

CASC Advisors Planner

Official Newsletter of the Connecticut Association of Student Councils



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Director's Corner

Happy Fall, Pumpkin Spice, Autumn, almost the end of Quarter 1, Parent-Teacher Conference, Homecoming Dance, Spirit Week, Pep Rally, end of Fall Sports season, season!!

Thank you to all of the schools that joined us for this year's live President's Symposium at the Old State House in Hartford! The Association's Executive Board shared several new initiatives for this year that we hope you will pass along to your local Student Councils. More details can be found in the "PROGRAM UPDATES" section below. A couple items to highlight:

Revamped Awards and Competitions

Your Executive Board spent the summer revamping all of our awards and competitions. Please take a moment to read about them in this newsletter and on our website!

CASC Convention 2027 Update

In recognition of our 75th anniversary in April, this year's Convention theme is "**Lead Strong, Shine Bright.**" This event is serving as the launch for a year-long celebration of our diamond jubilee!

- **Date:** Friday, March 5th
- **Location:** Woodland Regional High School in Beacon Falls
- More details are available on our website!

Remember between newsletters to check our association website (<https://www.ctstuco.com/>) as well as our instagram feed @ctstuco to keep up with the latest news and opportunities CASC offers.

Be safe, and as always thank you for your continued support of student leadership in Connecticut and remember to stay above the line.

Christopher Tomlin
CASC Executive Director

Upcoming State Important Dates::

OCTOBER

October TBD:: Student Workshop Presenter Training (HS)

CASC is proud to provide this new certified training program for student presenters.

NOVEMBER

November 17:: CASC District Conference, Virtual (HS/MS)

Each of Connecticut's 4 districts holds its own conference that will allow for local students and advisors to connect, build relationships and share ideas. More details to follow.

The President's Desk



Happy fall everyone! We hope that the school year is off to a strong start as your student councils are busy with back-to-school activities and initiatives. As you continue to work on your incredible projects, with everything from spirit to fundraising events, we encourage you all to send in submissions to CASC's Top Project competition to celebrate your hard work; all submissions are due February 13th!

The CASC Executive Board would love to thank everyone who attended our 8th Annual President's Symposium this past week. It was exciting to see you collaborate on new initiatives and present your ideas, and we hope to see you all at the upcoming CASC events that the board introduced during Symposium.

For those of you who could not make it this year, we are excited to announce that this year's Convention Theme is **"Diamond Jubilee: Lead Strong Shine Bright!"** Held at Woodland Regional High School, the event will feature motivational speeches, leadership workshops, and special recognition honoring CASC's 75th anniversary and our commitment to leading forward.

As always, keep an eye out for upcoming events, and we are excited to see all of the amazing projects you produce this year!

Sophia Vazquez '27
Conard High School



Program Updates

CASC WESTERN DISTRICT OPENING



We are still looking for a school interested in stepping in to fill a **one-year vacancy** for the 2026-27 school year as Western District leadership school.

To be eligible, an interested school needs to be able to provide one advisor and two students to step into the following roles:

- **Advisor:** Serves on one of our E-Board committees (Competition, Recognition, or Special) Works with students from across Connecticut.
- **Vice President (Student):** Serves on the Competition Committee ("fun" stuff) to help develop the Top Project Competition, CSV, and the Convention pep rally.
- **District Coordinator (Student):** Joins the Recognition Committee ("prestige" stuff) to oversee programs like the Council of Excellence, Nedovich Award, Leadership Awards, and Unsung Hero awards.

Commitment:

- **Meetings:** It's a manageable but impactful commitment with five (5) Saturday meetings at CAS in Cheshire (9–1) throughout the year and quick 30 minute monthly virtual sync meetings once a month on Sunday night.(7pm)
- **Events:** Board members must attend: Convention, Presidents Symposium, District Conference (Virtual), Adventures in Leadership.
- **Committee Work (Competition or Recognition):** This is dependent on the committee itself and changes throughout the year.

If this is something that might interest you and your student leaders, or if you have any questions, please let me know. And thank you again for everything that you do for student leaders in Connecticut.

CASC COMMITTEES - Extended to October 9!

Last Call!

Do you have middle or high school students looking to get involved, collaborate with peers across Connecticut, and lead projects for causes they care about all while learning leadership skills and becoming more involved with CASC?

Please encourage them to apply for a CASC Committee! Led by Executive Board student staff, committees offer a low-barrier way for students to make a statewide impact.

- **Meetings:** Committees meet virtually once each month at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday to plan statewide events and initiatives.
- **Deadline:** Applications are open through **October 9th!**
- **Application:** available on CASC Website. ctstuco.com/committees.

If you have any students that are interested in learning more about serving on any of these committees please have them visit ctstuco.com/committees

Current CASC Committees listed in alphabetical order:

Legislative Affairs Committee

- Get involved in Connecticut's legislative process with CASC's Legislative Affairs Committee! Connect with like-minded peers to boost civic engagement, discuss key youth issues, and draft official CASC statements on teen-related legislation. Help shape state and local government while making your voice heard.

Student Workshop Committee

- Members of the Student Workshop play an active role in organizing and leading sessions that equip interested students with the skills to become effective presenters and empower them to deliver their own workshops at CASC events. Members regularly collaborate with the Student Workshop Coordinator to plan and coordinate the trainings they will facilitate, as well as address any other workshop-related matters. Additionally, they contribute to the preparation of workshops for the annual CASC convention and support the Student Workshop Coordinator with any additional needs.

Service Committee

- Members of the Service Committee are involved in planning the Convention Service Project. They are expected to attend all CASC events. Members are expected to meet with the Service Project Coordinator throughout the year to ensure that they are on schedule and have fulfilled all their assignments. Additionally, they should be helping to plan the Service Project in any capacity that the Service Project Coordinator needs them for.

Mental Health Committee

- Members of the Mental Health Committee play an active role in helping design and coordinate the annual Mental Health Summit. They are expected to attend all CASC events, participate in planning meetings, and contribute to the creation of other mental health awareness projects. These include helping create guides for student councils related to mental health awareness and Mental Health Mondays. They are expected to effectively communicate with the Mental Health Affairs Coordinator to share progress and updates in their assignments.

Social Media Committee

- Members of the Social Committee assist in social media management and content creation. They are expected to attend all CASC events and record media, including photos and videos. They will help in creating graphics for promotion or informational posts. Keeping up with the latest trends is also very important.

Parliamentarian Committee (NEW)

- Members of the Parliamentarian Committee assist in planning and running the CASC General Assembly through teaching and advocating for the usage of Roberts Rules of Order in our local student councils.

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

November 17, 2026 - Virtual



Why Attend Conference

District Conference offers a unique and inspiring opportunity for student leaders to connect, collaborate, and share their ideas. It serves as a launching pad for meaningful projects, innovative initiatives, and real-world issues that participants are passionate about addressing in their own communities. Beyond idea-sharing, the conference fosters valuable networking, the exchange of resources, and the formation of supportive peer communities that continue long after the event ends. *Whether you want to refine your council's current goals or bring home fresh projects that inspire your entire student body, this is the place to start.*

What to Expect

Interactive Problem-Solving Breakouts: Dive into real-world student council topics

Hands-On CTRISES Action Planning: Walk away with a complete, balanced annual roadmap for your school using the CTRISES framework

"Our Best!" Project Showcase: Share your school's standout event and learn what other councils across CT are doing.

Conference Schedule::

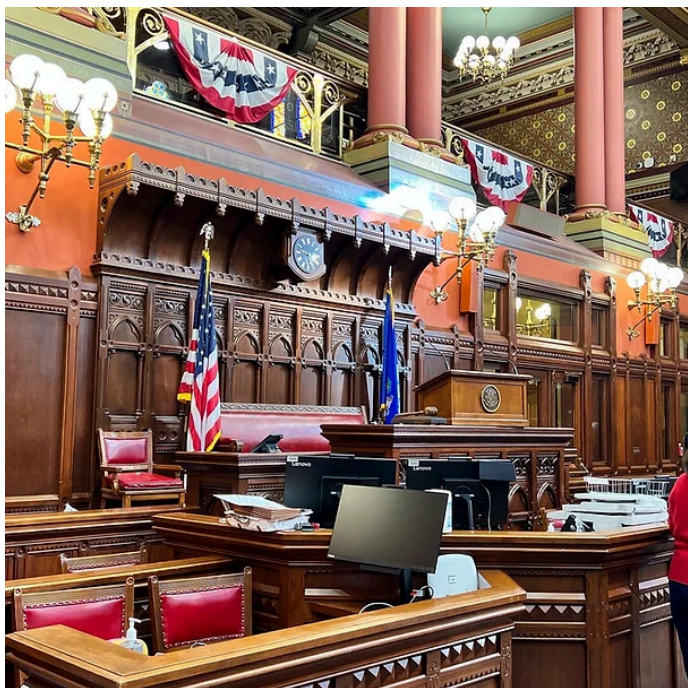
9:00-10:00 A.M. Opening Plenary Session

10:00-12:00 Discussion and District Breakouts

MOCK LEGISLATIVE SESSION DAY

December 18, 2026

Capitol Building, Hartford



Why Attend::

CASC, in partnership with Connecticut General Assembly, is proud to announce its Second Annual Mock Legislative Session Day in the Capitol Building on **December 18 from 9AM-4PM.**

Mock Legislative Session Day is a hands-on opportunity for student council members from across Connecticut to work with the Connecticut General Assembly staff and legislators to learn how a bill becomes a law. Students will experience the bill analysis, fiscal analysis, and the process of putting a bill's intentions into legal language, in preparation for Mock Session.

On Mock Legislative Session Day students will be broken into "Majority" and "Minority" caucuses which will be led by fellow student leadership. These groups will then work with CGA staff to decide if they support or oppose bills and how to prepare for them before getting to the house floor where students will debate their mock legislation on the House Floor.

This is an incredible educational experience giving student council members the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the legislative process in a hands-on way.

- **THIS YEAR THERE IS A HARD CAP OF 14 STUDENTS PER SCHOOL AND 70 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS.**
- This educational experience is \$15.00 each and includes lunch and all necessary supplies.
- Students will be discussing, debating and amending 6 student driven topics of local or state concern.
- Students should be interested in entering a public service profession or seeking public office in the future.
- The program includes 1 mandatory zoom orientation meeting before the live event in Hartford.

Timeline

- October 1 - Registration opens
- November 1 - Deadline for application to serve as Chair or Ranking member due.
- November 15 (7-8:30PM) Zoom Training for Chairs and Ranking members
- December 1 - Registration closes
- December TBD (Day time) - zoom training for all delegates
- December 18 - Day of the Event



2028 CASC CONVENTION HOST! - YES - 2028!

March 2028

A High School Near You!

Planning ahead? CASC is always looking for engaged student leaders, advisors and schools interested in taking their leadership to the next level! Applications are due by February 12, 2027 CASC would be thrilled to hear your bid at this year's Convention, so now is the time to start planning!

Questions? Email CASC's executive director

2026-27 CASC Awards!

February 2027

Your student council is doing great things, make sure those accomplishments get the recognition they deserve! CASC offers a number of awards that celebrate outstanding student councils, students, and advisors who demonstrate leadership, service, and a commitment to making their schools and communities better!

A few important reminders:

- The Council of Excellence, Student Council Award is a year-long process that encourages your council to take a deeper look at its program and impact within the school community.
- The Student Leadership and Unsung Hero Awards are open to Middle and High School student council members.
- Don't wait until the deadline! Start collecting photos, statistics, testimonials, and other documentation now!
- Submissions are accepted starting December 1!

Don't let your school's great work go unnoticed—nominate, celebrate, and shine! Awards are open exclusively to CASC member schools, and all applications must be submitted online. (CTSTUCO.COM/recognition)

2026-27 CASC Competitions!

February 2027

CASC offers a variety of student-centered leadership competitions designed to encourage excellence in service, communication, collaboration, and school engagement. Through events such as CSV and Top Project, CASC Competitions give student councils the opportunity to highlight their initiatives, share effective practices, and strengthen leadership skills. These events foster teamwork, creativity, and community involvement while connecting students from across the state in a supportive, growth-focused environment.

A few important reminders:

- Submissions are accepted starting December 1!

Competitions are open exclusively to CASC member schools, and all applications must be submitted online. (CTSTUCO.COM/competition)



CTRISES:: Project Ideas

Remember to be focusing on your **C**(citizenship), **T**(training), **R**(recognition), **I**(inspiration), **S**(service), **E**(engagement), **S**(spirit). Looking for a new project to run this month in your student council? Think about incorporating some of these suggestions into your calendar.

Ideas for October



CITIZENSHIP

Digital Citizenship week

This #DigCitWeek, support students' mental health and digital well-being. Growing up has always had its challenges. <https://www.common sense.org/education/digital-citizenship-week>

TRAINING

Public Speaking and Presentation Training

- Focus: Improve communication skills for both individual and group presentations.
- Activities:
 - Speech contests on various topics.
 - Workshops on crafting powerful speeches, using visual aids, and

managing stage fright.

- Practice sessions where students present to their peers for feedback.
- Goal: Help students feel confident in public speaking and strengthen their ability to articulate ideas.

RECOGNITION

Custodian Recognition

October 2 is National Custodian Day, show your appreciation to the custodians who clean the school through either food, baskets, or student made cards of appreciation. Encourage students to take ownership of the cleanliness of their school.

OR consider shifting the focus from giving items to sustaining appreciation. Pair student-made cards with a school-wide "Keep It Clean" pledge or a mini-campaign where student council members spend one period helping the custodial staff. This directly connects recognition with student ownership of the facility.

INSPIRATION

Community leader guest speaker

Rather than a traditional passive auditorium lecture, make it interactive, format the event as a Q&A panel or a round-table workshop where council members and students can ask actionable questions about leadership and community involvement.

SERVICE

Trick or Treat for Canned Goods

Submitted by:: Bolton High School

Highland Park market donated 500 paper bags, StuCo members deliver bags with a note saying they will pick up the weekend of Halloween. Students then pick up bags, we go through them to remove expired items, then deliver to local food shelters.

Add a pre-campaign education component. Instead of just dropping off bags, include a flyer detailing local food insecurity statistics and specific high-need items. Adding a friendly competition between homerooms for total weight collected boosts participation significantly.

Leaf Raking

Submitted by:: Bolton High School

Student Council rakes leaves, does yard work for those in the town who need the service.

ENGAGEMENT

National Bullying Prevention Month

October is World Bullying Prevention Month! During this month students, schools, and communities all

over the world go BLUE together against bullying.

Think Pink This October

It is a great time for student councils and school organizations to raise awareness and support a meaningful cause.

Consider organizing a fundraiser or awareness project that fits your school community. It could be as simple as selling pink ribbons or creating a school-wide Pink Spirit Day. Share breast cancer facts and statistics during morning announcements throughout the month to help educate your school community.

Don't forget to partner with your athletic teams! Promote their "Pink Games," organize a school-wide Pink Out, or find other creative ways to bring students and staff together to show their support.

Think pink, raise awareness, and make a difference this October!

SPIRIT

Homecoming Dance

Many high schools host their Homecoming Dance and Spirit Dress Up days this month.

Ideas for November

CITIZENSHIP

Get out the Vote activities

Inspiring young leaders to participate in the democratic system of our country is at the very heart of why Student Councils were first founded in the 1800's. Contact your local registrars to try and hold a voter registration day for your seniors. Pass out information about local ballot questions, candidates and the major issues. (The important part is to be unbiased in all of your materials.)

Consider expanding beyond just high school seniors. Add a non-partisan "mock election" or policy debate for underclassmen so the entire school practices civic engagement, even those under 18. Partner with social studies classes to turn it into an annual tradition.

Hold mock elections the day before Election Day. This is also a great opportunity to look at how your Council holds elections. Do your elections include::

- *Written election rules and/or campaign procedures*
- *A written process for ballot counting and announcing election results*
- *Use of voting machines or online voting, voter registration, voting precincts, or other characteristics of local/state elections*

RECOGNITION

Teacher Appreciation Baskets

It's fun to tell teachers how thankful we are for them. November is a great time to put together baskets to leave in Teacher Centers or Teacher Lounges. Things to include:: hot chocolate mix, mints, life savers, tissues, and punny inspirational messages!

INSPIRATION

Thanksgiving Meeting Party:

Plan a thanksgiving party for the last day of school

before break, have each member bring a food item that they eat on Thanksgiving. While everyone is eating, have them share what they are thankful for. This is a great morale booster after homecoming season and allows the chance to reward your group's commitment with treats while they focus on what's ahead.

SERVICE

Visit Elderly

This is a great time of year to schedule some time to visit nursing homes to visit and interact with them. You can also host a "senior" prom complete with period music and food. You may want to try and get your school band to perform some of the standards.

ENGAGEMENT

Kindness Day

World Kindness Day is November 13, it is a day that promotes the importance of being kind to each other, to yourself, and to the world. Look for opportunities while you go through your day to infuse kindness into someone's day:

- *Write positive messages on post-it notes and leave them for people to find*
- *Pick up trash you see on the ground outside and throw it in a garbage can*
- *Pay for a stranger's coffee or meal*
- *Compliment someone*
- *Send a positive or encouraging text to five people in your contacts*
- *Talk to someone new*
- *Practice gratitude*

SPIRIT

Flag Football

Whether it is Powder Puff or another name, the November weather allows for one last outdoor activity of the year. In many schools this means a PowderPuff

game with Junior and Seniors boys and girls. Some towns even compete against each other on these days.

***We are always looking for new and exciting projects or events to highlight, if your council has a project that you would like to see highlighted in a newsletter please submit it [here](#).*

Tips and Tools

Leadership...for now, for the future

Adopted from "FOCUS" January 1989

The following article first appeared in the January 1989 "Focus" newsletter dedicated to Senior High School advisors; it was quite a popular article, being reprinted several more times during the publication's run. Every time I come across it, I find myself rereading it. And each time I can't help but pause and ask myself: Is this message meant for me, the advisor, or for the student leader? Or a gentle reminder to us both?

Each day leaders make decisions based on their beliefs about what will happen during the next minute, within the next hour, by tomorrow, by next week or next month, during the next year within the extended future, i.e. by 2031.

Admittedly, any projects of leadership skills and behavior needed for the future may prove to be in error. A greater risk, however, is that the projected leadership behavior may prove to be necessary but the same "leaders" may not be ready to exercise the necessary skills. The following suggestions

represent one view of leadership action needed for now and the immediate future:

Be a Risk Taker!

1. Be a Risk Taker! Persons who rise to the top of a group profession are risk takers. It seems likely that this will continue to be a major characteristic of leadership.

Learn to Say "NO"!

2. Learn to Say "NO"! To be an effective leader, roles and duties for each position must be continually clarified and redefined. Leaders need to know how to say "No" to requests which are:

- (a) beyond their power to control,
- (b) beyond the resources allocated or available to their organization, or
- (c) inappropriate to organizational priorities, objectives and/or goals.

Consider Alternatives

3. Consider Alternatives. The "one best way" is not feasible in a pluralistic society. To become skilled in identifying or creating alternative courses of action, as a means of building a coalition of support for action taken, is an important skill.

Develop Skills in Conflict Management

4. Develop Skills in Conflict Management. A major portion of a leader's time is expended in conflict resolution activities. Consequently, all leaders would benefit by additional development of skills in alternative approaches to conflict management and conflict resolution.

And...

Include the "excluded" in your organization and/or school-community

5. Include the "excluded" in your organization and/or school-community. Communication with the total organization or school-community is very important and should include mechanisms for a two-way flow of information. Try to get everyone involved and/or

included in the decision-making process. What are the information needs, the expectations, and the suggestions of each segment of the group you are leading? Concern must be given to age, cliques, differing ethnic, and cultural groups, and so forth and their expressed needs should be actively addressed.

Develop Effective Communication Skills

6. Develop Effective Communication Skills. To be effective, a leader must develop written or oral communication skills and become an active listener-with emphasis on listening as a starting point in effective communication.

Some leaders "lead" by responding to crises. Leadership for the future requires personal commitment, movement toward known and planned-for goals, an avoidance of the "one best way" syndrome, a willingness to consider and use input from the total group or organization being lead, and a willingness to be responsible for outcomes.

Don Larsen

Executive Secretary

Wisconsin Association of School Councils

Upcoming Events

Be sure to check the CASC Website (CTStuco.com) for a full calendar of our program and more information!

OCTOBER

October TBD:: Student Workshop Presenter Training (HS)

CASC is proud to provide this new certified training program for student presenters.

NOVEMBER

November 17:: CASC District Conference, Virtual (MS/HS)

Each of Connecticut's 4 districts holds its own conference that will allow for local students and advisors to connect, build relationships and share ideas. More details to follow.

DECEMBER

December 4-6:: NA4SA (NAWD) Annual National Conference on Student Activities (MS/HS)

Check www.nawd.com for more details as we get closer to this event.

December 16:: Mock Legislative Session Day (HS)

Mock Legislative Session Day is an opportunity for student council members from across Connecticut to work with the Connecticut General Assembly staff and legislators to learn how a bill becomes a law. Students will experience the committee and public hearing process, bill analysis, fiscal analysis, and the process of putting a bill's intentions into legal language, in preparation for Mock Session where students will debate their mock legislation on the House Floor.

This is an incredible educational experience giving student council members the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the legislative process in a hands-on way.

JANUARY

January 30:: Student Workshop Presenter Training (HS) at CAS, Cheshire

CASC is proud to provide this new certified training program for student presenters.

FEBRUARY

February 2:: Mental Health Summit (HS)

February 12:: NatStuCo Council of Excellence application award deadline. (MS/HS)

February 12:: CASC Student Executive Board applications due. (MS/HS)

February 12:: CASC Award applications due. (MS/HS)

MARCH

March 5:: State Convention, WOODLAND Regional High School (MS/HS)

March 12:: CASC Staff Applications Due

March 20:: CASC Staff interviews at CAS, Cheshire

APRIL

April TBD:: Advocacy Day, Hartford

April 17:: CASC's 75th Birthday

April TBD:: National Student Leadership Week (MS/HS)

MAY

May 1:: New Officers Term Begins

May 19:: *"Adventures in Leadership"* (MS/HS)

Ropes course designed to allow your newly elected leaders an opportunity to come together and begin to work as a team, while meeting leaders from across the state. More details to follow.