



**2025-26 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 2025-26 was to link activities to 21<sup>st</sup>-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, and Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic, and Naugatuck Valley Community College in Waterbury. All conferences were held in January 2026. We had over 1000 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 professional presenters who received exceptional reviews from attendees. Students had a great time developing leadership and community service skills while 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 700 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 600 high school student leaders, along with their advisors, attended the 2025 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 21<sup>st</sup>-century skill development and learned a variety of ways to improve collaboration, communication, student voice, action planning, positive sportsmanship with our Class Act program, CIAC Education Based Athletic Curriculum, financial literacy and much more.

**Student Empowerment Day** - What began as two panel discussions, Men of Color in Leadership and Women in Leadership, evolved into a powerful Empowerment Day at Farmington High School. More than 900 students, advisors, legislators, state representatives, and community leaders from across Connecticut came together for a day centered on empowerment, leadership, representation, and student voice.

While the two featured panels remained at the heart of the experience, the event expanded into a larger movement focused on inspiring and uplifting young people. Students had the opportunity to hear authentic stories from leaders with diverse backgrounds and experiences, engage in meaningful conversations, and connect with individuals who reflected the communities they come from. The day created an environment where students felt seen, heard, and encouraged to step into leadership roles within their schools and communities.

**National Student Leadership Conference** – The NFHS National Student Leadership Summit will take place in-person this year from July 16-20. We will be bringing student leaders from student boards and unified sports to represent Connecticut.

**“Arts in the Middle”** - The “Arts in the Middle” Conference returned in March of 2025. Just about 100 student leaders 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 Honors Society Statewide Conference (High School/Middle School Level)** - The statewide Connecticut Association of National Honors Societies (CANHS) conference took place on March 17th (delayed due to weather), 2026, at Central Connecticut State University. Approximately 200 Student leaders participated in a tremendous conference that included dynamic speakers and student-led activities.

**Connecticut Association of Student Councils Leadership Convention** - The CT Association of Student Councils (CASC) Convention took place in person at Norwich Free Academy in Norwich. 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, “Adventures in Leadership” took place at Winding Trails in Farmington, CT, with a day of team-building activities designed to prepare new Councils for the adventures of leadership that lie ahead in the new school year.

**Student Athlete Advisory Board** - CAS-CIAC’s Student Athlete 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 four 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.

**Student Empowerment Advisory Board** - In 2020, CAS-CIAC launched the Student Equity Advisory Board (SEAB) to raise awareness about inequities impacting students across Connecticut and to create opportunities for student-led conversations and action surrounding inclusion, representation, and belonging in schools. What began as a statewide equity initiative has since evolved into the CAS-CIAC Empowerment Board, reflecting a broader mission focused on student leadership, empowerment, advocacy, and creating spaces where all students feel seen, heard, and valued.

The Empowerment Board brings together student leaders from across Connecticut to collaborate on initiatives that promote inclusivity, leadership development, and positive school culture. Students work alongside educators, community leaders, legislators, and peers to develop ideas, programs, and action plans that can be implemented within their schools, leagues, and communities.

**State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE)** - The 2025-26 State Student Advisory Council on Education (SSACE) consisted of twenty-five high school students who met monthly from August 2025-June 2026. SSACE’s number one project this year was to produce a presentation for the State Board of Education which centered on two topics: A.I. and Math. They will be presenting their findings and recommendations on June 3rd at the State Board of Education meeting.

SSACE selected the recipients of the Governor’s Challenge to Educational Citizenship Awards that are an annual recognition of school / community service projects. In addition, SSACE selected possible candidates to serve on the State Board of Education for the 2026-2027 school year.

**College & Career Exploration Night** – This interactive event provided high school students and their families with an opportunity to explore post-high school options from college and career pathways to trade programs. The evening included a panel discussion featuring professionals who’ve built rewarding futures through diverse pathways. Presentations were offered in English and Spanish.

**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 Naugatuck High School. Naugatuck was honored at Mohegan Sun during the 2026 basketball state championships.

**High School Dance Championships** – The dance state championships were held this year on February 28, 2026, at Farmington 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 7, 2026, at Newtown High School in Newtown, 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 Thursday, April 30, 2026. Both the fall and spring season semi-finals and championships were held in-person at Quinnipiac University in Hamden, CT. Visit <https://casci.ac/13037> for championship results. 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 will take place on May 17, 2026, at Glastonbury High School. Visit <https://www.nefirst.org/nedcmp> for results and related information.

**Connecticut Debate Activities:**

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

**Thomas Flanagan / CAS-CIAC Endowment Grant Awards** – Eleven Flanagan grants were awarded this spring, supporting new and existing initiatives that enhance student learning and engagement.

**The Arts Committee** - Over 150 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. Noah Hoffman, senior at RHAM High School was this year's recipient as well as the recipient for Section One.

CAS presented a Marching Band esprit de corps award to three schools at the U.S. Bands competition in November.