



2024-25 Annual Report
CT STUDENT ACTIVITIES CONFERENCE
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The Connecticut Student Activities Conference (CSAC) saw impressive participation rates this year. The overall objective for CSAC in 2024-25 was to link activities to 21st century leadership skills, diversity awareness, mental health awareness, student voice, and school climate initiatives. The following is a summary of the initiatives and events organized under the auspices of the CSAC this year.

State Student Leadership Conferences

- **Elementary Level Leadership Conferences** - The Elementary Student Leadership conferences were held in person at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield, Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, and Three Rivers Community College in Norwich. All conferences were held in January 2025. We had over 800 students, advisors and administrators in attendance. In addition, we had parent breakout sessions with over 80 parents in attendance. There were impressive student and adult presenters who received exceptional reviews from attendees. Students had a great time building leadership and community service skills and participating in anti-bullying activities to bring back to their schools.
- **Middle Level Leadership Conference** - The middle level leadership conference was held in person at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. Over 500 students, advisors and administrators were in attendance and gave very positive reviews at the end. Students and advisors participated in extensive leadership training, including anti-bullying activities, diversity awareness sessions, and community service initiatives to bring back to their schools.
- **High School Level Leadership Conference** - Over 500 high school student leaders, along with their advisors, attended the 2024 High School Leadership Conference in December at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. Students statewide were able to participate in intense leadership training and have fun while doing it! Students engaged in presentations geared toward 21st century skill development and learned a variety of ways to improve collaboration, communication, student voice, action planning, positive sportsmanship, financial literacy and much more.
- **Men of Color in Leadership Conference** - The Men of Color in Leadership Conference took place on October 30, 2024, and featured leaders from different fields including education, entrepreneurship, medicine and sports. Over 600 middle and high school students and advisors attended the event at Berlin High School. According to attendees, it was a morning of inspiration with dynamic leaders on the panel/breakout sessions motivating them to reach their highest potential.
- **Women in Leadership Conference** - The annual Women in Leadership Conference was held on May 27, 2025, at Berlin High School, and focused on how dynamic individual leadership builds community and shared purpose and contributes to positive personal growth and change in our schools and communities. This year's conference included a panel of distinguished women leaders in the fields of education, medicine, human services, entrepreneurship, politics, construction, and athletics. Student-leaders were also represented on the panel. The event also included a women's empowerment/networking breakout session with professional leaders.

National Student Leadership Conference – The NFHS National Student Leadership Summit will take place in-person on July 22-25, 2025. We will be bringing student leaders (CANHS, CASC, SSACE, SAAB, SEAB and Unified Sports) to represent Connecticut.

“Arts in the Middle” - The “Arts in the Middle” Conference returned in March of 2025. Over 200 students convened for a day of creativity, collaboration, and artistic exploration. This impactful event promoted the arts among middle school students, offering them unique opportunities to engage with peers from diverse backgrounds and take on high-caliber artistic challenges. Through workshops, performances, and hands-on activities, students were encouraged to express themselves, learn from one another, and deepen their passion for the arts. The conference proved to be a dynamic and inspiring experience, reinforcing the power of the arts to connect, empower, and elevate young voices.

National Honor Society Statewide Conference (High School/Middle School Level) - The statewide Connecticut Association of National Honors Societies (CANHS) conference took place on February 24, 2025, at Trinity College. Over 200 Student leaders planned a tremendous conference that included dynamic speakers, an SCSU National Honors Society student panel, and student-led activities. Students and advisors left the event following a phenomenal leadership experience.

Connecticut Association of Student Councils Leadership Convention - The CT Association of Student Councils (CASC) Convention took place in person at Woodland Regional High School in Beacon Falls, CT. This student-driven, -planned and -led event was a huge success. There were close to 200 participants in attendance. High school student leaders joined peers from across the state for a morning of inspiration and empowerment. The program also included a breakout session geared specifically toward advisors.

Student Council Adventures in Leadership Conference - CASC’s “Adventures in Leadership” is all about building the base of a successful team outside of our normal comfort zone. This year’s “adventure” took place at Winding Trails in Farmington, CT, with a day of team-building activities designed to prepare new Councils for the leadership journey that lay ahead in the new school year.

Student Athletic Advisory Board - CAS-CIAC’s Student Athletic Advisory Board (SAAB) had a great year. An offshoot of the successful “Class Act Schools” initiative, the statewide advisory board empowered students to promote good sportsmanship within their leagues and to address other issues regarding athletics. Students met five times throughout the school year and were able to share their respective experiences and highlights, plan and implement community service actions plans, and come together to have a voice in promoting respect, teamwork, and character in all of our “Class Act” schools and beyond. In addition to the meetings, board members had the opportunity to take action and conduct Class Act training for schools and leagues in the state. The last meeting of the school year took place on May 13, 2025. Students presented their researched-based Class Act Playbook for schools to use as a resource throughout the school year.

Student Equity Advisory Board

In 2020, CAS-CIAC created a Student Equity Advisory Board (SEAB) to bring awareness to inequity in Connecticut and collaborate on ways to enhance inclusion in schools for all students. The SEAB consists of up to six students from each league and those members develop and implement ideas and action plans to bring back to their respective leagues, schools, and communities. The final presentations from SEAB took place on May 29, 2025, and covered a range of critical topics, including: Improving Student Mental Health in Schools and Athletics; Ensuring Fair Access to Sports Facilities and Equipment in Schools; Increasing Diversity Among Educators in Connecticut Schools; Addressing Racial Inequities in School Achievement; and, Supporting Gender and LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity in Schools.

State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE) - The 2025-26 State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE) consisted of eighteen high school students who met monthly from August 2024-June 2025. SSACE’s number one project this year was to produce a presentation for the State Board of Education which centered on two topics: Literacy and Suicide Prevention. SSACE also did a pilot program for the Enhancing Literacy rates research in Thomaston and Waterbury, CT. SSACE selected the recipients of the Governor’s Challenge to Educational Citizenship Awards which are an annual recognition of school/community service projects. In addition, SSACE selected possible candidates to serve on the CT State Board of Education for the 2025-2026 school year.

Battle of the Fans Competition - Battle of the Fans is a video-based school spirit competition designed to find the CT high school with the very best examples of spirit and sportsmanship. This year's winner was Simsbury High School. Simsbury was honored at Mohegan Sun during the 2025 basketball state championships.

High School Dance Championships – The dance state championships were held on February 22, 2025, at Hamden High School. With over 50 teams competing, the event ran very smoothly. The coaches, dancers, and families were extremely excited to be a part of the event. Visit <https://casci.ac/10559> for more information.

High School Cheerleading Championships – The cheer state championship was held on March 1, 2025, at Trumbull High School in Trumbull, CT. Over 80 teams competed. Visit <https://casci.ac/10560> for results and related information.

Esports - Esports continues to take off in the state of Connecticut. With over 45 schools in Connecticut participating, all students are able to have fun playing video games while being a part of a team and gaining important life lessons and leadership skills. The spring season wrapped up on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. Both the fall and spring season semi-finals and championships were held in-person at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, CT. Visit <https://www.playvs.com/connecticut> for more information about esports opportunities in Connecticut.

Robotics - CSAC continued its partnership with NE *FIRST*, an organization that sponsors robotics tournaments for elementary, middle and high school teams. NE *FIRST*'s goal is to inspire in students an appreciation of science, technology, engineering and mathematics and to show them how an understanding of these fields can enrich their lives. The CT High School Robotics Championship took place on May 18, 2025, at Glastonbury High School. Visit <https://www.nefirst.org/nedcmp> for results and related information.

Connecticut Debate Activities

•**High School Debate** - High School debaters from schools statewide debated intriguing topics throughout the school year. For debate topics, results and more, visit <http://ctdebate.org/>.

•**Middle School Debate** - Middle schools debated intriguing topics throughout the school year. For debate topics, results and more, visit <http://ctmsdebate.org/>.

The Arts Committee - Over one hundred and fifty high schools were represented at this year's in-person Arts Banquet. A feature of the event is the presentation of the "Heart of the Arts" award which is given annually to an individual who exemplifies the ideals of the positive heart of the arts that represent the core mission of the fine and practical arts. Cooper Toland, senior at Stamford High School, was this year's recipient.

Thomas Flanagan / CAS-CIAC Endowment Grant Awards – Applications for the 2025 Flanagan grants will close in early June, and we are excited to provide funding to schools with up-and-coming leadership programs.