



THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS

CAS Middle Level Student Leadership Conferences Call for Volunteer Presenters

*January 3, 2020 at Sacred Heart University, Fairfield
January 17, 2020 at Trinity College, Hartford*

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The Connecticut Association of Schools is preparing for the Middle Level Student Leadership Training Conferences *Making Acceptance Acceptable*. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to share your leadership experiences and ideas with middle level student leaders from the diverse groups in Connecticut and to have a potential impact on how they will work with others as they develop as thinking leaders.

Breakout sessions will address one of the following strands:

- Building a climate of acceptance
- Making a difference at school
- Taking risks and rising to the occasion
- Social networking
- Communication
- Mindfulness

On the day of the conference, there will be four breakout sessions beginning at 9:15 a.m. and ending at 1:40 p.m. Each session will run for 50 minutes. You will be scheduled for a minimum of one and a maximum of three sessions which will include a lunch break (lunch will be provided for you).

If you think this opportunity may be beneficial to you and your overall professional growth, please complete our on-line presenter registration form which you may find on our website at www.casciac.org/register. Select the *2020 Presenter Registration-Middle Level Student Leadership Conference*. If you have any questions regarding registration, please contact Barbara O'Connor at boconnor@casciac.org.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the program in more detail, please contact me at cmiller@casciac.org or via phone at 203-250-1111. I look forward to hearing from you, and we hope to work with you again this year at the conference.

Sincerely,

Cherese Miller

Cherese Miller
Director
CAS Student Activities

Serving schools
and their leaders



*Connecticut Association of Schools - Middle Level Student Leadership Conference
Lesson Outline for Presenters*

Your work with the early adolescent participants has the potential to impact how they work with others and develop as thinking leaders. In support of your efforts, we have provided general information and a lesson outline to assist you in preparing your presentation. We hope that this information is helpful. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us, and we will be happy to help in any way possible. The presentation sessions run for 50 minutes, and approximately 22 students are assigned to each group.

Background:

As you are putting the finishing touches on your presentation, it is important to note that the students within your groups are all from different schools. Consequently, you might want to engage them in activities that will foster their interaction, communication, and cooperation.

Strand: Most (but not all) breakout sessions will address one of the following strands. Here are some questions that may be helpful in preparing your presentation/workshop.

Building a Climate of Acceptance:

Presenters who address this topic will share information on ways to create a positive and constructive climate in middle schools. Some questions to guide you in planning might include, but are certainly not limited to:

- How can individuals and/or groups positively impact a school's culture?
- How can we extend a positive school climate to the cafeteria, hallways, busses, athletic fields, and even neighborhoods?
- How can a school community welcome and be inclusive of new students and families?
- How can a school community make acceptance acceptable?
- What can individuals and groups do to minimize the chances of bullying and teasing taking place?

Making a Difference at School:

Presenters on this topic are recognized leaders in their school. For this presentation, workshop leaders should reach back to their middle-school experience and touch upon the following points:

- What inspires one to be a leader and take action?
- What are some of the barriers to being a leader?
- Who can be relied upon to help?
- What are some of the defining moments in leadership?
- How does one convince others to join?
- What organizational skills are needed to be a leader?
- Where does vision and creativity fit in?
- How does one overcome obstacles?

Taking Risks and Rising to the Occasion:

Being a leader is not easy. It involves taking some risks – intellectual, social, or emotional. Discuss some of the risks involved in leadership and the building blocks to its attainment.

- What are the characteristics of individuals that people want to follow?
- What can one do to become a leader rather than a follower?
- What skills are necessary to be a leader?
- What are the rewards of leadership?
- What can be done to overcome adversity?

Social Media Safety and Awareness:

This strand is about helping students use of social media sites to develop positive relationships with friends and family, and to promote safety and making good decisions when using these platforms.

- What are some good decisions about using social media?
- What are the dangers?
- How can students be safe?
- What are some of the future consequences of careless use of social networking?

Communication:

Communication is what we do to give and get understanding. It is the process of sending and receiving messages. Successful communication occurs when there is understanding. Discuss the importance of communication in schools, sports, clubs, work, etc.

- What is considered good communication?
- Why is active listening so important?
- When are good communication skills needed?
- What is assertive speaking and why is it important?

Mindfulness:

Mindfulness practices help children improve their ability to pay attention by learning to focus on one thing (e.g., breath, sound) while filtering out other stimuli. Mindfulness also provides kids with skills for understanding their emotions and how to work with them.

- What is mindfulness?
- Why is paying attention to what you hear so important?
- How do you practice positive/negative talk?
- How do you deal with stress and strong emotions?