



2024-25 Annual Report
CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION
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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. The work of the Center is guided by an advisory board of active principals and assistant principals.

Based on the annual member survey and feedback from our elementary, middle level, and high school boards, CAS staff worked collaboratively with the CLI Advisory Board to design professional learning opportunities around the topics that were most important to our CT leaders. We hosted both in-person and virtual events based on the input we received regarding members' interests, needs, and preferences for structure and content.

CAS staff have successfully expanded our partnerships with educational organizations (noted below) to ensure that our members receive expert guidance and facilitation.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OFFERINGS: 2024-25

- CAS Leadership Academy
- Vernon Leadership Academy
- The 2024 Legislative Session: A Webinar for School Leaders
- The Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP): A Webinar for Administrators and Attendance Teams
- Investigations: What Every School Administrator Needs to Know (Session #1 of Winter School Law Series)
- School Climate: Understanding the New Student Bullying Investigation and Response Obligations (Session #2 of Winter School Law Series)
- Special Education and Student Discipline (Session #3 of Winter School Law Series)
- Principal Power-Up Consortium (monthly sessions for early career and aspiring leaders)
- Unconferences for elementary, middle and high school leaders
- The Science of Reading Meets Play-based Learning (webinar)
- Restorative Practices Training (numerous sessions- beginner, advanced, trainer of trainers, certified and non-certified staff)
- School Climate Training (numerous sessions)
- Evaluating Teachers during Play-based Learning - Look-fors and Alignment with Rubrics
- Legal Series: Title IX Workshop
- Teenage Brain Workshop (3-part series)
- Middle School Scheduling Skull Session
- Proven Best Practices in Elementary Scheduling (webinar)

- Coaching for Leaders: Refresher for CTECS (3-part series)
- The Breakthrough Coach (one 2-day workshop and 2 introductory webinars)
- Speed of Trust Workshop for High-Performing Teams (in partnership with FranklinCovey)
- AI Squad (3-part series in partnership with CES)
- Legal Webinar: Immigration Enforcement Activities and Connecticut's K-12 Public Schools (in collaboration with CAPSS)
- Self-Leadership Collaborative Introduction Workshop
- Coaching for Growth: Expanding Your Tools for Building Capacity (3-part series/3-offerings)
- Bringing Your Vision of Graduate to Life (in partnership with NEASC)
- Full-day legal workshop with Pullman & Comley
- The 4 Essential Roles of Leadership (in partnership with FranklinCovey)

OTHER PROGRAMS/INNOVATIONS

Linking Leaders PodClub

The CLI facilitated a virtual PodClub, a professional learning community designed around the power of podcasts. Just like a book club, our PodClub brings together passionate leaders to explore, reflect, and discuss important topics. But instead of reading a book, we dove into curated podcasts that aligned with themes relevant to school leadership and education.

Linking Leaders PodCAST

The ***Linking Leaders*** PodCAST explores innovative strategies, shares inspiring stories, and engages in insightful conversations that empower school leaders to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of education.

United for ImpaCT

The CAS Annual Leadership Conference was held over two days in March at the Mystic Marriott in Groton. More than 30 breakout presentations were offered covering five main focus areas: Collaborative & Shared Leadership; Creating a Culture of Inclusion & Belonging; Innovative Practices for Hiring, Evaluation, & Retention; Creating & Refining School-based Systems; and Legal Issues. Keynote speakers Desiree Cocroft and Kendrick Moore shared insights into leadership, including ways to build trust with staff as well as how to do more when more is required.

CAS Connections

CAS Connections are informal networks intended to connect school leaders from across the state of CT in role-like groups. The topics for discussion are member generated. CAS Connections are held monthly via Zoom.

- High School Principals/Assistant Principals
- Middle Principals/Assistant Principals
- Elementary Principals/Assistant Principals

Early Learning Leadership Series

This series is a partnership between CAS and the Bureau of Special Education. Monthly virtual meetings are held to connect leaders of early childhood centers with trailblazers in the area. Each month, a specific topic is covered through a presentation. Some topics that have been covered this year are: Evaluating Teachers During Play-Based Learning; ELDS Standards and Alignment with Kindergarten Standards; Look-fors in an Early Childhood Classroom.

Annual Planning Summit

On April 25, 2025, the CLI Advisory Board along with interested members from the elementary, middle and high school boards engaged in a **CLI Planning Summit** to reflect on 2024-25 and strategically plan professional learning opportunities for 2025-26.

Strategic Partnership with Cardona Solutions

On May 16, 2025, CAS announced a dynamic new partnership with Cardona Solutions, founded by former U.S. Secretary of Education Dr. Miguel A. Cardona to help school districts and educational leaders across Connecticut build innovative systems of leadership, growth, and sustainable improvement. Together, Cardona Solutions and CAS will focus on:

- designing innovative, student-centered leadership development frameworks;
- supporting superintendents and building-level leaders with tools to reimagine instructional leadership;
- aligning leadership strategies with improved student outcomes and educator retention; and,
- offering customized district-wide solutions that strengthen collaboration, trust, and strategic planning.