in special education due process with the local or regional board of education. This will continue to protect the families of Students with Disabilities from the undue inequitable financial burden when seeking impartial complaint resolution.

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 SAC steadfastly upholds its commitment to providing valuable 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.

The emphasis on addressing critical teacher shortages, advocating for increased training, MTSS and recognizing the significance of student voice resonates deeply with our commitment to enhancing the educational experiences of students with disabilities.

We are particularly encouraged by the focus on authentic student input and recognizing students as agents of change. Incorporating their perspectives is a pivotal step toward increased engagement and positive outcomes. We are eager to hear new ideas and strategies from a variety of stakeholders to effectively integrate student voices into decision-making processes.

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

As we move forward, we look to the CSDE and State Legislature to translate these Priorities and Recommendations into actionable initiatives.

Thank you for your continued support, and we welcome the collective efforts of our community in making a positive difference in the educational journey of our students.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Yankee, Chairperson dillneryankee@gmail.com
State Advisory Council for Special Education
Connecticut State Department of Education

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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	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 Family	Commissioner of Department of Children and Family
12	4	Vacant	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	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	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	Kevin Keating (appointed) replaced by 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	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, Mia Giantonio, Thomas Melillo and John King	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