



Bureau of Special Education

Back-to-School Meeting

Connecticut State Department of Education | September 9, 2022

Special Education Youth Advisory Council (YAC)

What is the Special Education Youth Advisory Council (YAC)?

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 YAC?

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

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

Who are the members of the YAC?

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

When and where does the YAC meet?

YAC members meet between three to four times during the school year. The first visit is a focus group, the second and third visits are leadership trainings, and the fourth is a youth summit. The focus group and leadership trainings take place on-site (or virtually) 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 YAC different than the CT Secondary Transition Youth Advisory Board (YAB)?

- The YAC includes students in middle and high school with a focus on special education experiences, the YAB includes students and youth/young adults ages 14 to 26 with a focus on secondary transition and beyond.
- The YAC is school/district based, the YAB students and youth can sign up individually.
- The YAC holds three 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 four sessions.

How can I get involved?

Contact Nicole Vitale, SERC Consultant, at vitale@ctserc.org or 860-632-1485 ext. 234.

