



Desi Nesmith
 Executive Director
 Capitol Region Education Council
 111 Charter Oak Avenue
 Hartford, CT 06106

CREC
 Council Meeting
 3/18/2026
 11:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
 In-Person and ZOOM Meeting (Link in Calendar Invite)

COUNCIL MEMBERS	CREC ATTENDEES
Leonard Lockhart	Desi Nesmith
Meg Scata	Dr. Sasha Douglas
Steven Tatum	Heather Tartaglia
Kory Mills	Carlos Figueroa
Betsy LeBorious	Debra Borrero
Bobbie Granato	Aura Alvarado
Miriam Underwood	Carol Dewey
Tyron Harris	Amy Karwan
Dr. Sharon Goulet	Eddie Miranda
David Gilroy	Mason Thrall
Chris Campbell	Curtis Rodriguez-Porter
Dr. Lisa Simone	Dr. Sarah Vocca
Louis Daniels	Elsie Gonzalez

I. CALL TO ORDER and APPROVAL of MINUTES

3/18/2026 Council Meeting called to order at 11:30 a.m.

A. 2/18/2026 Council Meeting

MOTION: A Motion to approve the February 18, 2026 minutes was made by Meg Scata and seconded by Betsy LeBorious. The motion passed unanimously.

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

III. STUDENT LIAISON PARTICIPATION

None



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IV. PRESENTATIONS to COUNCIL

Dr. Sarah Vocca and Curtis Rodriguez-Porter presented on CREC’s Open Choice program.

Open Choice provides the opportunity for Hartford resident students to attend high performing integrated schools within suburban towns and allows students in the suburban communities the opportunity to attend select public schools within the City of Hartford.

CREC manages the Open Choice Program on behalf of the CT State Department of Education. CREC manages the lottery, helps districts with marketing ideas and receives various grants for direct support to district and open choice students. CREC works closely with the State Department of Education to offer insight and information with respect to open choice program.

From the launch of the program in 1966 through present day, the open choice program has undergone rebranding, transitions, and improvements due to the Sheff v. O’Neill decision in 1996. CREC has worked diligently to make sure that Connecticut students have quality education, regardless of where they reside.

There are various types of grants available for the open choice program. Some of those are attendance grants to help curb chronic absenteeism, enrollment bonus grants, academic grants and social support grants.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Meg Scata gave the finance and audit committee report outlining the information from the attachments presented at the finance and audit committee meeting (listed as Attachments A-U under Deliberated Action). Discussions were had with respect to the line of credit document presented to council for review and approval.

VI. DELIBERATED ACTION

A. General Items

1. Connecticut State Department of Education Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs Healthy Food Certification Statement (**Attachment A**)
2. General Fund – Line of Credit (**Attachment A1**)



B. 2025-2026 Revised Programs

1. Polaris Center (**Attachment B**)
2. CT Technical Education and Career System Related Services (**Attachment C**)
3. Youth Service Programs (**Attachment D**)

C. 2026-2027 New Programs

1. Student Services (**Attachment E**)
2. Farmington Valley Diagnostic Center (**Attachment F**)
3. STRIVE (**Attachment G**)
4. University Pathways (**Attachment H**)
5. Early Intervention Birth to Three Services (**Attachment I**)
6. Head Start/Early Head Start Program (**Attachment J**)
7. Transportation Services (**Attachment K**)
8. Sheff Technical Services (**Attachment L**)
9. Soundbridge (**Attachment M**)
10. RESC Alliance SDE IDEA (**Attachment N**)
11. CT Technical Education and Career System Services (**Attachment O**)
12. Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP)(**Attachment P**)
13. Supplemental Services (**Attachment Q**)
14. Youth Service Programs (**Attachment R**)
15. Early Childhood Education (**Attachment S**)
16. Internal Staff Development (**Attachment T**)

D. 2025-2026 Approved Operating Budgets (Attachment U)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A Motion to approve Attachments A through U as listed above was made by Meg Scata, the Finance and Audit Committee Chair. The council voted on the motion, and it was passed unanimously.



E. April 15, 2026 Council Meeting

Reschedule the council meeting currently scheduled for April 15, 2026 to April 22, 2026 due to spring recess.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A Motion to approve the rescheduling of the April 15, 2026 meeting to April 22, 2026 was made by Chris Campbell and seconded by Meg Scata. The Motion passed unanimously.

F. Policy Approval (Attachment V)

The following policies and regulations were approved by the Policy Committee on February 18, 2026, as a first reading.

1. Proposed New Policy 5121.3P – Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism
2. Proposed New Regulation 5121.3R – Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism
3. Proposed Revised Policy 3541.6P – CREC Vehicle Safety
4. Proposed Revised Policy 4118.231P/4218.231P – Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco
5. Proposed Revised Regulation 4118.231R/4218.231R – Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

The following policies are presented by the Policy Committee for a *second* reading:

1. Proposed New Policy 5121.3P – Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism
2. Proposed Revised Policy 3541.6P – CREC Vehicle Safety
3. Proposed Revised Policy 4118.231P/4218.231P – Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

RECOMMENDED ACTION: A Motion to approve policies 1 through 3 listed as Attachment V was made by Chris Campbell, the Policy Committee Chair. The council voted on the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

None



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VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Nesmith gave an update with respect to the 2026 legislative session. CREC is advocating with the legislature to restore the \$12M for RESC Magnet Schools that was removed in the Governor’s budget. CREC council members were asked to share information they received during the council meeting to support CREC in its advocacy efforts.

Throughout the past few weeks, Mr. Nesmith has met with various legislators to discuss the Governor’s proposed removal of the \$12M and to ensure they understand the impact of this decision and the consequences if revisions to the budget are not made.

He also met with Michelle Gilman, Commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services to strengthen the relationship between CREC and the DAS.

Mr. Nesmith was invited to participate in Read Across America and visited Wolcott Center of Head Start in Windsor to read to the students in February. He also attended the CREC Teacher Residency Program Reunion Conference at Central Connecticut State University.

IX. COUNCIL CHAIR’S REPORT

Mr. Lockhart addressed the council about the various committees CREC facilitates on which council members are invited to join. They are the Finance & Audit Committee, Policy Committee and Early Childhood Committee. Communication will be sent to council members outlining each.

X. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

None

XI. REPORTS

None

XII. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Betsy LeBoriosis asked if an Open Choice representative could reach out to her to speak to the Board of Education in East Windsor to discuss CREC’s Open Choice program and answer any questions board members may have. Open Choice will reach out to Ms. LeBoriosis to schedule a meeting.



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XIII. ADJOURNMENT MOTION: A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Leonard Lockhart, Council Chair. The council voted on the motion, and it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

