



**2019-20 Annual Report**  
**CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION**  
*Submitted by Dr. Bill Silva*  
**CAS Associate Executive Director and CLI Director**

The Connecticut Association of Schools established the Center for Leadership and Innovation to address the professional learning and related needs of aspiring and practicing school leaders. CAS Associate Executive Director Bill Silva is the director of the Center. The Center is served by an advisory committee of experienced principals, as well as representatives of graduate and undergraduate educational leadership and education programs.

### **Leadership Academies**

The Meriden Leadership Academy was conducted in conjunction with the Meriden Public Schools. Fifteen teacher leaders from Meriden completed three of the five session sequence related to teacher leadership skill development; due to school closures made necessary by the coronavirus pandemic, the final sessions of the academy will be completed in the fall of the 2020-21 school year.

The current school year also saw the continuation of the inter-district academy held at the CAS offices, which included teacher leaders from Bethel, Ellington, Hebron, Willington, Windsor, and Regions 5 and 16. The CAS academy is planned to continue next year. All academy sessions this year were co-led by Bill Silva and Everett Lyons with specialized support by Pat Howley in the administration of the Myers-Briggs Inventory.

### **CAS Leadership Series Offerings**

A full catalog of over 15 CLI workshops was offered this year on a variety of topics and issues of interest to school leaders. Registration and overall attendance at the workshops varied based on the presentation topic, from low teens to more than 60. Evaluations of each workshop were overwhelmingly positive.

This year's offerings included the following subject areas (in some cases, multiple offerings): special education, social emotional learning, school climate, legal issues and legislative updates, teacher evaluation and supervision strategies, restorative justice, preschool, and school scheduling.

### **ZOOM-INS**

Following school closures and the onset of distance learning due to the coronavirus pandemic, CAS hosted bi-weekly opportunities for principals and other school leaders to meet virtually through the ZOOM videoconferencing platform. These included informal conversations as well as more formal webinars and town halls with guest speakers who addressed specific topics of interest and concern. While attendance varied depending on the topic and individual schedules, the ZOOM-INS have been met with unanimous acclaim and gratitude for the opportunity to network and share challenges, ideas, and resources.

### **Principals Focus Group**

CAS hosted a Principals Focus Group of approximately 15 members that met virtually every two weeks to provide guidance to CAS staff regarding programs, resources, and events that would assist principals at all levels with the challenges of school closures, distance learning, and transition planning.

## **Women in Leadership Conference**

CAS hosted a very successful conference for young women student leaders in middle and high schools from across the state; total attendance had to be limited to 90 students due to the capacity of the room, and school delegations were limited to 10 students maximum. The students heard presentations from six women in leadership positions in the fields of education, health care, and administration, and also participated in breakout sessions. Students left with action plans to bring back to their own schools to promote women in leadership and to address identified needs and challenges.

## **Recognition Programs and Events**

Many of the Center's traditional recognition events were impacted by the school closures and restrictions on large gatherings caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Twenty-two **Connecticut Scholars** were celebrated at a virtual recognition ceremony. While the **High School Arts Awards** banquet was cancelled, the 296 student artists were recognized in a half-hour broadcast featuring congratulatory remarks from Connecticut arts celebrities and keynote speaker visual artist Hong Hong. The **Middle Level Scholar Leader Recognition** program was cancelled, and **School of the Year** recognitions have been postponed to the fall.

## **Executive Coaching and Special Populations**

The requests for Executive Coaches decreased this year. A Blended Coaching Model was launched with an emphasis on the identification and monitoring of SLOs for new principals. The Executive Coaching Model will be updated in order to appeal to principals, central office staff and boards of education as an opportunity to increase already developed leadership skills and bring them to an even higher level of effectiveness. A committee of coaches will explore and identify new approaches and types of Executive Coaching Models and a marketing strategy for the 2020-2021 school year. New models will have an emphasis on helping administrators transition back to school with the support of coaches.

The Special Education Coaching Model was delayed this year while waiting for official approval of the state contract. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was ultimately established with SERC to oversee and manage the IDEA funds provided to the state in order to fund this year's Special Education Coaching Model at no cost to districts. Coaching assignments began in late February just as the COVID-19 pandemic began to disrupt programming in schools as they closed. Dependent on the continuation of funding and the reopening of schools, CAS Special Education Coaching will begin in late summer or early September.

CAS continues to partner with the **Connecticut Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (CALAS)**, which met twice this year at CAS. The April meeting and Gala, where scholarships are awarded to Latino students, had to be cancelled.

A plan to meet with urban administrators to get feedback regarding CAS programming and services to best meet their needs will be re-scheduled to the early fall. The CLI team is committed to ensuring that topics that are important to urban districts as well as sessions that support English learners and special education students are included in programming.

## **Chinese Educator Delegation Visit**

For the third year, CAS hosted a delegation from Guangdong Province in the People's Republic of China. School leaders and teacher preparation faculty were included in the delegation. CAS provided a full range of experiences related to the educational system of the United States as a means of extending cultural understanding between the two nations. In addition to presentations, participants also visited Connecticut schools and spoke with school leaders.

### **Alternative Education Leaders Community of Practice**

The Center continued its partnership with the CSDE to provide opportunities for alternative education administrators to meet. Meetings were conducted by CSDE staff members.

### **Educator Evaluation and Development Training**

The Center was charged by the Connecticut State Department of Education with the continued training of school and district leaders on the state's System for Educator Evaluation and Development (SEED) model for administrator evaluation and support. Additional tutorials were given in support of the teacher evaluation and support model.

*I am proud to share with you the accomplishments of the Center for this year. Particular thanks are in order for all the practitioners who have supported the Center's work through their dedication and voluntary efforts. Special recognition for their contributions is extended to CAS Program Managers Erin Guarino, Anna Flores, Noreen Liberopoulos, and Barbara O'Connor; to our administrative team CAS Executive Director Glenn Lungarini, Assistant Directors Marie Salazar Glowski; Cheresse Miller, Karen Packtor, Henry Rondon, and Rosie O'Brien Vojtek; and to consultant Everett Lyons.*