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October SERC Program Committee
Meeting Minutes/Summary
October 9, 2026
1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

In attendance: Erin Benham, Tom Swan, Sinthia Sone- Moyano, and Steve Higgins
Absent:
Others Present: Marjorie Davis, SERC Associate Director, and Jennifer LeBrun, SERC Executive Assistant

Call to order at 1:35 p.m.

Summary

This meeting was a program report presentation for the upcoming board meeting on October 27th. Ms. Davis shared updates on various educational initiatives. The presentation covered 143 IDEA-authorized activities scheduled, in-district contracts focusing on special education and social-emotional support, and ongoing grants, including the Connecticut Family Schools Partnership and the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services prevention work. A significant portion of the discussion focused on a new legislative initiative to expand dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities in Connecticut, with committee members sharing insights into current barriers to access and the importance of raising awareness among students and families. Members also discussed how dual enrollment and AP courses differ, with members noting that many students incorrectly assume AP courses are the best path to college acceptance.

Hartford Public Schools

The committee discussed a recent board meeting in Hartford. It was reported that the Hartford superintendent had not provided sufficient information to complete an audit due to missing data for the final year. The members touched on leadership challenges in Hartford, including multiple CFO changes during the current superintendent's tenure.

Racial Equity Requests

Ms. Davis confirmed that there has been a decline in requests for racial equity and social justice work in school districts over the past few years, following a significant increase in

the wake of George Floyd. She noted that some districts requested changes to language around DEI work. Ms. Davis mentioned that while current requests are limited to a few contracts, there are signs that districts may be becoming more receptive to this type of work.

Education Grants and Initiative Updates

Ms. Davis provided updates on several ongoing initiatives and grants. She reported that the Connecticut Family Schools Partnership grant under CREC is in its fourth year, with programming being streamlined due to declining funding. She highlighted the success of special education support programs for families and mentioned a new $200,000 prevention work grant with the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. She also discussed the upcoming Hate Crimes Bias Incidents Guidance Protocol work and a new legislative initiative to expand dual and concurrent enrollment opportunities in Connecticut, seeking input from the audience on best practices and successful districts.

Dual Enrollment Opportunities

Ms. Davis discussed dual-enrollment opportunities at South Windsor High School and the plans to use EdSight data to gather information. Mr. Higgins provided information about dual enrollment, while Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano highlighted common barriers to accessing these programs, including student and parent awareness and internal system challenges. Ms. Benham mentioned that dual enrollment and credentials are topics of ongoing discussion in the Blue-Ribbon Career Pathways initiative, with the first draft set to be sent to the governor next month.

AP vs ECE Course Discussion

The committee discussed the challenges and misconceptions surrounding AP courses versus ECE courses, highlighting the importance of understanding differences in college acceptance and career pathways. It was discussed that overloading students with AP courses can be unhealthy due to excessive stress, particularly in high-achieving environments.

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.