

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

GUIDED BY PURPOSE INSPIRED BY PROGRESS

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Looking Back, Moving Forward: A Leadership Legacy at ACES

ACES is a vibrant, evolving organization dedicated to serving students, families, districts, and communities in ways that truly make a difference. As I prepare to close this chapter of my professional journey at ACES at the end of the current school year, I reflect with immense pride on the extraordinary growth, innovation, and collaboration that have defined our work together. We remain committed to advancing our mission through Advocacy, Commitment, Excellence, and Service in the months ahead.

During my time as Executive Director, we have expanded our impact through bold initiatives, new programs, and transformative facilities. We launched ACES International, expanded global partnerships, and opened two international preschools (which will remain with ACES), work that now will continue on an even larger stage as ACES International transitions to become part of AESA Global, extending our influence and collaborations worldwide. We strengthened regional partnerships through collaborative programs such as ACES at Mead, ACES at Ansonia Middle School, and expanded services in West Haven, creating new opportunities for students while supporting districts in meeting diverse needs. Looking ahead, we are excited to open ACES Perry Hill Nest for the 2025–26 school year, further expanding our reach and impact. We also developed The Bridge at ACES and our REGIONS program, ensuring specialized supports for students with complex challenges. We relocated ACES Thomas Edison Middle School in Meriden to the Chase campus in Waterbury and have seen ACES Chase Academy grow, now serving grades 6–10 with plans to expand to include grade 12 by 2027.

Our investment in infrastructure has been equally significant. We opened the Leeder Hill campus, renovated the Little Theatre, and launched the SmartCare Health Center to serve staff wellness needs. We took bold steps to launch the Regional Special Education Transportation (RSET) program and strengthened community partnerships through initiatives such as our insurance collaborative. We are advancing three construction projects: ACES Wintergreen (Hamden), ACES Chase Academy (Waterbury), and 88 Bassett Road (North Haven) to expand our ability to serve students and communities.

We also recognize the importance of providing specialized education to our most vulnerable students. Our ACES Youth Justice and Education Programs provide diversion, academic instruction, real-world learning, and wraparound services in partnership with local and state providers. These efforts have earned recognition from the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) and other state-level agencies, underscoring our impact in this critical area.

The expansion of ACES UP is another milestone, offering innovative solutions for schools and communities across the region. From clean air technology to solar panel installations and EV charging stations, ACES UP is helping create healthier, more sustainable learning environments for future generations.

Innovation has guided us through both opportunity and challenge. We navigated the shift to remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining our focus on educational equity and student engagement. We introduced new models for teaching, learning, and workforce readiness. We have embraced sustainable practices, expanded career readiness pathways, and strengthened support services for students and adults alike.

These achievements are a direct reflection of the Advocacy that drives us to champion every learner, the Commitment we show to our mission and community, the Excellence that defines our programs, and the Service that strengthens every connection we build.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication, skill, and heart of our staff, the trust of our partners, and the resilience of our students and families. Together, we have built something far greater than the sum of its parts, a legacy that will continue to grow for years to come.

As I look toward the future, I am confident that ACES is poised to reach even greater heights. Our foundation is strong, our vision is clear, and our core values: Advocacy, Commitment, Excellence, and Service will continue to guide us forward. It has been my honor to lead this remarkable organization, and I leave knowing it is in the most capable hands.

Thank you to our staff, partners, students, and families for the trust, dedication, and collaboration that have made these accomplishments possible. Together, we will continue to inspire and transform lives for years to come.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Danehy, Ed.D. Executive Director, ACES

Thomas M. Dach

Executive Leadership Council



Thomas M. Danehy, Ed. D. Executive Director



Timothy Howes
Deputy Executive Director



William A. Rice, Ed.D. Assistant Executive Director of Operations and Facilities



Rebecca CuevasDirector of Human Capital Development



Michelle Coogan Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Programs





Mission

ACES is dedicated to enhancing and transforming lives through education, innovation, and leadership.

Vision

To create an equitable and socially just world one life at a time.

Organizational Beliefs

- · Each individual has inherent worth
- · All individuals can learn
- · High expectations and effort are essential for higher achievement
- · Quality education provides the foundation for the success of the individual and community
- · Diversity strengthens an organization
- Individuals are responsible for their own actions
- Everyone has a responsibility to each other and to contribute to the common good
- · Honesty and respect are essential for building trusting relationships
- A positive attitude enhances performance
- · Collaboration enhances productivity and generates creativity
- Families are essential partners in education
- · The willingness to change is necessary for individuals to grow and organizations to thrive





ABOUT ACES

ACES (Area Cooperative Educational Services) is dedicated to enhancing and transforming lives through education, innovation, and collaboration. Serving the Greater New Haven area and beyond, ACES provides a wide range of educational services and programs designed to meet the diverse needs of our communities.

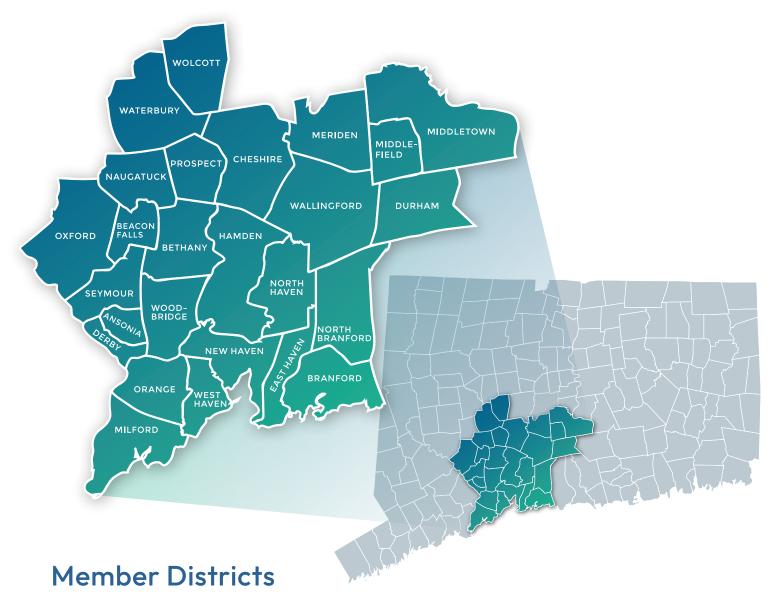
As a regional educational service center, ACES operates as both a nonprofit and a service organization. We function as a school district serving more than 2,000 students across three magnet schools, seven special education schools, and five alternative education programs. Additionally, we support many more students and educational professionals throughout the region through our comprehensive Services Division.

We offer specialized education programs for students from preschool through adulthood, ensuring that every individual has access to the resources and support they need to succeed. Our Life Skills program, beginning at age 23, is designed to equip adults with the practical skills necessary for independent living and community integration.

In addition to our educational services, ACES also provides professional development, technology solutions, operational support to school districts, and more, enhancing the overall quality of education in the region. The Open Choice and Magnet School programs provide parents and students with diverse educational options, fostering an inclusive environment that promotes academic excellence and personal growth. Our commitment to innovation and excellence makes ACES a vital resource for students, educators, and communities alike.

Together, we are ACES—dedicated to excellence in education and committed to empowering every individual to reach their full potential.

To learn more about ACES and its impactful initiatives, we invite you to explore www.aces.org.



Ansonia North Haven
Bethany Orange

Branford Oxford

Cheshire Regional District #5 (Bethany, Orange, Woodbridge)

Derby Regional District #13 (Durham, Middlefield)
East Haven Regional District #16 (Beacon Falls, Prospect)

Hamden Seymour
Meriden Wallingford
Middletown Waterbury
Milford West Haven
Naugatuck Wolcott
New Haven Woodbridge

North Branford

SCHOOL DISTRICT	MEMBER	OFFICE
Ansonia	Rich Bshara	
Bethany	(Vacant)	
Branford	Ellen Michaels	
Cheshire	Ann Marie Cullinan	Executive Board
Derby	(Vacant)	
East Haven	Michelle Delucia	
Hamden	Greta Johnson	
Meriden	McKimmy Hayes	
Middletown	(Vacant)	
Milford	Mike Smith	Executive Board
Naugatuck	Ethel Grant	Vice Chairperson
New Haven	(Vacant)	
North Branford	Kim Dawson	
North Haven	Martin Rudnick	
Orange	Susan Riccio	Chairperson
Oxford	(Vacant)	
Regional District #5	Carol Oladele	
Regional District #13	Lindsay Dahlheimer	Executive Board
Regional District #16	(Vacant)	
Seymour	(Vacant)	
Wallingford	Ray Ross	
Waterbury	Thomas Van Stone	Fiscal Agent
West Haven	Kim Kenny	
Wolcott	Roberta Leonard	Executive Board
Woodbridge	(Vacant)	



Susan Riccio Chairperson



Ethel Grant Vice Chairperson







25
Communities in the ACES Region

50
Districts Served by ACES

ACES Schools and Educational Programs

Collaborative Educational Programs

1,357
ACES Magnet School Students

921ACES Special Education Students

2,278
Total ACES Students

ACES ACCESS / VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

75

Businesses Working With ACES Vocational Programs 130

Total ACCESS Program Participants 125

ACES High School Students Participating in ACES Vocational Programs

CLINICAL SERVICES (Encompassing Assistive Tech, Behavior Services, OT/PT)

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

21

Districts/Agencies Served

56

Schools Served

171

Students Served

BEHAVIOR SERVICES

17

Districts Served By ACES Behavior Services

21

Insurance-Based ABA Service Clients

EXTENSION THERAPY SERVICES

29

Districts/ Agencies Served By ACES Extension Therapy Services 103

Schools Served By ACES Occupational And Physical Therapists 1,865

Students Served By ACES Occupational And Physical Therapists **EARLY HEAD START**

104

Children Served in Early Head Start - Birth to 3

16

Expectant Mothers Served in Early Head Start

14

Communities Participated in Early Head Start

OPEN CHOICE

13

Districts Participated

44

Schools Participated

365

Students Served

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO CERTIFICATION

113

Educators Enrolled in ACES ARC Programs

3

ARC Cohorts

1,281

Educators Participating in Professional Development Opportunities Facilitated by PDSI

REGIONAL SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION (RSET)

24

Districts Served by RSET

270

Special Education Students Transported

ACES APPLICATIONS AND REPORTING GROUP

3

Districts Served

68

Programs Supported

3,027

End-Users Supported

610

Data Privacy Contract Reviews and Applications Supported

39

Projects Completed

6,875

Service Requests Completed

1,299

RESC Alliance Canvas Courses Supported

108

RESC Alliance Canvas Course Developers Supported

18,525

RESC Alliance Canvas Participants Supported

NETWORK SERVICES

6

Businesses and Districts Served

3,520

End-Users Supported

5,257

Devices Maintained

5,825

Services Completed

TRANSPORTATION

317

ACES Students and Individuals Transported

175

Vehicles in ACES Fleet

1 Million +

Fleet Miles Driven by ACES Drivers

2024-2025 ACES AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

ACES Highlights

ACES Career Fair Highlights

The ACES Career Fair was once again a resounding success, drawing an impressive turnout and creating an atmosphere full of energy and enthusiasm. More than a career exploration event, it served as a meaningful gathering for individuals dedicated to transforming lives through education.

We extend our gratitude to the ACES staff members whose commitment and hard work made this event possible, fostering connections and inspiring future careers. To all who attended, from aspiring educators to administrative professionals, thank you for exploring the opportunities ACES offers. Your passion and commitment to education continue to make our mission possible.







CASBO Vendor Day Highlights

ACES was proud to participate in CASBO Vendor Day, where staff from ACES RSET, ACES Clinical Services, and ACES UP shared valuable resources, connected with school leaders, and highlighted the impactful work we do across the region. This event provided an important opportunity to showcase ACES' mission and services while strengthening partnerships that support students and communities.







ASRC Walk for Autism Highlights

ACES proudly participated in the 2025 ASRC Walk for Autism, with more than 100 staff and families joining together in support of autism awareness. Our collective presence reflected ACES' ongoing commitment to community, inclusion, and advocacy.











Leadership Development Highlights

In partnership with the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, ACES supported staff participation in leadership development opportunities. David Sanchez took part in the Chamber's Leadership Program, while Elaine Sein completed the XO Program. These experiences reflect ACES' commitment to cultivating strong leaders and fostering professional growth that benefits both our organization and the wider community.





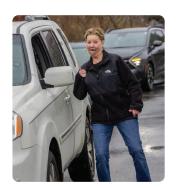


The Gr8 Thanksgiving Food Drive

In November 2024, ACES continued its partnership with WTNH News 8 at Connecticut Foodshare for the annual GR8 Thanksgiving Food Drive. ACES proudly served as an event sponsor, with staff on hand to help collect nonperishable food donations from the public. Our involvement highlighted ACES' ongoing commitment to supporting families in need and strengthening community connections during the holiday season and beyond.









Middletown Pride Parade

ACES staff proudly continued our participation in the Middletown Pride Parade, celebrating love, diversity, and acceptance alongside the community. Our presence at this year's event underscored ACES' ongoing commitment to inclusion and belonging

ACES 3rd Annual Resource Fair

ACES proudly hosted its third annual Resource Fair, building on the momentum of past years and strengthening connections between schools, district staff, and external providers. With participation from 19 districts, 28 vendors, and over 60 attendees, the event highlighted the growing impact of this initiative. Each year, the Resource Fair expands in reach and influence, showcasing a diverse network of providers dedicated to supporting students' educational growth and social-emotional well-being.







Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce Awards

At the 28th Annual Chamber Choice Awards, hosted by the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce, ACES was honored as the **Service Organization of the Year.** The event celebrated outstanding contributions across the community, with recognition for businesses, educators, and leaders who make a difference. This award underscores ACES' continued impact in serving students, families, and districts throughout the region.









Leeder Hill Music Festival

In May 2025, ACES launched its first-ever Leeder Hill Music Festival, bringing together staff, families, and the community for an afternoon of live performances. The event featured Manny James, Kdub & Kay Dot, Bill G., Dre' Da'Voice, and more, with proceeds benefiting Team ACES in the ASRC Walk for Autism. This inaugural festival built on ACES' tradition of showcasing staff talent and highlighted the power of music to connect and inspire while supporting a meaningful cause.









ACES Educational Center for the Arts Highlights

ECA students, faculty, families, and administration came together this year to energize programming, expand initiatives, boost recruitment efforts, and harness the passion and commitment of all members of our community. Three areas of focus included expanding and strengthening relationships with the larger community, developing meaningful interdisciplinary collaborations, and pursuing innovation through art.

Artistic Connection, Collaboration, & Innovation

CONNECTIONS

Black Joy Showcase

In February and March of 2025, ECA students and faculty developed a powerful celebration of identity, culture, and student voice. The 2025 Black Joy Showcase was an incredible success thanks to the leadership of our remarkable students, the support of our families, and the commitment of our faculty. The spirit of this evening showcase was captured by Lucy Gellman in the *Arts Paper*, sharing it with the broader community, shining a spotlight on the joy, excellence, and possibility that exists within our walls. Please visit this link to read their article on the event.

IRIS After School Program Workshops

Students and faculty expanded their work with the IRIS Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services After School Program in New Haven throughout the 2024–2025 school year. A small team of students from across the school visited IRIS regularly from October–March. With a focus on building relationships and connections, this small team developed a series of arts-immersion workshops for elementary and middle school IRIS students to promote connection, support literacy, and inspire creativity through the arts. This work was shared in a formal presentation at the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Council Empowered to Lead Symposium in July 2025, led by Assistant Principal, Amy Christman.

National Recognition

The ECA Jazz Collective competed at the National High School Jazz Festival in Philadelphia, PA, in March 2025, earning their second consecutive 1st Place award. The festival brings together high school students from across the nation to celebrate jazz education and performance. The ECA Music Department Tri-M National Honor Society was recognized as the NAfME (National Association for Music Education) Connecticut Chapter of the Year for their community and service programming. Many ECA writers and visual artists were recognized through *The Scholastic Art and Writing Awards* program, the longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens in the United States. CT Halo Awards: The ECA Theatre Department Participated in the 2024–2025 Halo Awards this year, earning numerous nominations and the following awards, including Best Stage Management (Ray Sanders (SM) for Romeo and Juliet), Best Performance in a Supporting Male Role: (Kaylin Harrell as Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet), and the Fearless Award for The Accepted, an original play by ECA Faculty member Brett Epstein.

Visual Art Portfolio Day

ECA hosted a two-day art portfolio college fair featuring 25+ of the top art schools and collegiate programs from around the country. This event, designed exclusively for ECA students, is the largest of its kind in New England and one of only a handful in the country. ECA junior and senior students share their portfolios with college counselors, university faculty, and practicing artists, as both practice for juniors as they approach college admissions & interviews, as well as formal college admissions opportunities for seniors, a fair number of whom are admitted to collegiate programs at the event.







INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

Three Ways to Tell a Story

Under the guidance of Saul Fussiner (writing), Laura Manzella (dance), and Polina Nazaykinskaya (music), ECA students collaborated across three disciplines to produce original works of poetry, story, musical composition, dance choreography, and film. Faculty facilitated joint sessions of their fall semester classes to explore the art of storytelling through deep exploration and the generation of artistic ideas. Students shared the culmination of this work in a public performance titled "Three Ways to Tell a Story."

2025 Summer Film Program

In July 2025 ECA launched its first summer program, a week-long intensive in the art of film. Funded through a professional development grant, ECA faculty from all five artistic departments worked collaboratively to offer interactive workshops in screenwriting, acting for the camera, cinematography, sound design, and film editing. The structure was designed as an idea incubator for faculty share and develop interdisciplinary curricula. After exploring foundational workshops, students progressed through the writing, filming, and editing process to produce two short films.

INNOVATION THROUGH THE ARTS

Visual Art: Sculpture Exhibit

The 3rd quarter Visual Art Gallery Opening featured student works in the ECA gallery and 5th floor studios, in addition to a special sculpture exhibit in the ECA Arts Hall. Works featured moveable murals and a multi-media installation featuring large-scale sculptures, video, and projection mapping by more than 20 students.

Devised Theatre: Feminist Theatre Project

Ingrid Schaeffer (Theatre Department Chair) and Liz Daingerfield (Theatre Department Faculty) co-facilitated the development of a full-scale production of original student work exploring vital conversation and using the stage to uplift diverse voices and challenge societal norms. After a full semester of research, exploration, writing, and rehearsing, the production premiered in May 2025, to sold-out crowds.

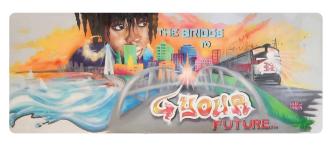
Theatre Production:

ECA students took the stage in April 2025 with Left to Our Own Devices, a performance that tackled the challenges of staying truly connected in a digital world. Through a rich tapestry of characters, from internet influencers and gender-fluid trailblazers to struggling teens and misunderstood families, they explored the impact of technology on relationships, identity, and mental health. With courage, honesty, and creativity, they shed light on topics like online bullying, peer pressure, and the search to be seen and heard. The result was a moving and thought-provoking production that sparked important conversations and left a lasting impression on all who attended.

ACES Youth Justice and Education Services (YJES) Highlights

Expanding Access and Services

Youth Justice and Education Services (YJES) provided rigorous academics, vocational training, clinical support, and advocacy for youth navigating significant challenges, including justice system involvement. Over the past year, programs across three REGIONS and The Bridge at ACES expanded their reach, offering more youth structured pathways to education and vocational



exploration, as well as personal growth. This progress was reflected not only in enrollment but also in the diversification of program offerings and the strengthening of community partnerships. By integrating academics with workforce readiness, therapeutic care, and restorative practices, YJES created environments where youth could re-engage with education and vocational exploration, develop resilience, and pursue long-term goals with greater confidence.

Innovation and Program Development



Innovation remained central to YJES' efforts last year, driving new initiatives that expanded opportunities for youth and strengthened their readiness for the future. Hamden REGIONS Phase II at The Bridge has advanced with new external funding, supporting the continuation of the "Pop Up Shop" projects that provide youth with hands-on experiences in entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and workforce skills. These projects not only build practical abilities but also foster creativity,

teamwork, and confidence, while expanding programming with a focus on vocational exploration, restorative practices, and stronger community partnerships. A statewide vocational initiative, launched through a contract with the Juvenile Branch Court Support Service Division (JBCSSD), engaged ACES to hire vocational instructors who will be placed in juvenile justice residential programs across Connecticut, including the state's two detention centers. This milestone marked a significant step in extending workforce development from individual programs to a coordinated statewide effort.

The launch of the Brightwell program for high school youth with autism highlighted YJES's commitment to inclusive education and vocational exploration, and it is an option for local school districts seeking high-quality programming for this population. Clinical supports expanded with the addition of a contracted psychiatrist at The Bridge, strengthening therapeutic care and overall well-being. Work also began on integrating an Al-based curriculum to prepare staff and youth for the demands of modern learning. Planning continued for a new afterschool enrichment program, which, once funded, will expand engagement opportunities beyond the traditional day. Together, these initiatives reflect YJES's adaptability and innovation in responding to the evolving needs of youth and the communities we serve.

Leadership in Policy and Advocacy

YJES expanded its influence through leadership in juvenile justice reform, cochairing the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) Diversion Committee to advocate for alternatives to arrest and promote diversion. It supported police and youth training programs statewide, fostering restorative approaches between youth and law enforcement. By working at both program and policy levels, YJES ensures the voices and needs of justice-involved youth remain central, positioning itself as both a service provider and thought leader in creating fairer opportunities for youth in Connecticut.



Human Capital Development Highlights

Human Capital Development welcomed Aryn McQuarrie, Larisa Kowaleski, and Melissa Alers to the department. Aryn is serving as the Receptionist and Fingerprinting Services Liaison, providing a warm and professional first point of contact for staff and visitors. In her role, Aryn will help ensure smooth front office operations and support the important work of onboarding and compliance through fingerprinting services. Larisa joined HCD as an HR Generalist and Lead for Fingerprinting Services, bringing valuable expertise to both our core HR functions and compliance efforts. In this role, Larisa will support a wide range of human resources initiatives while also leading the coordination of fingerprinting services. Her leadership and dedication will help strengthen our team's ability to serve staff and administrators across the organization. Melissa returns to ACES as an HR Generalist and Talent Development Specialist, focusing on initiatives that support staff growth and success. Melissa brings a strong background from



her previous roles at ACES, where she worked in Open Choice, Trade Development, and World Languages. Her wealth of experience and commitment to our mission will be invaluable as she helps design and deliver programs that enhance employee engagement and development.

West Haven High School Collaborative Program Highlights

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the West Haven High School Collaborative Program. For two decades, ACES and the West Haven School District have worked side by side to provide students with an education that combines strong academics with the services and supports they need to succeed.

The collaborative has always been more than a program; it represents the commitment of two districts working together on behalf of students and families. Over the years, that partnership has created opportunities that are unique to West Haven and ACES, giving students access to resources that strengthen both their learning and their sense of belonging.

We are proud of this shared history and grateful for the trust placed in us. As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward to continuing the work together and building on the foundation that has been set for the next generation of West Haven students.



West Haven High School Collaborative Program Highlights

The West Haven High School Collaborative Program had an exciting year filled with growth and achievement. This year, students participated in high school electives such as drawing, ceramics, government, and personal finance, while also engaging in hands-on projects supported by an ACES Foundation Grant, including maintaining a hydroponic garden tower and preparing meals with their own harvest. They also launched a dog treat business, gaining valuable employability and life skills through managing money, inventory, and production. Community experiences included trips on the Metro North train, candy making at Fascia's Chocolates, and a visit to the Connecticut Science Center. The year concluded with a special stepping-up ceremony where four seniors were celebrated alongside staff, families, a guest speaker, and the school band; highlighting the program's focus on growth, independence, and community connection.





West Haven Elementary Collaborative Program Highlights

This year, the majority of students in the collaborative program accessed grade-level curriculum at individualized paces, with strong academic outcomes including one student who achieved school-wide recognition for mastering 1,000 sight words. Students increasingly joined peers in inclusive settings such as lunch, recess, and general education classes, with three preparing to exit at year-end and three attending part-time. Social-emotional learning was emphasized through "safe day" charts, Safe Day Club activities, and upcoming implementation of the AIM Curriculum. With support from ACES Foundation grants, students also participated in a karate program that focused on building character and confidence and used a new hydroponic garden tower to grow and harvest their own vegetables and spices. Together, these experiences reflect the program's commitment to academic growth, social-emotional development, healthy living, and inclusion.







ACES Village School Highlights

Teaching the Power of Community

At Village School, we are committed to teaching our students the value of being civic-minded and giving back to the community. Each year, our students and staff come together to support organizations that make a difference, and this year we proudly raised over \$3,000. Through events and initiatives supporting causes such as the ASRC Walk for Autism, The Tommy Fund, CdLS Awareness Day, Susan G. Komen, CT Children's Foundation, and more, we not only strengthen important community partnerships but also model for our students the power of compassion, generosity, and collective action.

Fostering a Love of Reading at Village School

At Village School, we believe literacy is a cornerstone of growth for every student, no matter their ability level. Books have the power to open doors; sparking imagination, building communication, and creating opportunities for learning that extend far beyond the classroom. Each year, our Scholastic Book Fair invites students and families to share in the joy of choosing books together, reinforcing the importance of reading as a lifelong habit. Thanks to the generosity of an ACES Education Foundation Grant, every student this year was able to take home a brand-new book from the Book Fair at no cost to them, ensuring that the gift of reading is accessible to all. In addition, our monthly library visits, featuring guest readers from across our community, bring stories to life and foster a love of reading for all. Whether through a favorite picture book, a story read aloud, or a text that inspires new curiosity, literacy remains at the heart of helping our students discover new possibilities.

A Creative Collaboration with ACES Educational Center for the Arts

This year, Village School students had the unique opportunity to collaborate with the ACES Educational Center for the Arts, where they explored the power of expression through theater. In a playful and engaging workshop, students learned about emotions and how they can be expressed through acting, movement, and creativity. The experience not only introduced them to the art of performance but also provided a meaningful way to practice social-emotional skills in an accessible and fun environment. This collaboration with another ACES program was a wonderful example of how the arts can connect students to new forms of expression and help them grow in confidence and understanding.













ACES Whitney High North Highlights

WHN's Annual Food Drive Provides Over 40 Holiday Baskets to Families in Need

Last November, Whitney High North held its annual food drive. Staff and students worked together to collect a variety of nonperishable food items to help supplement holiday meals for families in need. Through the collaboration of our community outreach coordinator and social workers, we were able to send home and deliver more than forty food baskets during the holiday season.

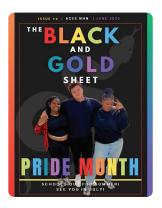
In addition, thanks to the generosity and support of the ACES grant foundation, we launched a school food pantry on site to provide ongoing support for families throughout the year. This resource ensures that our school community has access to essential food items well beyond the holiday season.

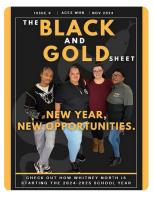


WHN Students Continue to Publish The Black and Gold Sheet to Voice Local and Global Perspectives

Whitney High North students showcased their writing abilities this year through The Black and Gold Sheet, a student-run magazine created to amplify both local and global perspectives. Collaborating with staff, students identified topics and wrote editorial pieces that allowed them to develop their voices as young writers and critical thinkers.

The magazine features multiple sections, offering students an outlet to share their likes, dislikes, and concerns on a wide range of issues. Published and distributed each quarter, The Black and Gold Sheet has become a meaningful platform for student expression, creativity, and engagement with the world around them.







Staff and Students Create Lasting Memories on Spring Trip to Washington, D.C.

This past spring, staff and a select group of students traveled to Washington, D.C., for an unforgettable learning experience. The group arrived by train and toured many of the nation's most notable landmarks and attractions in our capital city.

Throughout the trip, students were able to make real-world connections to their learning while also building lasting memories with peers and staff. The experience not only broadened their understanding of history and government but also strengthened our school community.



The Bridge at ACES & Brightwell Academy Highlights

Over the past year, The Bridge at ACES has continued its mission of "bridging" youth involved in the juvenile justice system and/or in need of a specialized alternative setting back on the path to graduation within a small program environment. This initiative focuses on providing enhanced services across three key areas: vocational exploration, challenging academics, and social-emotional support. Youth benefit from customized programming aimed at building skills, fostering resilience, and preparing them for long-term success. Our youth are referred by local school districts, juvenile justice residential centers (Hartford and Hamden REGIONS), along with juvenile justice teams including probation, DCF, and juvenile public defenders' offices.

The Bridge's approach is highly collaborative, engaging probation officers, local service providers, school districts, and families to ensure that a strong network of care supports every youth. These partnerships allow for the alignment of educational planning with wraparound services, ensuring continuity as youth move between programs and their home communities. Close coordination also makes it possible to identify emerging needs more quickly and to respond with targeted supports that address both academic and personal growth. This collective effort strengthens outcomes and reflects a shared commitment to helping youth succeed.

A major highlight this year was the launch of Brightwell Academy, a new program supporting high school students with autism. Brightwell is created to offer specialized academic and vocational programs in a nurturing environment, gradually becoming an option for local school districts seeking high-quality, customized services for this group. The addition of Brightwell expands The Bridge's reach, allowing more youth to access programs that address their specific needs.

Together, these efforts showcase The Bridge's ongoing commitment to giving youth the resources, partnerships, and opportunities they need to stay on track for graduation and build confidence in their future. The combination of academic rigor, vocational exploration, and clinical support ensures that youth not only reach immediate goals but also develop the skills and resilience necessary for long-term success. The addition of Brightwell Academy further strengthens this continuum of services by offering a specialized environment for youth whose needs extend beyond traditional programming.

Looking ahead, The Bridge at ACES will continue to grow as both a supportive space and a launching pad, preparing youth to transition confidently into their next chapter, whether that is graduation, employment, or returning to their home districts with renewed readiness to succeed. Plans include closer alignment with YJES initiatives such as Al-integrated curricula, statewide vocational placements, and expanded afterschool enrichment, ensuring that The Bridge remains a leader in innovation and opportunity within ACES.







ACES SAILS Highlights

ACES SAILS staff along with their families joined Team ACES at the ASRC Walk for Autism on a beautiful day in May. To raise money we again collaborated with Busy Bee Beading & Co. to conduct an agency wide bracelet fundraiser raising \$220 as part of Team ACES.

In April, SAILS Family Engagement Committee planned their annual Prom. This year's theme was luau. The Prom is a fantastic event providing families a fun night out and an opportunity to connect with SAILS staff and families. Families were able to spend time with their child, enjoy delicious pizza and snacks, as well as dance the night away thanks to RJ the DJ!

Community participation is important for students to generalize and practice skills learned at school. Students continued to make regular trips to various community locations such as grocery and department stores, movie theaters, parks, and restaurants to work on communication, behavior, social, and functional life skills. New this year was a collaboration between ACES SAILS and ACES ACCESS to provide an additional location for students to practice skills.







ACES Chase Academy Highlights

Eleven high school freshmen earned college credit from the University of Connecticut for successful completion of Discrete Mathematics.

ACES Chase Academy continues its partnership with the Barr Foundation to create an innovative high school experience as part of their Catalyze New Models program.

Ten 6th-grade students were state finalists at the 2025 Connecticut Invention Convention, held at the University of Connecticut.

100% of 8th-grade students successfully presented their competency-based Digital Portfolio Demonstration to showcase their amazing work associated with the school's Portrait of a Graduate attributes of problem solving, collaboration, communication, and advocacy.



ACES Early Head Start Highlights

ACES Early Head Start Participates in Middletown Kids Health & Safety Day

ACES Early Head Start (EHS) staff participated in the 2025 Middletown Kids Health & Safety Day, a community-centered event focused on providing families with valuable health education and safety resources. Staff engaged with families and children throughout the day. Their presence highlighted the dedication of our EHS team to supporting young learners and strengthening family well-being.







ACES Education Foundation Fund-a-Need Grant Recipient

On January 16, 2025, ACES Early Head Start received the ACES Education Foundation Fund-a-Need grant for "Building Readers for Life," for \$5,000 for the 2024–2025 school year. With these funds, the program purchased 360 educational and culturally and linguistically responsive books, along with 40 additional titles highlighting male role models. Books are shared with families during structured program activities such as Socializations or delivered monthly to homes, helping families steadily build personal home libraries.

Reading during the earliest years is critical for brain development, language growth, and family bonding. Research from the American Academy of Pediatrics, Zero to Three, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children confirms that reading from birth to age three supports vocabulary, emergent literacy, and a love of books. By providing families with high-quality, culturally meaningful materials, this project ensures children have the resources and encouragement to develop early literacy skills that prepare them for school and lifelong learning. Through this grant, ACES Early Head Start is not only placing books in children's hands but also building readers for life.



ACES at Mead Highlights

ACES at Mead held its First Annual Science Fair, and it was a huge success! Staff, students, and families came together to celebrate curiosity, creativity, and hands-on learning.

Students in grades k-5 were introduced to different scientific phenomena, sparking excitement and setting the stage for exploration. Then, each student group proudly presented their experiment—sharing their hypotheses, results, observations, and key takeaways.

Projects were directly connected to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), giving students the chance to engage in authentic scientific practices. Through their work, students asked questions, designed and carried out investigations, collected and analyzed data, and communicated their findings—skills at the heart of NGSS and 21st-century learning.

It was inspiring to watch our young scientists confidently explain their thinking, respond to questions, and demonstrate how science connects to the world around them. Families and peers toured the projects, asked thoughtful questions, and joined in the fun—making it a true community celebration of learning.







ACES at AMS Highlights

Our middle school students had quite the adventure on their field trip to the Eli Whitney Museum. Students explored the forces of potential, kinetic, and mechanical energy while learning about the history of catapults. They then became engineers themselves, applying their knowledge to design and build their own catapults—testing ideas, refining their models, and sharing results.

This experience was deeply connected to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), as students practiced planning and carrying out investigations with their catapult designs, developing and using models to explain energy transfer, constructing explanations and designing solutions through hands-on engineering, and engaging in argument from evidence by comparing outcomes and approaches.

The day wrapped up with a well-earned lunch out at a favorite restaurant which provided a chance for students to relax, reflect, and celebrate their efforts after a day of physical and intellectual challenge.





ACES Whitney Academy EXPLORE, CREATE, and RISE Highlights

Students, staff, and families worked together to raise a total of \$4,000 to donate to the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation. This was the largest donation made by Whitney Academy to the Foundation, to date. Students were active participants in the fundraising and promotion of this event.

We introduced a new enrichment activity for students titled The Peer Program. This club is similar to Best Buddies as it allows students from our higher-functioning, verbal classrooms to engage in social activities with students in our medically fragile and lower-functioning classrooms. These experiences provide students with a fun way to connect with their peers and deepens their understanding of each other and others' differences.

We celebrated the successes of our classrooms with students and their families during the 2nd annual "Thanks For Giving" event in December. Classrooms created posters or presentations to display their accomplishments with families. Families were able to learn about and purchase items from classroom-run businesses and celebrate their child's successes. Student artists treated their families to performances, including a special one by our new student-staff band, Vonte and the Subs!

Students' talent was on full display, both on stage and behind the scenes, during our annual spring musical. This year we performed The Wizard of Oz!









ACES Mill Road School Highlights

Community Service

ACES Mill Road School Instills Community Service Values Through Local and National Programs ACES Mill Road School is a community service school that supports a myriad of local and national programs. From singing at a local assisted living facility, collecting food for a local pantry, holiday fundraising for those in need and raising money for the American Cancer Society, we teach our students the power of giving back to the community.

Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices Training Fosters Safe and Supportive Spaces for ACES Mill Road School. The entire school has been trained in Restorative Practices, defined as "methods for building community and repairing relationships when harm has occurred". The intent is on creating safe spaces for staff and students where we work through challenges in positive and supportive ways.



Community Engagement

ACES Mill Road School believes in Community Engagement as a way to make connections with both families and local businesses. From our participation in the annual fall scarecrow competition, to our very own Mill Road barbecue, we worked tirelessly to create a "family vibe" both at school and in the community.

ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School Highlights

Leaders in Arts & Innovation

Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School offers an intensive arts curriculum that inspires creativity and innovation. During the 2024–25 school year, WIMS "creatives" explored the essential question: Who are we as leaders in arts and innovation? Partnerships with ACES Educational Center for the Arts, CONNCORP, the Peabody Museum, Southern Connecticut State University, and the Shubert Theatre enriched student experiences through opportunities offered during the school day, after school, and throughout the summer. Student products included original WIMS merchandise, two schoolwide musicals, and artistic creations across multiple media.

Academic Excellence

WIMS is committed to becoming a high-achieving school in the State of Connecticut. The year began with a "Chart Your Course" event focused on goal-setting and vision, and concluded with a Celebration of Learning, where students presented academic and artistic products that reflected their growth and aspirations. These presentations highlighted the school's mission to "creAte, collaboRate, communicaTe, and discover their passion through innovation and the ARTS."

Beyond performance-based measures, WIMS achieved a 7% decrease in chronic absenteeism, reflecting stronger school engagement. Student achievement in both math and literacy showed encouraging growth, as evidenced by standardized test scores and student portfolios. Wintergreen creatives truly "shine brighter than diamonds."







PDSI Highlights

In September 2024, PDSI hosted a conference focused on the practices described in Dr. Peter Liljedahl's best-selling book, Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics (Grades K-12): 14 Teaching Practices for Enhancing Learning. Nearly 200 educators were treated to a virtual lecture from Dr. Lilejdahl and breakout sessions designed by PDSI staff and other educators experienced in implementing thinking classrooms. Participants engaged in student-centered strategies from Building Thinking Classrooms across different content areas, collaborated and shared across districts on implementation of Dr. Liljedahl's practices, and reflected on ways to create safe, inclusive learning spaces that amplify student voices and ideas.

Due to the success of this conference, PDSI offered follow-up workshops for 243 educators and a consortium of districts to continue the learning and sharing across districts and content areas.

Professional Learning Consortiums

To provide innovative and cost-effective solutions for districts, PDSI developed and piloted two professional learning consortiums, each designed to bring together educators and leaders from across the region to engage in collaborative learning.

Building Thinking Classrooms Consortium

This consortium was designed for teachers, instructional coaches, and school leaders who are new to Building Thinking Classrooms and are committed to fostering student-centered, thinking-focused learning environments based on Peter Liljedahl's Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics. Through a collaborative professional learning community, 65 participants explored high-impact strategies that foster student engagement, deepen thinking, and promote problem-solving.

Play-Based Learning Consortium

This unique opportunity brings together educators, administrators, and curriculum leaders to explore the power of play-based learning in elementary school settings. 42 participants engaged in professional learning, site visits to see the implementation of play-based learning, and collaborative development of standards-aligned scenarios while building a supportive network to effectively integrate play-based learning into existing curriculum. The consortium culminated in a showcase for participants to demonstrate their learning for colleagues and administrators.

In addition to continuing these two topics, PDSI is adding a consortium on School Climate Leadership in 2025-26.

Leading with AI: ACES AI Certification Course for Leaders & Educators

In February 2025, PDSI launched an AI certification course for leaders and educators. 18 educators and school leaders participated in this pilot.

The ACES AI Certification Course is a forward-thinking, research-based professional learning experience designed for K–12 district and school leaders, instructional coaches, and educators who are ready to lead confidently in the age of AI. Developed and facilitated by Bob Hutchins, Founder of Human Voice Media, the course brings together practical strategies, ethical frameworks, and real-world case studies to help educators navigate the evolving role of AI in schools.

Participants explore the foundational principles of artificial intelligence, examine privacy and bias in Al-powered tools, and apply leadership strategies for change management and community engagement. Through a blend of theory and practice, the course equips participants with the tools to evaluate Al tools thoughtfully, make informed decisions, and lead strategic implementation efforts that prioritize ethics, equity, and educational impact.

Course Modules:

Module 1: Al Foundations for Leaders & Educators

Module 2: Data Privacy, Accuracy & Management

Module 3: Leadership & Change Management in Al Integration

Module 4: Al in Community & Family Engagement

Module 5: Al Pilot Programs & Practical Application in K–12 Education

CERCLE Workforce Development for Early Care and Education Grant

Through a second-year grant from CERCLE, ACES PDSI staff facilitated CDA portfolio support groups and training for 14 New Haven early childhood providers working to obtain the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential needed to advance their careers. The focus was to support educators within their current positions and support advancement, as needed. CDA portfolio support cohorts consisted of 2-hour weekly sessions for 12 weeks, including an hour of training and an hour of support. Training focused on best practices in the early childhood field aligned to the eight (8) CDA Competency Areas. The support guided participants to articulate and document how they meet the CDA Competency Areas in their daily work. In addition, participants received observation/coaching support to provide guidance in putting the CDA Competency Standards into practice and support them in providing a meaningful learning environment and opportunities to enhance the development of the children they serve.

As a result of this project:

- Educators developed individual professional development plans and reported being motivated to continue their education.
- All participating educators articulated how they provide appropriate care and education to the young children they work with.
- Administrators have the information necessary to support their staff in maintaining and obtaining early childhood credentials.





Building Leadership Capacity Within PDSI

In spring 2024, PDSI promoted Rosaria (Rosie) Giannetti and Dr. Jessica White to new leadership roles at ACES!

Rosaria Giannetti has been named Assistant Director of Professional Learning Services. Since joining ACES in September 2021 as a Professional Learning Specialist, Rosie has brought her 15+ years of experience in elementary education and instructional coaching to support districts and educators. Her expertise in elementary curriculum development, K-5 literacy instruction (Science of Reading), multilingual learners, and early childhood education will continue shaping high-quality professional learning programs.

Dr. Jessica White has been appointed Assistant Director of Al Services and Product Development. Since joining ACES in August 2019 as a Professional Learning Specialist, Jessica has been instrumental in math education, instructional data teams, curriculum writing, and equity-oriented instructional practices. With deep expertise in K-12 mathematics teaching and learning, differentiation, and Restorative Practices, she will now lead the expansion of Al-driven solutions and digital learning innovations.

Both bring valuable experience from their time as Professional Learning Specialists and will continue to advance ACES' mission through their leadership!

ACES Teacher of the Year

The ACES Teacher of the Year program recognizes and celebrates teachers for their hard work and dedication to our students, especially during such an unprecedented time in education.

Sasha Lugo has consistently excelled at ACES, delivering exceptional support and attention to her students. Her passion for teaching and dedication to student success make her an invaluable member of the ACES community.





ACES Rookie of the Year

The ACES Rookie of the Year award recognizes staff who embody the ACES Vision, Mission, and Beliefs and demonstrate them in their daily work through strong work ethics and community service. Rookie of the Year nominees must have been employed for a minimum of 1 year and no more than 3.

Congratulations to **Cristina Goncalves, Khalilah Hinton,** and **Jason Terryn** for being selected as the recipients of the 2024 Rookie of the Year Award.







Khalilah Hinton



Jason Terryn

ACES Executive Director Recognition Award Recipients

The Executive Director's Recognition Award program honors staff who represent the ACES Vision, Mission, and Beliefs and demonstrate them in their daily work through outstanding work ethic and community service.

Congratulations to Andrew Carr, Allison Simeone, and Melissa St. Peter for being selected as the recipients of the Executive Director's Recognition Award.







Andrew Carr

Allison Simeone

Melissa St. Peter

Teacher Education and Mentoring Program (TEAM)

The Beginning Teacher Recognition Award honors first and second-year teachers who have demonstrated perseverance and commitment in their early years of teaching. This award is not about being the "best", it's about recognizing those who continue to grow, adapt, and inspire.

We are proud to celebrate these incredible educators and thank them for the positive impact they make every day across our schools!

Congratulations to our Beginning Teacher Recognition Award Recipients:

- · Christina Ceccorulli
- · Carrie Dennehy
- Andrew Denny
- · Nicola Distasio
- · Donovan Doviak
- Matthew Duval
- · Melissa Fortunato
- · Geoffrey Giannini
- · Alyssa Hall
- Jennifer Malz
- · Desteny Maragh
- · Gabrielle Mitchell
- Brendan Reilly
- Alexandra Rogers



ACES SCHOOLS

As a local education agency (LEA), ACES operates a number of schools and educational programs that serve the needs of member school districts across the region. The two primary district needs that we address in our schools are a) issues of academic achievement stemming from racial, ethnic and economic isolation; and b) educating students whose disabilities pose challenges that exceed the capacity of local districts. In response, we provide rigorous academic curricula through three interdistrict magnet schools that enroll close to 1,400 students, seven special education schools and five alternative education schools that enroll over 900 students.





ACES Interdistrict Magnet Schools

ACES Educational Center for the Arts (ECA)

Located in the heart of New Haven's Audubon Arts District, ACES Educational Center for the Arts (ECA) is a public, halftime, inter-district magnet high school for the fine arts, serving students from 27 school districts in south-central Connecticut and beyond.

ECA students engage in curricular programs in visual arts, theatre, dance, creative writing, and music which broaden and deepen their capacities as young artists. As they progress through their course of study, ECA students become **Thinkers** who pursue, respond to, and refine ideas with intellectual rigor and artistic insight; **Seekers** who develop and follow a line of questioning as they aspire to deeper understanding and discovery; and **Creators** who bring ideas to life through imaginative play and the bold, tenacious pursuit of discovery.

ECA graduates go on to study a variety of fields both in and outside of the arts, at college and universities including Vanderbilt, Boston University, NYU, RISD, UCONN, The New School, The Juilliard School, AMDA, Howard University, Cooper Union, Yale, University of Michigan, and the Berklee School of Music. ECA alumni create a vibrant network of professionals in the arts as performers, creators, and producers, as well as in business, design, education, medicine, film, social work, art therapy, and more.

Experience the transformative power of the arts at ECA.

ACES Chase Academy is an interdistrict magnet school where 6th through 9th-grade students focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics). The school empowers students to examine challenging problems through design, writing, research, and investigation to find innovative solutions. ACES Chase Academy is a seven-time recipient of the Project Lead the Way Distinguished Program award. ACES Chase Academy continues its high school expansion with our first graduating class in 2028.

ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School (WIMS) is a K-8 Magnet school serving students from more than a dozen Connecticut school districts. ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School is dedicated to providing all students with a safe and nurturing environment that immerses each student in the arts, grounds them in restorative behaviors and engages their minds to ensure academic and personal success. Magnet Schools of America named WIMS a National Magnet School of Distinction in 2023, and a National Merit School of Excellence in 2024. ACES Educational Center for the Arts, Southern University, and the Shubert Theatre are just a few of the partners who support the implementation of robust enrichment opportunities for all students. WIMS scholars are exposed to arts professionals who are influential on both local and global platforms through the Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Schools approach to instruction. Wintergreen's rigorous curriculum is designed and implemented to prepare students to leave our school with the inspiration to create, collaborate, communicate, and discover their passion through innovation and the arts.







ACES Special Education Schools

ACES Brightwell Academy

Brightwell Academy is a specialized high school program designed for students with autism and high cognitive abilities who benefit from support in social-emotional development, transition planning, and real-world readiness. The program serves students who demonstrate strong academic potential, thrive with structure and individualized attention, and need guidance in areas such as executive functioning, emotional regulation, and social skills.

The Academy integrates rigorous academics aligned with Connecticut Core Standards with embedded social-emotional learning and restorative practices. Students also gain career readiness training, community integration experiences, and transition services to support their futures. A strong emphasis is placed on developing self-advocacy, independence, and essential life skills to prepare students for success in college, careers, and beyond.

ACES Center for Autism Spectrum & Developmental Disorders (CASDD)

The ACES Science-based Approaches to Independence and Life Skills (SAILS) program at the Center for Autism Spectrum and Developmental Disorders (CASDD) is an educational program serving middle school, high school, and transition age students who present with significant cognitive, communication, behavioral, and adaptive challenges. ACES SAILS utilizes the science of ABA to deliver comprehensive and collaborative instruction to support complex learning and behavioral needs. Programming is designed based on each student's unique needs and abilities and focuses on building the academic, social, communication, behavioral, and functional life skills needed to increase independent participation in family, community, and work environments. A variety of related services such as speech and language, occupational, and physical therapies are available and delivered in collaboration with each student's Special Education Teacher and BCBA creating a holistic approach to support student skill development and application

ACES at Ansonia Middle School (AAMS)

In 2021, Ansonia Public Schools continued its partnership with Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) to establish an extension program at Ansonia Middle School. The continuation of services with a looping model, allows for our Mead Elementary School program students to continue to receive services and support in grades six through eight. The middle school extension continues to support specific student needs in the areas of academic, behavioral, and therapeutic interventions while supporting the transition to the secondary education setting. AAMS is open to all Ansonia and surrounding area students in middle school. This Program has widely expanded to meet students' needs from Greenwich, Stamford, Darien, New Canaan, and Stratford.

ACES at Mead Elementary School (AMES)

In 2018, Ansonia Public Schools partnered with Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) to establish an exciting new K-5 program at Mead Elementary School, to focus on specific student needs including the areas of academic, behavioral, and therapeutic interventions. AMES offers a strong focus on academics with a full range of art, physical education and other activities with Mead School students. AMES is open to all Ansonia and surrounding area students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

ACES Mill Road School offers high-quality educational programming for Special Education students in grades K–8. The school serves a diverse population of students with a strong focus on therapeutic and restorative behavioral practices to address their behavioral and mental health needs. In addition to this support, the school provides a rigorous academic curriculum that challenges students to reach their full potential. To meet the wide range of student needs, the school offers differentiated instruction in small classroom settings that promote academic growth. Learning environments are designed to provide additional support both in and outside of the classroom, maintain low student-to-teacher ratios, and create safe, structured spaces for learning, exploration, and personal development.

ACES Mill Road School is also home to two additional specialized programs. The New Haven Urban Youth Program serves students in grades K–5 identified by the New Haven Board of Education as requiring a more structured environment to address their academic, behavioral, and social needs. This program supports both Regular Education and Special Education students with tailored interventions designed to help each student thrive. The ASCEND Program is designed for high-functioning students on the Autism Spectrum, offering individualized instruction, targeted interventions, sensory supports, and structured routines that promote independence, social-emotional growth, and academic excellence. Together, these programs ensure that every student at ACES Mill Road School receives the tools, guidance, and opportunities needed to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally while preparing for future success.

ACES Whitney Academy EXPLORE, CREATE, and RISE is a therapeutic environment dedicated to serving a diverse student population, ages 14-22, who exhibit a range of cognitive, physical, behavioral, communication and medical challenges. Students in the EXPLORE program complete academic courses while participating in individualized learning experiences and developing pre-vocational skills. Our RISE classroom provides educational and behavioral support to students who benefit from an Applied Behavioral Analysis approach. This program provides students with a personalized level of behavioral support, which is gradually faded within the classroom structure to prepare students to enter a more naturalistic learning environment. The CREATE program is a school-based transition program for students ages 18-22 that places strong emphasis on preparing students for life and work beyond school. The program supports students in developing self-advocacy and self-determination skills, as well as work and life skills that will assist students in reaching their maximum level of adult independence. Students in CREATE gain education and experience beyond the classroom through our on-site Work Center and community-based vocational sites. Our educational programs at Whitney Academy provide all the necessary support to enhance students' abilities to develop in academics, vocation/employment, life skills, communication and social skills. The related services model uses a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to provide an individualized and holistic approach to student support services, including mental health services, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, nursing care, and behavioral support services. Additionally, students are provided opportunities to develop their skills and interests in athletics, technology, and the arts through participation in school and community-based activities. Our staff work collaboratively with parents, outside agencies, and community partners to provide a continuum of support for all students

ACES Whitney High School North provides a positive, therapeutic, individualized and multifaceted program for high school students with significant behavioral, mental health and learning issues. Students participate in a full academic and vocational program that includes a motivational, behavioral management system. Instructional methods include frequent assessment of student progress and the expanded opportunity for students to receive remediation. In addition to academic and behavioral support, Whitney High School North features a Vocational program which includes an Automotive Department, Technology Department, Culinary Department and Graphic Arts Department where students are learning real world hands on skills that they can take with them into careers after high school. WHN also features the Gateway Partnership Program where students are given the opportunity to take courses and earn college credits.

ACES Village School provides special education instruction to students from all over the state of Connecticut. ACES Village School provides extensive, comprehensive, and collaborative services to children ages 3-14 with a wide range of abilities and complex support needs. Students who attend Village School all present with significant cognitive delays in addition to other support needs. Within Village School students participate in one of three programs; the integrated pre-school program, Early Intensive Behavior Intervention (EIBI) program, and the Village program. The integrated pre-school program provides opportunities for integration with typically developing peers for students ages 3-5 years old. In all three programs, student educational programming is aimed at making meaningful progress towards individual goals and objectives identified in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which are linked to current state and national learning standards. A heavy emphasis is placed on increasing independence through supported instruction for students in a variety of academic, behavioral, and functional life skill areas. In order to maximize growth a variety of related services are available and include speech and language, physical and occupational therapies, social work services, behavioral services, adaptive physical education, music therapy, and nursing services.

ACES Youth Justice and Education

The ACES Youth Justice and Education Programs support a specific group of students who require diversion through academic instruction, real-world learning experiences, and extended support from local and state providers. Our innovative efforts have gained recognition from the Juvenile Justice Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC) and other state-level justice agencies. Our leadership team has been assigned a role at the state level, co-chairing the JJPOC Diversion Committee in partnership with Thea Montanez, Governor Lamont's senior advisor. Montañez leads interagency initiatives to connect more residents to opportunity in the state. Dr. Simone's and Ms. Montanez's role focuses on enhancing youth support and promoting prosocial opportunities within Connecticut communities. Our ongoing work in the Youth Justice and Education programs expands our scope to include partnerships with the Department of Children and Families, social service agencies, and private foundations that support justice efforts for our students. Through these collaborative efforts, we aim to provide comprehensive and practical support to our students, helping them transition successfully and positively impact their communities.

ACES Hartford REGIONS

Since its inception in May 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, ACES Hartford REGIONS has been committed to providing exceptional education to students in a juvenile justice facility. We offer community-based vocational opportunities and emphasize citizenship through community service projects, helping students develop practical skills and a sense of responsibility. Our mission is to provide transformative educational experiences that prepare students for successful futures, even in challenging circumstances.







ACES Hamden REGIONS

ACES Hamden REGIONS opened its doors on December 16, 2020, with just two students. At the start of the 2024–2025 school year, our dedicated team offered an enriched educational program featuring exciting project-based learning, restorative justice practices, and cross-curriculum learning. Our students have seen remarkable academic achievements and growth, with notable improvements in their engagement and performance. Our educators are deeply involved, providing individualized support and fostering a dynamic learning environment that encourages student success. We will continue collaborating with The Bridge at ACES, enabling Hamden REGIONS Phase II students to transition smoothly into a community high school.

ACES AFIR (Lisa's House)

We proudly announce the successful opening of ACES AFIR (Lisa's House), our first juvenile justice girls' residential program launched in December 2023 in Plainville. Collaborating with Community Solutions, Inc., we played a key role in launching their inaugural CSSD (Court Support Service Department) program. Our experienced team of educators has been instrumental in ensuring a smooth start, providing robust academic rigor, real-world activities, and vocational opportunities. The program has seen successful student engagement and growth since its opening. As we look forward to a bright and collaborative future, we are excited about the continued impact and success of ACES AFIR in supporting the development and achievements of our students.

The Bridge at ACES

The Bridge at ACES has seen a notable increase in enrollment, particularly among students who have faced challenges in traditional classroom settings. Our program serves as a crucial "first step" for students transitioning from juvenile justice programs, offering a structured pathway back to community life. We provide accelerated clinical, academic, social-emotional, and team-building services to support all student learners. Our comprehensive support has successfully diverted many students from dropping out of school and helped them avoid negative community engagement. Our expanded collaboration with school districts beyond New Haven County has enabled us to reach and support a broader range of students engaged in juvenile justice or educational disconnection. The Bridge's dedicated support team is pivotal in fostering student success and promoting positive reintegration into their communities.

ACES SERVICES

ACES UP - Transforming Schools into Sustainable Learning Environments

Launched to promote and facilitate the adoption of green energy technologies across Connecticut, ACES UP has been at the forefront of sustainable innovation since acquiring the state's first full-sized electric school bus in 2021. Building on the lessons learned, we developed a program designed to benefit every school district, making the transition to green energy both accessible and effective.

At its core, ACES UP offers turnkey development services for the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at schools, all at no up-front cost to the host district. Beyond EV charging, we provide a comprehensive suite of renewable energy options, including solar power, battery storage, fuel cells, and other distributed energy solutions, all tailored to reduce energy costs and carbon footprints while simplifying the process for school districts.

Our ACES Clean Schools Program further enhances this mission by managing every aspect of the sustainable transformation, from design and financing to construction. By leveraging state-of-the-art technologies and innovative financing models, we aim to make schools self-sufficient, improve classroom air quality, and redirect significant savings from utility costs back into education.

This all-inclusive solution encompasses solar rooftop and carport installations, electrification of school bus fleets, advanced battery storage, LED lighting, combined heat and power systems, and more. These initiatives not only drive sustainability but also ensure that the savings generated are reinvested into the future of education.

Clinical Services

Behavior Services provides direct and support services for schools, organizations, and families in south-central Connecticut. The services involve behavioral assessment, support plan management and implementation, intensive instructional programming, and staff training/development. Behavior Analysts and Behavior Technicians provide intervention and support to students through collaboration with staff within students' public school districts. Additionally, ACES Behavior Services provides regional professional development opportunities.

Our Treatment and Learning Center (TLC) Offers insurance-based ABA services to young children (2–6) with autism spectrum disorder. TLC is staffed with a team of board-certified behavior analysts and registered behavior technicians. In addition to these services, TLC serves as a site for ACES Systematic Safety Intervention Strategy Training, parent training, assessment, and periodic after-school social skills groups for students with disabilities of all ages.

Extension Therapy Services provides contractual occupational therapy and physical therapy to member school districts, local private schools, and agencies. Services are provided as a related service when deemed necessary for a special education student to participate in his and/or her educational curriculum and also to provide, as requested by the school district or school, support to the general education curriculum. Services include assessment, direct treatment, consultation, and professional development.

Assistive Technology Services provides contractual assessments and consultative services to member school districts, local private schools, and agencies. Services are provided through a collaborative process offering consultation to students, consultation to staff, and assessments related to assistive technology needs in the following areas: Educational Access, Physical Access, or Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices. The ACES Assistive Technology Services Department consists of multiple highly-trained assistive technology (AT) professionals with backgrounds in Speech Language Pathology, Special Education, and Occupational Therapy.

Early Childhood Services (ECS), part of ACES PDSI, offers a wide range of support for public and community-based early care programs. In partnership with the Office of Early Childhood and the RESC Alliance, ECS supports the CT Accreditation Quality Improvement System (AQIS), a state resource system providing leadership and support for early childhood programs to achieve and maintain program accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC study groups and overview sessions are held regularly, as well as professional learning on the CT ELDS, CT DOTS, and the Pyramid Model. ECS provides early care programs with customized professional learning and coaching on a variety of topics including curriculum development, social/emotional development, implementing and planning with the CT ELDS and CT DOTS, and content specific support for young learners (language/ literacy, science, math, etc.).

ACES Applications and Reporting Group specializes in the K–12 education sector, offering comprehensive support for current and evolving educational technology initiatives. Our deliverable services include strategic digital learning plans, data services, data integration, software application onboarding, training and support (e.g., PowerSchool, ParentSquare, LearnPlatform), data privacy best practices, project management, ADA compliance, service desk management, and regional technology council networking opportunities.

Health Insurance Collaborative is a coalition for health insurance among ACES member districts and communities. The combined buying power of ACES towns, school boards and nonprofit agencies helps to provide high-quality health insurance at competitive rates. Insurance Collaborative participants include the Town of North Haven, the North Haven Board of Education, the Ansonia Board of Education, the East Haven Board of Education, and the Ellington Board of Education.

ACES International Preschool & Childcare Center provides a nurturing, play-based learning environment for children from infancy through age five, blending creativity, cultural awareness, and nature exploration. As part of Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES), the center offers developmentally appropriate programs that promote curiosity, independence, and social-emotional growth. Through its multicultural curriculum, art integration, and outdoor learning experiences, children gain the foundational skills needed for kindergarten and lifelong learning. Guided by a team of dedicated educators, the center continues to foster a community where every child is valued, engaged, and inspired to explore the world around them. Two locations in 124 S. Pomperaug Avenue in Woodbury, CT and 7 Berkshire Road in Newtown, CT.

Network Services delivers cost-effective solutions to meet the technology needs of school districts throughout the ACES region. Deliverable services include: end-users' computing, hardware purchasing and support, network health, preventative measures, disaster recovery, virtual environments, and cyber security.

Professional Development and School Improvement (PDSI) is the professional learning division of ACES. PDSI is a driven team of individuals that designs customized and cost-effective solutions to support the professional learning needs of ACES schools and programs, and ACES region districts. They offer their expertise in a variety of specialties including: coaching, curriculum development, instructional strategies, teacher leadership, educator evaluation, technology integration, data analysis, assessment, facilitation of district planning processes, and more. These professional learning opportunities are available to administrators, coaches, teachers, and a multitude of other PreK–12 staff. The PDSI team offers unique and targeted services and learning designs that support educators in a myriad of content areas for learners of all ages and abilities. In addition to providing coaching, consultation, and technical assistance, PDSI facilitates regional education programs, and two Alternate Route to Certification (ARC) programs, the Alternate Route to Certification for Library Media Specialists (ARCLMS) and Alternate Route to Certification for Teachers of English Learners (ARCTEL).

Regional Special Education Transportation (RSET) provides cost-saving, safe, quality transportation for special education students traveling to non-ACES placement sites. The ACES RSET initiative was launched in September 2018. In 2024–2025, ACES RSET worked with 24 districts and transported 270 students.

ACES Department of Security Services

The ACES Department of Security Services is responsible for both internal and external security operations across the agency's schools and programs. Internally, the department is composed of a dedicated team of School Security Officers (SSOs) and support staff who maintain daily safety, implement protocols, and support emergency preparedness throughout all ACES campuses.

Externally, the department works closely with local law enforcement, first responders, and community partners to coordinate emergency response, consult on threat preparedness. The Director of Security also consults with other school districts on their security operations, sharing best practices and supporting regional safety initiatives.

ACES Speech and Language Services provides contractual speech therapy and professional development in the areas of communication and/or communication disorders to member school districts, local private schools, and agencies. Services are provided as a related service when deemed necessary for special education students to participate in their educational curriculum within their district. Services include assessment, direct treatment, consultation, and professional development.

Transportation Services

At ACES transportation, our mission is to provide safe, reliable, and compassionate transportation. We are dedicated to supporting the educational journey of everyone by ensuring their transportation needs are met with the highest standards of care and professionalism. Our specialized services are designed to accommodate the unique needs of our students and individuals, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment.

We believe everyone deserves access to quality education, and transportation should never be a barrier. Our team of trained and empathetic drivers and aides are committed to creating a positive and nurturing experience for our students from the moment they board our vehicles to the moment they arrive at their destination.

Through ongoing training and collaboration, we maintain a close partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Motor Vehicles to ensure all vehicles receive regular maintenance and safety inspections throughout the year.

At ACES transportation we are not just providing transportation; we are facilitating opportunities for growth, learning, and success for all our students and individuals.

Together, we are driving towards a brighter future for our students and individuals.

ACES World Language Services provides high-quality interpretation, translation, and bilingual evaluation services for clients in educational settings. The department also supports businesses, including law firms, nonprofit organizations, and out-of-state school districts. Each request is unique, and we work closely with clients to ensure high-quality results.

This department was recently transferred to the External Pupil Services division, which is led by Kevin Keating and Maddie Colon.

ACES Regional Educational Programming

ACES Early Head Start

is a federally funded community-based program recruiting and serving families with children birth to 3 years including expectant families in Middlesex County. This home visiting program prioritizes categorical and income eligible families and is designed to promote school readiness.

ACES Adult Career & Community Empowerment Support Services (ACCESS)

provides hope, purpose and structure to adults with developmental, intellectual, and physical disabilities. ACCESS program participants (or individuals) range in age from 23–70+ and possess a wide array of interests, abilities, and skills. We offer enrichment opportunities in our Day program and employment through our Individual and Group Supported Employment programs.

ACCESS individuals possess a wide array of skill sets, including food prep and delivery, laundry services, scanning and basic office tasks. Current employers include The Strong Kitchen, Die-Cut Paper Products, and Fascia's Chocolates. Additionally, ACCESS runs four businesses: United Lawn Care, United Cleaning, Designs by ACCESS, and ACES Shines mobile shoeshine. ACES ACCESS Day Program provides a wide variety of enrichment initiatives, including volunteer opportunities, a recycling program, visual arts, gardening, community-based experiences and physical activities.

ACES Office of Choice Programs offers the Open Choice Program which started in 1998. It provides options for families to choose available openings in urban (New Haven) and suburban schools in the ACES region. In 2024–2025, 365 students, 44 schools and 13 school districts participated in ACES Open Choice Program. Also offered is the Magnet Choice Program which is coordinated by ACES for districts in the ACES region. Families in any school district can apply to a lottery for open seats in ACES WIMS or ACES Chase Academy. In some districts, families provide student transportation, with a travel subsidy provided by ACES. Many districts will be provided with transportation at no cost to the families.

ACES West Haven Collaborative

is a long standing in-district, collaborative program at West Haven High School. These two classrooms provide educational services to twenty students with intellectual or other disabilities. The staffing for this multi-faceted program consists of two special-education students, three Teacher Assistants and three Teacher Assistant/Drivers who work together to provide students with the necessary supports in order to develop and enhance their academic, vocational, life and social skills abilities.

In the fall of 2021, two additional collaborative ACES classrooms were opened at the elementary level and are housed at Seth Haley School. These classrooms serve students in Kindergarten through Grade 4 who have been identified as needing additional social, emotional, and behavioral support in order to experience success in school.

The program is staffed by two Special Education teachers, two Teacher Assistants, four Behavior Technicians, a part-time Social Worker, and a part-time Behavior Analyst. Together, this team provides individualized instruction and support in a structured, nurturing environment.

A central goal of the program is to provide early intervention so that students can build the skills needed to return to general education settings. As students demonstrate readiness, they begin attending general education classrooms with targeted support in place. These supports are gradually reduced as students gain independence, with the ultimate aim of helping them transition back to mainstream classrooms in their home schools.

ACES Central Administration

ACES Central Administration is dedicated to providing the sound technology, administration, fiscal and related services necessary to carry out ACES mission and goals. Central Administration oversees the smooth and efficient operation of our agency.

Executive Director

serves as the Chief Executive Officer of ACES, as a regional service agency and as the superintendent of ACES schools.

Deputy Executive Director for Services

oversees the Market Services Division, which includes a wide array of innovative specialized services such as Clinical Services (encompassing Behavior Services, Autism Programs, Extension Therapy Services, and Assistive Technology), Health Insurance Collaborative, International Programming, Professional Development and School Improvement, Speech and Language Services, Trauma Services, and Translation. Additionally, this office is responsible for managing the agency's budgeting process, spearheading program development, and driving strategic initiatives that enhance the overall effectiveness and reach of the organization.

Assistant Executive Director of Operations & Facilities

ACES Operations Division achieves its mission is to ensure the smooth functioning of internal processes, empower employees with the necessary resources, and continuously improve operational excellence by leading the effective operation of the Buildings and Grounds Department, including Facility Budget Management, Capital Improvement projects, Nutrition Services, Network Services, Internal Transportation, Security Management and Preparedness, Magnet School & Open Choice, HIPAA compliance and ACES Internal Operations. The operations division also oversees two of ACES's long-standing programs, ACCESS and Early Headstart.

Human Capital Development

oversees all aspects of Human Resources and personnel activities from recruitment, orientation, onboarding and benefits to employee assignments, workforce planning and policy development. Our goal is to attract talent, support employees and encourage them to reach their full potential. We work collaboratively with our unions, other ACES platforms, and the Executive Leadership Council (ELC) to not only match employees with positions that allow them to grow but also promotes employee development.

Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Programs

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Programs provides leadership and oversight of ACES' schools and specialized programs. This role focuses on advancing curriculum and instruction, student support, and program innovation while ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations. The Assistant Superintendent collaborates with school leaders, program directors, and executive leadership to drive academic excellence, foster continuous improvement, and ensure ACES programs meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Marketing Services

defines and manages the ACES brand and voice, and promotes the agency's mission and services by increasing ACES' visibility across the region and internationally. The Marketing Department produces all internal and external publications, supports agency campaigns and initiatives, and communicates with stakeholders in regard to all brand management and promotional efforts. Additionally, the department manages advertising, collateral, crisis communication, events management, marketing merchandise, search engine optimization, social media content, weather notifications, and website maintenance.

Fiscal Management

oversees all core financial operations, including Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Payroll, Budget Development, Auditing, and Financial Reporting. The team manages financial projections, grants, and investments to ensure compliance, accountability, and the effective use of resources that support the organization's long-term goals.

Pupil Personnel and Related Services

provide ACES internal schools with specialized services such as social work, developmental guidance, psychology services, speech, physical and occupational therapies, nursing and psychiatric counseling services. In collaboration with the CSDE and SERC, and as part of a RESC Alliance initiative, ACES Pupil Personnel Services responds to identified trends in special education to provide resources, design and implement initiatives and determine effectiveness.



The Connecticut RESC Alliance

ACES is one of six regional educational service centers (RESCs) in Connecticut. All RESCs support Connecticut school districts' instructional and operational components. The RESC Alliance works collaboratively to develop and deliver high-quality, cost-effective educational resources, programs and services to the state's public schools. For additional information on the RESC Alliance, go to **www.rescalliance.org**. This year, ACES collaborated with our RESC partners on several high stakes projects that will have lasting impact on Connecticut educators.

Igniting Change

Igniting Change is a multi-faceted professional learning experience facilitated by the RESC Alliance and focused on meeting the needs of all schools and districts throughout Connecticut by providing equity-centered learning opportunities grounded in four professional learning pathways. Districts and schools are encouraged to engage with the professional learning designs that best meet their needs.

Approximately 350 Connecticut educators and leaders attended the fall conference on October 30, 2024 at the Connecticut Convention Center. The fall conference included a keynote from Dr. Dena Simmons, who captivated educators and school leaders with her journey of overcoming racism and bullying, transforming her struggles into a powerful movement for others.

Participants engaged in breakout sessions designed around four dynamic pathways:

- · Culturally Sustaining Systems
- Equity-Centered Leadership
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
- Supporting Multilingual Learners

The next Igniting Change conference is scheduled for October 20, 2025 with keynote speakers Dr. Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz (racial literacy + equity leader) and Dr. Gholdy Muhammad (award-winning author + equity innovator)! More information can be found at **www.ignitingchangect.org**.

Science of Reading (SoR) Affinity Groups

The RESC Alliance Science of Reading (SoR) Affinity Group project, led by the RESC Alliance in partnership with the Center for Literacy Research and Reading Success, supported 237 educators across 74 Connecticut school districts in implementing high-quality, evidence-based K–3 reading programs during the 2024–2025 school year. Throughout the year, specific affinity group meetings and personalized coaching worked to build educator capacity, promote instructional fidelity, and fostered cross-district collaboration.

Each meeting featured high-leverage protocols and tools grounded in the Science of Reading and Connecticut's Literacy Look-Fors. The initiative created a supportive learning environment where districts learned from one another, tackled real-world implementation challenges, and aligned leadership and classroom practice.

Educator Evaluation Support

The RESC Alliance provided training on the new CT Guidelines for Educator & Leader Evaluation and Support 2023. These trainings provided professional learning for educators and leaders on evaluation practices, effective feedback, and advancing inclusive principal leadership, including specialized support for school, district, and administrator preparation programs as well as train-the-trainer opportunities.

Al Leadership Consortium

Influenced by the success of ACES PDSI's professional learning consortiums during the 2024–25 school year, the RESC Alliance will follow the ACES PDSI model by hosting an AI Leadership Consortium in 2025–26. This consortium is a yearlong, statewide professional learning experience designed to help districts prepare for and lead the integration of artificial intelligence in education.

Professional Learning for Special Education

The RESC Alliance is working in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to bring Connecticut school districts resources and professional development for certified and non-certified staff working with students with disabilities.

IEP Quality & CT-SEDS Professional Support

The RESC Alliance continued its partnership with the Connecticut State Department of Education to provide professional learning supports to educators in developing high-quality Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and navigating the Connecticut Special Education Data System (CT-SEDS).

Supports included:

- Supporting the CSDE dedicated help desk for support and technical assistance for districts on the IEP/PPT Process, and entering IEPs, referrals, and evaluations into CT-SEDS
- Statewide and in-district IEP Quality Training, IEP Quality Training Refreshers, and IEP Quality Training for School Leadership Teams for all educators involved in planning and placement teams (PPTs) around IEP development based on the new IEP. Upon completion, educators will gain the capacity to develop and implement high-quality IEPs within CT-SEDS.
- CT-SEDS Onboarding designed for new special educators or new to CT-SEDS.

- Targeted sessions that provide opportunities for school-based professionals to gain knowledge and increase competency within specific topics related to CT-SEDS or the new IEP, including 504, progress reporting.
 PreK, and more. Sessions included information on system updates, with live CT SEDS demonstrations (when applicable).
- Discipline-Specific IEP Goal Development Training offers educators within a specific discipline an interactive training experience that supports the practical application of developing high-quality, measurable IEP goals and objectives.

Communities of Practice (CoP)

Ongoing collaborative groups where educators come together to share ideas, focus on evidence-based practices, and build collective capacity in areas relevant to learners of all ages.

Introduction to Charting the LifeCourse and Implementation of Charting the LifeCourse

Training introducing the "Charting the LifeCourse" framework, which is a toolset for planning quality of life outcomes and person-centered planning. It supports looking at the whole life of a student, not just academic or specialized service needs.

Introduction to Customized Employment in CT

Training on what customized employment is, how to plan it, and how to implement it in Connecticut. This is relevant for transition planning for students with disabilities.

Preschool Special Education

These offerings provide professional learning for early childhood educators focused on supporting multilingual learners, early career special educators, designing preschool IEPs, implementing behavioral and cultural responsiveness strategies, collecting and analyzing meaningful data, and using multi-tiered systems of support in preschool and kindergarten settings.

Early Childhood Transition: Early Intervention (Part C) to Special Education (Part B)

Training focused on the transition process for very young children (infants/toddlers) who move from Early Intervention (Part C of IDEA) into preschool special education (Part B). Covers legal/process aspects, collaboration, alignment, and ensuring smooth transitions.

Secondary Transition Coordinator Training

Focuses on training coordinators who work with secondary students (middle/high school) to plan transitions—post-school planning, preparing students for further education, employment, independent living as appropriate.

Approximately 3700 educators statewide enrolled in special education professional learning sessions in the 2025-26 school year. ACES PDSI provides registration and tech support for these trainings.













AQIS

In partnership with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) and the RESC Alliance, ACES PDSI supports the CT Accreditation Quality Improvement System (AQIS), a state resource system providing leadership and support for early childhood programs to achieve and maintain program accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC study groups and overview sessions are held regularly, as well as professional learning on the CT ELDS, CT DOTS, CT CKC Framework, and the Pyramid Model. ACES PDSI provides NAEYC accreditation support to the south-central region of Connecticut. Programs we have supported through accreditation have a pass rate of 90% and higher

GEER

As part of the Governor's Education Emergency Relief (GEER) Fund, the RESC Alliance partnered with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) for the purpose of ensuring continuing educational opportunities for students of all ages affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the fourth year of this project, ACES PDSI professional learning specialists provided technical assistance and coaching support focused on leveraging educational technology to engage and communicate with children and families.

In addition, the GEER Online Learning Hub was launched in January 2023. The GEER Online Learning Hub seeks to provide online professional learning opportunities and resources for early childhood program providers and families. Since its launch, the GEER Online Learning Hub has been visited by over 5,000 unique users, including childcare providers, and parents and caregivers searching for resources on technology use by young children. The GEER Online Learning Hub is managed by ACES PDSI and be accessed at https://sites.google.com/aces.org/geeronlinelearninghub/home.

Pathways to Success for Multilingual Learners is a series of professional learning opportunities funded through Title III statewide activities funds, coordinated by ACES, and facilitated by the RESC Alliance. In 2024–25, 135 educators participated in the Pathways asynchronous professional learning modules hosted by ACES on the Canvas learning management system. This series of online modules is focused on enhancing academic outcomes for multilingual learners by increasing the capacity of school and district professionals to effectively meet the needs of their students through effective, research-based practices and strategies, and adherence to state/federal policies. These online modules were developed by the CT RESC Alliance in collaboration with the CT State Department of Education and consist of a video presentation and access to useful resources for teachers. Modules are self-paced or can be completed with a group or professional learning community (PLC).

UPLIFT A Trauma-Informed Care Training Program for Schools

The Regional Trauma Coordinators from each RESC provided training, technical assistance, and consultation to public school districts on UPLIFT, a train-the-trainer program that is trauma-informed, resilience-focused, and individualized to meet the unique systemic needs of a school or district. 220 educators and related services providers enrolled in training topics that included fostering physical and psychological safety, staff & system wellness, harnessing resilience through peer support, compassionate leadership, and cultural humility.

	Ansonia	Bethany	Branford	Cheshire	Derby	East Haven	Hamden	Meriden	Middletown	Milford	Naugatuck	New Haven	North Branford	North Haven	Orange	Oxford	Seymour	Wallingford	Waterbury	West Haven	Wolcott	Woodbridge	Reg Dist #5	Reg Dist #13	Reg Dist #16	ACES Programs	Other
SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS																											
AAMS	х						х				х								х	х		х					12
AMES	Х				х															х		х					5
Brightwell Academy																											1
CASDD	х		х			х	х	х	х			х						х	х	х			х				8
Mill Road School	х		х	х	х	х	х	х		х	х	x	х	х			х	x	х	x							8
Village School	х		х		х	х	х	х	х	х	х	x	х	х			х	x	х	x				х			14
Whitney Academy	х			х	х	х	х	x	x	х	х	x	х	х		х	х	x	х	x		х	х	х			17
Whitney North	х				х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х						х	х	х	х		х		х		11
MAGNET SCHOOLS																											
ECA	х	х	x	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	x	х	х	x	х	х	x	х	x		x	х	x	х	x	14
ACES Chase Academy	х				x		х	х	х		х	х					х		х		х			x	х	x	17
WIMS	х		х	х	x	х	х	х		х	х	x	х	х				x	х	x							4
ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION SCHOOLS																											
The Bridge at ACES	х		х			х	х	х	х	х		х						х	х	х							8
REGIONS Hamden	х							х	х			х															6
REGIONS Hartford							х				х	x						x	х		х						5
ACES at AFIR Plainville						х		х				х															5
SERVICES																											
ACCESS			х			х	х	х	х	х		х	х	х	х			х		х			х			х	2
Assistive Technology	х		х		х	х	х			х	х		х	х		х			х	х	х			х		х	3
Behavior Services	х		х	х			х	x	х	х		х				х	х	х	х	х	х					х	5
Communications Services				х																			х				0
ACES Early Headstart									х															х			12
ACES Applications and Reporting Group	х													х												х	4
Extension Therapy Clinical Services OT/PT	х	х	х		х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х			х		х	х	х	х		х				х	12
Health Insurance	х					х								х													1
In-District Collaboratives	х											х								х							1
Magnet School Parent Choice	х		х	х	х	х	х	х	х		х	х	х	х			х	х	х	х	х						20
Minority Teacher Recruitment							х	х	х		х	х		х					х	х		х					0
Network Services	х				х		х													х							3
Open Choice	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х		х	х	х	х	х			х		х		х	х				1
PDSI/Early Childhood Services	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	х	294
Pupil Related Services	х		х	х	х		х	х	х	х		х					х	х	х	х	х						30
Regional Special Ed Transportation	х		х	х	х	х	х					х	х	х		х	х	х		х			х		х	х	7
Security								х																			1
Transportation	х		х	х	х	х	х	х		х		х	х	х	х			х		х					х	х	1

Major Interagency Relationships & Sources of Funding

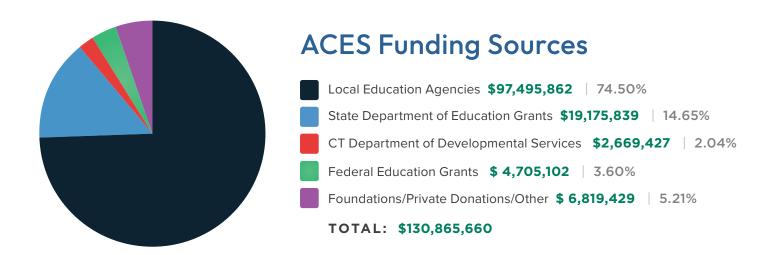
ACES maintains strong relationships with the school districts that created and govern the organization. This connection with member districts, plus other local funds, accounts for 74.50% of ACES financial support. Programs ranging from education for students with cognitive, emotional, and physical challenges to professional services including occupational and physical therapy and behavior services are financially supported by member districts through tuition and fees for services.

The second major source of support is the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). ACES receives grants and contracts primarily for state initiatives, such as the magnet school initiative, the Open Choice program, professional development activities, school construction, and school readiness programs. These programs have an impact on both school districts and local communities. This support accounts for 14.65% of ACES income.

The third major ACES interagency relationship involves the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS). ACES principal involvement with this agency is through programs for disabled adults. This funding represents 2.04% of ACES budget. The fourth major source of support for ACES programs is federal funding through grants for educational programming. This source accounts for 3.60% of the total budget.

The final category of major revenue is from private sources in the form of grants from charitable foundations and other special contracts. These grants and "other" contracts represent approximately 5.21% of the ACES annual budget.

ACES is a member of the Connecticut Alliance of Regional Educational Service Centers and works closely with the other RESC's on collaborative projects.



PROGRAM	/DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BUDGET	EXPENSE
INSTRUCT	IONAL PROGRAMS			
SPECIAL E	DUCATION			
1001/1002	Whitney Academy/CREATE/RISE	L	\$ 12,244,236	\$ 12,163,107
1003/1017	Mill Road School/ASCEND	L	\$ 10,091,626	\$ 9,638,955
1004	Village School	L	\$ 7,815,151	\$ 7,022,382
1005	Village EIBI	L	\$ 8,170,386	\$ 7,411,401
1007	SAILS - Intensive	L	\$ 6,794,580	\$ 6,516,256
1011	Whitney High School North	L	\$ 7,462,777	\$ 7,207,017
1012	West Haven Elementary Program	L	\$ 1,014,581	\$ 694,304
1013	West Haven High Program	L	\$ 925,718	\$ 872,399
1019	ACES Mead Elementary	L	\$ 2,255,984	\$ 2,000,257
1040	Transportation	L	\$ 3,979,897	\$ 4,036,852
1060	Summer School	L	\$ (710,550)	\$ 2,592,397
			\$60,044,385	\$60,155,328
MAGNET S	CHOOLS			
1203	Educational Center for the Arts	S,L,O	\$ 4,170,675	\$ 4,245,536
1205	Wintergreen Magnet School (WIMS)	S,L,O	\$ 9,691,018	\$ 9,206,324
1210	ACES Chase Academy	S,L	\$ 11,165,571	\$ 11,227,468
2001	MSAP WIMS YR.1	F	\$ 22,170	\$ 22,170
2002	MSAP WIMS YR.2	F	\$ 562,654	\$ 74,232
2003	MSAP WIMS YR. 3	F	\$ 1,017,901	\$ 667,947
2405	Magnet Transportation	L,S	\$ 2,868,000	\$ 2,699,401
2638	Title IV - Student Support & Enrichment	F	\$ 12,302	\$ 2,097
2638-25	Title IV - Student Support & Enrichment	F	\$ 34,734	\$ 11,102
2238-24	Title I Improving Programs 6/24	F	\$ 55,139	\$ 55,139
2238-25	Title I Improving Programs 6/25	F	\$ 477,721	\$ 446,501
2239-25	Title II A Teachers 6/25	F	\$ 69,608	\$ 69,608
			\$30,147,493	\$28,727,526
REGULAR	EDUCATION			
1204	NH Cooperative High School	L	\$ 282,395	\$ 271,439
1206	NH Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School	L	\$ 394,253	\$ 407,617
1209	New Haven (NH) ASPIRE	L	\$ 1,458,937	\$ 1,372,396
1218	Urban Youth	L	\$ 442,988	\$ 1,107,126
1219	New Haven Magnet Schools	L	\$ 50,093	\$ 129,305
1220	BRIDGES	L	\$ 2,107,822	\$ 1,790,431
1221	REGIONS (Hartford)	L	\$ 460,925	\$ 177,082
1222	REGIONS (Plainville)	L	\$ 61,315	\$ 109,641
1223	REGIONS (Hamden)	L	\$ 584,086	\$ 459,305
1227	New Haven FY22 to FY23 Carryover	L	\$ 49,296	\$ 37,504
2616	Perkins Grant - West Haven	F	\$ 187,977	\$ 184,367
			\$6,080,088	\$6,046,212
INTERDIST	TRICT PROGRAMS			
1018	Regional Special Education Transportation	L	\$ 7,859,587	\$ 8,910,110
			\$7,859,587	\$8,910,110
TOTAL INS	TRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS		\$104,131,553	\$103,839,176
			÷ 1,101,1000	+ , , , . , •
PUPIL PER	SONNEL & SUPPORT SERVICES			
1101	Pupil Services	L	\$ 2,203,044	\$ 1,842,062
1102	Extension Therapy Services	L	\$ 4,182,395	\$ 3,584,263
1103	Behavioral Services	L L	\$ 4,767,660	\$ 4,631,509
.100		L		
1105	Assistive Technology	L	\$ 590,814	\$ 428,154

	D START Early Head Start 1/24-12/24 Early Head Start 1/25-12/25	F	\$ 550,318	\$ 576,948
2811 FOTAL EAR		F	\$ 550,318	\$ 576 948
TOTAL EAR	Early Head Start 1/25-12/25			Ψ 0, 0, 0 10
	,	F	\$ 1,127,812	475,530
	RLY HEAD START		\$1,678,130	\$1,052,477
ROFESSIO	NAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS			
602	Professional Dev/School Improvement	S, L, O	\$ 2,544,126	\$ 2,502,502
604	Conference Management	L	-	\$ 109,327
617	ACES International	0	\$ 887,916	\$ 1,840,364
618	ACES PreK	0	\$ 1,342,184	\$ 1,977,742
2651-23	Title III A English Acq. 6/23	F	-	
2651-24	Title III A English Acq. 6/24	F	\$ 10,406	\$ 10,406
OTAL PRO	PESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS		\$4,784,633	\$6,440,34
RESC ENTIT	TLEMENTS			
2401	Administering Open Choice	L,S	\$ 182,757	\$ 182,75
2404	Choice Transportation	L,S	\$ 2,651,658	\$ 3,337,440
	CENTITLEMENTS	,	\$2,834,415	\$3,520,203
CAREER SE	RVICES			
504	ACCESS - Supported Employment	L,S,O	\$ 3,367,971	\$ 2,739,783
550	Vocational Support Services	L,O	\$ 13,513	\$ 13,513
2104	Workforce Alliance	S	-	
2105	Workforce Alliance	S	\$ 45,000	\$ 40,122
2110	Workforce Alliance	S	\$ 14,700	\$ 13,953
OTAL CAR	REER SERVICES		\$3,441,184	\$2,807,37
GRAND	TOTAL 2024-2025		\$131,602,922	\$130,865,660
3udgets li	ncluded in Above:			
Central O	ffice (1370,1401-1416)			\$ 14,325,290
Building C	Operations (1301-1319, 1322)			\$ 13,706,047
Magnet So	chool Operating Grants			\$ 8,424,470
Aisc Grants	(Funding not guaranteed on an annual basis)		\$ 2,989,093	\$ 2,720,104

Legend of Funding Sources: L: Local F: Federal S: State O: Other

NSTRUCTIO			
	ONAL PROGRAMS		
SPECIAL ED	UCATION		
001/1002	Whitney Academy/CREATE/RISE	L	\$ 12,244,236
003/1017	Mill Road School/ASCEND	L	\$ 10,091,626
004	Village School	L	\$ 7,815,15
005	Village EIBI	L	\$ 8,170,386
007	SAILS - Intensive	L	\$ 6,794,580
011	Whitney High School North	L	\$ 7,462,777
012	West Haven Elementary Program	L	\$ 1,014,58
013	West Haven High Program	L	\$ 925,718
019	Mead Elementary School	L	\$ 2,255,984
040	Transportation	L	\$ 3,979,897
060	Summer School	L	\$ (710,550
			\$60,044,38
AGNET SC	HOOLS		
203	Educational Center for the Arts	S,L	\$ 4,170,675
205	Wintergreen Magnet School (WIMS)	S,L	\$ 9,691,018
210	ACES Chase Academy	S,L	\$ 11,165,57
2001	MSAP WIMS YR.1	F	\$ 22,170
1002	MSAP WIMS YR.2	F	\$ 562,65
003	MSAP WIMS YR. 3	F	\$ 1,017,90
405	Magnet Transportation	S	\$ 2,868,000
2638	Title IV - Student Support & Enrichment	F	\$ 12,302
:638-25	Title IV - Student Support & Enrichment	F	\$ 34,734
238-24	Title I Improving Programs 6/24	F	\$ 55,139
238-25	Title I Improving Programs 6/25	F	\$ 477,72
239-25	Title II A Teachers 6/25	F	\$ 69,600
		'	\$30,147,49
EGULAR EI	DUCATION		\$30,147,477
204	NH Cooperative High School	L	\$ 282,39
206	NH Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School	L	\$ 394,25:
209	New Haven (NH) ASPIRE	L	\$ 1,458,93
218	Urban Youth		\$ 442,988
219	New Haven Magnet Schools	L L	\$ 50,093
220	BRIDGES		\$ 2,107,82
220	REGIONS (Hartford)	L	\$ 460,92
222	REGIONS (Hairtoid) REGIONS (Plainville)	L	\$ 400,92
222	REGIONS (Plainville) REGIONS (Hamden)	L	\$ 584,08
	New Haven FY22 to FY23 Carryover	L	
227	·	L	\$ 49,290 \$ 497.07
1616	Perkins Grant - West Haven	F	\$ 187,97
NTERDISTE	CICT PROGRAMS		\$6,080,08
018	Regional Special Education Transportation	L	\$ 7,859,58
	5	_	Ψ 7,555,56
			\$7,859,583

PROGRA	M/DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	BUDGET
PUPIL PE	ERSONNEL & SUPPORT SERVICES		
1101	Pupil Services	L	\$ 2,203,044
102	Extension Therapy Services	L	\$ 4,182,395
1103	Behavioral Services/TLC	L	\$ 4,767,660
1105	Assistive Technology	L	\$ 590,814
TOTAL P	UPIL PERSONNEL & SUPPORT SERVICES		\$11,743,914
EARLY C	HILDHOOD/EARLY HEAD START		
2810	Early Head Start 1/24-12/24	F	\$ 550,318
2811	Early Head Start 1/25-12/25	F	\$ 1,127,812
TOTAL E	ARLY CHILDHOOD/EARLY HEAD START		\$1,678,130
PROFESS	SIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS		
1602	Professional Dev/School Improvement	S, L, O	\$ 2,544,126
1604	Conference Management	L	-
1617	ACES International	0	\$ 887,916
1618	ACES PreK	0	\$ 1,342,184
2651-23	Title III A English Acq. 6/23	F	-
2651-24	Title III A English Acq. 6/24	F	\$ 10,406
TOTAL P	ROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS		\$4,784,633
RESC EN	TITLEMENTS		
2401	Administering Open Choice	S	\$ 182,757
2404	Choice Transportation	S	\$ 2,651,658
TOTAL R	ESC ENTITLEMENTS		\$2,834,415
CAREER	SERVICES		
1504	ACCESS - Supported Employment	L,S,O	\$ 3,367,971
1550	Vocational Support Services	L,O	\$ 13,513
2104	Workforce Alliance	S	-
2105	Workforce Alliance	S	\$ 45,000
2110	Workforce Alliance	S	\$ 14,700

GRAND TOTAL 2024-2025 BUDGETS: \$131,602,922

Budgets Included in Above:

 Central Office (1370,1401-1410, 1415, 1416)
 \$ 16,062,875

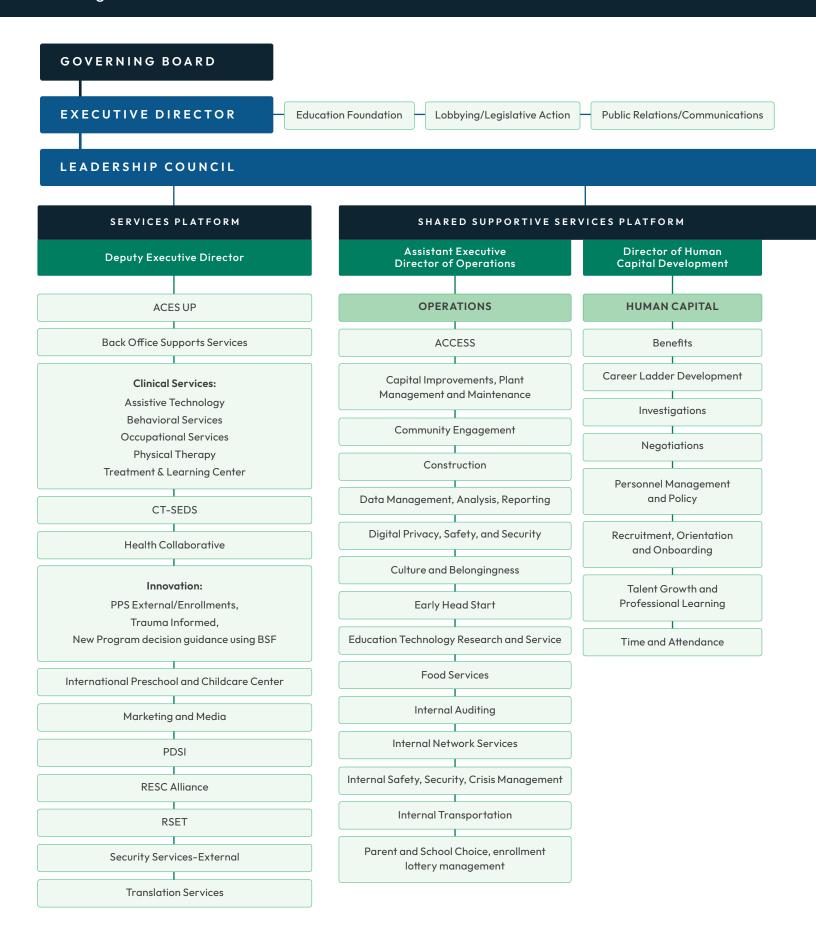
 Building Operations (1301-1321, 3100)
 \$ 12,244,608

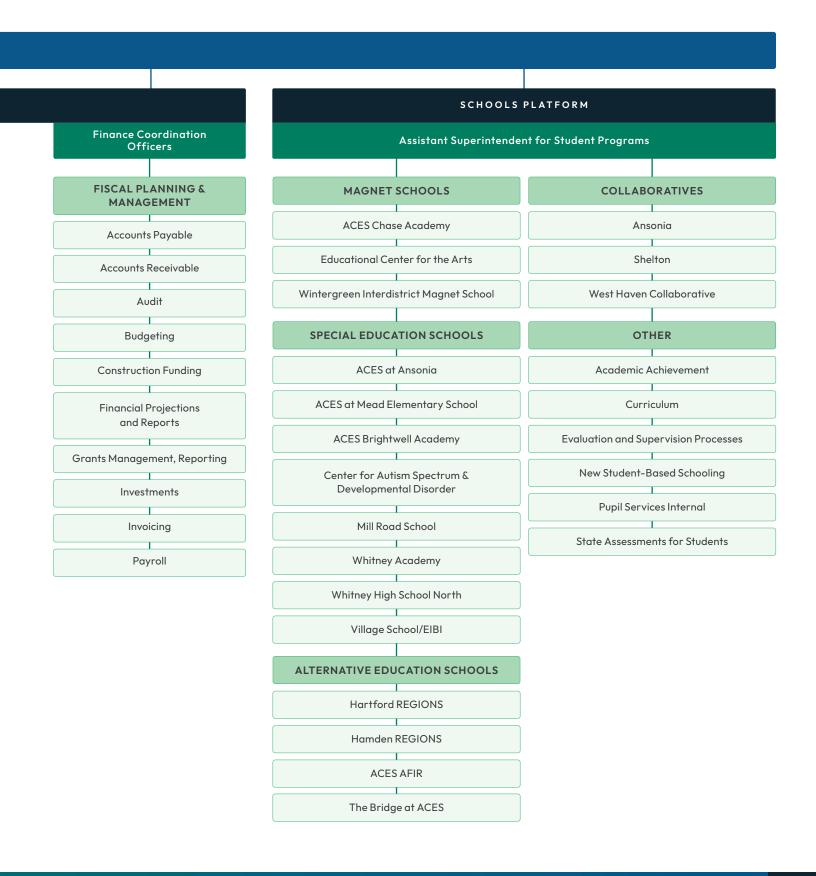
 Magnet School Operating Grants
 \$ 9,555,722
 *

 Misc. Grants (Funding not guaranteed on an annual basis)
 \$ 2,989,093
 *

 * Estimated Budgets

Legend of Funding Sources: L: Local F: Federal S: State O: Other





Central Administration

Central Administration Building

370 James Street New Haven, CT 06513 (203) 498-6800 Directions: (203) 498-6885

Executive Director

Thomas M. Danehy, Ed.D. (203) 498-6817

Deputy Executive Director

Timothy Howes (203) 498-6838

Assistant Executive Director, Operations & Facilities

William A. Rice, Ed.D. (203) 498-6868

Director of Human Capital Development

Rebecca Cuevas (203) 498-6823

Assistant Superintendent of Schools & Programs

Michelle Coogan (203) 407-4408

Director of Fiscal Management

Timothy Howes (203) 498-6812

Schools

ACES AFIR (Lisa's House)

50 Bank Street Plainville, CT 06062 Dr. Lisa Simone (LCSW), Principal John (Jack) F. Kitching, Assistant Principal (203) 484-9501

ACES at Ansonia Middle School

115 Howard Avenue Ansonia, CT 06401 Heather Gish, Principal (203) 736-5070

The Bridge at ACES

261 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Dr. Lisa Simone (LCSW), Principal John (Jack) F. Kitching, Assistant Principal (203) 507-5545

Brightwell Academy

261 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Dr. Lisa Simone (LCSW), Principal William Shanley, Assistant Principal (203) 507-5545

ACES Center for Autism Spectrum and Developmental Disorders

26 Old Post Road Northford, CT 06472 Jennifer Santarcangelo, Interim Principal (203) 484-9501

ACES Chase Academy

565 Chase Parkway Waterbury, CT 06708 Dr. Frank LaBanca, Principal Vicki Rose, Assistant Principal Dina Secchiaroli, Assistant Principal (203) 639-8403

ACES Educational Center for the Arts

55 Audubon Street New Haven, CT 06510 Stefanie Savo, Principal Amy Christman, Assistant Principal (203) 777-5451

ACES at Mead Elementary School

75 Ford Street Ansonia, CT 06401 Heather Gish, Principal (203) 736-5090 ext 4229

ACES Mill Road School

295 Mill Road North Haven, CT 06473 Kerri Gilmore, Principal Steve Cook, Assistant Principal (203) 281-6949

ACES REGIONS

995 Sherman Avenue Hamden, CT 06514 123 Washington Street Hartford, CT 06514 Dr. Lisa Simone (LCSW), Principal John (Jack) F. Kitching, Assistant Principal (203) 507-5545

ACES Village School

31 Temple Street North Haven, CT 06473 Virginia Tagliatela, Principal Kristen Peck, Assistant Principal James Nichols, Assistant Principal (203) 234-7611

ACES Whitney Academy

130-A Leeder Hill Drive Hamden, CT 06517 Juliellen Rodriguez, Principal Chamone' Dobbs, Assistant Principal Eric Paradis, Assistant Principal (203) 281-3577

ACES Whitney High School North

130-B Leeder Hill Drive Hamden, CT 06517 Bryan Markiewicz, Principal Kristin Harvey, Assistant Principal (203) 407-4500

ACES Wintergreen Interdistrict Magnet School

670 Wintergreen Avenue Hamden, CT 06514 Zakiyyah Baker, Principal Megan Conaster, Assistant Principal (203) 281-9668

Services

ACCES

60 United Drive North Haven, CT 06473 Enid DeJesus (203) 234-1344

Clinical Services

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Carrie Hartman (203) 484-6862

Health Insurance Collaborative

350 State Street North Haven, CT 06473 Timothy Howes (203) 498-6838

ACES International Preschool and Childcare Center

124 S. Pomperaug Avenue Woodbury, CT 06798 7 Berkshire Road Newtown, CT 06482 Lucia Fonseca 203-266-4392 ext. 2

Early Head Start

300 Washington Street Middletown, CT 06457 Heather Granja (860) 704-0725

External Pupil Services and Collaborative Programs

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Kevin Keating (203) 498-6849

Internal Pupil Services

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Theresa Ott Virginelli (203) 407-4414

Marketing & Communications

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Elaine Sein (203) 498-6816

Network Services

370 State Street North Haven, CT 06473 Lon Harrigan (203) 287-6850

Professional Development and School Improvement Services / Early Childhood Services

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Michelle Gohagon, Director Rosaria Gianetti, Assistant Director Jessica White, Assistant Director (203) 407-4408

Regional Special Education Transportation

370 James Street New Haven, CT 06513 Olga Sanchez (203) 498-6838

Speech & Language Services

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Timothy Howes (203) 498-6812

Technology and Operations

60 United Drive North Haven, CT 06473 Todd Solli (203) 287-6840

Trauma & Collaborative Programs

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Cynthia Ratchelous (203) 407-4421

Translation Services

205 Skiff Street Hamden, CT 06517 Kevin Keating (203) 498-6849

Transportation Services

370 James Street New Haven, CT 06513 Rosemarie Arma-Nowlin (203) 498-6841

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aces

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