



# Bureau of Special Education

## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Back-to-School Session

Connecticut State Department of Education | October 2, 2020

### Special Education Youth Advisory Council

#### What is the Special Education Youth Advisory Council (SEYAC)?

The SEYAC is designed to increase student involvement in the special education process and to help students develop strong, effective leadership skills in order to make positive changes in their school and community.

#### What is the purpose of SEYAC?

The purpose of the Special Education Youth Advisory Council is to:

- 1) Create a structure in which students with disabilities (middle and high school) can share their special education experiences and increase their capacity to make informed decisions regarding their educational programming;
- 2) Increase public awareness of the valuable role that student voice and increased student independence, can play in the lives of students, families, and communities; and
- 3) Inform the State Advisory Council for Special Education and the Special Education Division Director on issues that are important to special education students.

#### Who are the members of the SEYAC?

SEYAC members include middle and high school students with disabilities throughout the state of Connecticut.

#### When and where does the SEYAC meet?

Council members meet a total of three times. The first visit is a focus group, the second is a leadership training and the third is a youth summit. The focus group and leadership training take place on-site at each individual school and/or district that signs up. The youth summit, which brings all of the council members together, is at an off-site location.

#### How is SEYAC different than the Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)?

- The SEYAC includes students in middle and high school with a focus on special education experiences, the YAB includes students and youth ages 14 to 26 with a focus on secondary transition and beyond.
- SEYAC is school/district based, the YAB students and youth can sign up individually.
- SEYAC holds two of the trainings on-site at the school/in district and/or virtually and one conference off-site (if possible). School/district (students) commit to all three sessions.

#### How can I get involved?

Contact Nicole M. Vitale, SERC Consultant, at [vitale@ctserc.org](mailto:vitale@ctserc.org) or 860-632-1485, ext. 234.