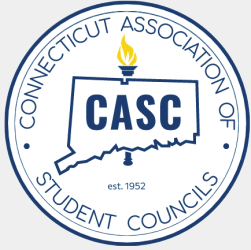


CASC Advisors Planner

Official Newsletter of the Connecticut Association of Student Councils



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Association
of Student Councils

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Director's Corner

Happy New Year! I hope you had a safe and relaxing break and that this year is off to a good start! Thank you for your continued dedication to instilling and developing student leadership at your schools.

A couple items of interest for everyone::

Election update:: The Association's Executive Board adopted at it's December Board meeting the following agenda items related to elections::

- 1.) Revised applications for all Board positions. (currently posted on the website)
- 2.) Changes to Association general elections
 - a.) Applications open December 1 and close February 15.
 - b.) Staff positions close 2 weeks after Convention to allow for more excitement generated at Convention.
 - c.) As part of the candidates 5 minute speech at Convention, a Nominating speech by a second student is needed. (This was previously a tradition in CASC.)
- 3.) Rules for an Open Convention
 - a.) After the extended deadline, any eligible candidate must bring a complete paper application with all required signatures to convention to be eligible to run. In the event that there are no prospective candidates by the day of convention, then we follow Bylaws, Article V, Section 3.

Registration for Convention is open! You can register your delegation today, we are also looking for presenters for breakout workshops.

Applications for Board positions, awards and competitions are open! You can find out more farther in the newsletter.

Be safe, and as always thank you for your continued support of CASC and its mission of building up student leadership in Connecticut. Remember to stay above the line!

Christopher Tomlin
CASC Executive Director

Upcoming State Important Dates::

JANUARY

January 8 - Start and Spark (HS/MS)

Convention discussion, VIRTUAL Meeting 7:00-7:40

January 9:: Mental Health Night (HS)

Mental Health Night will take place on Jan 9th, 2025 at 6:00 PM! Along with that, Mental Health Monday's will be posted on the 1st of every month.

January 22:: Service Project Launch (HS/MS)

Get excited! For the upcoming Connecticut Humane Society virtual conference launching this year's service project. There will be a keynote speaker talking about the importance of adopting pets from animal shelters, and information about the Connecticut Humane Society organization.

January 31-Feb 2 - NASC National Conference, Chicago, IL (HS/MS)

The National Student Council Conference will bring together students and advisers from National Student Council for two days of immersive learning from nationally acclaimed speakers, tailored leadership training, and diverse peer-to-peer connections. <https://www.natstuco.org/events/nasc-national-student-council-conference/>

FEBRUARY

February 8:: Student Workshop Presenter Training (HS)

CASC is proud to provide this new certified training program for student presenters.

February 15:: NatStuCo Council of Excellence application award deadline. (HS/MS)

February 15:: CASC Student Executive Board applications due. (HS/MS)

February 15:: CASC Award applications due. (HS/MS) *Council of Excellence, Top Ten Project, Dale Hawley Award, The Ron Nedovich Advisor of the Year Award. <https://www.ctstuco.com/recognition>*

Program Updates

MISSION: Meetup!

Wednesday, December 18, 2024 | Virtual Meeting | 7:00-7:40 pm

Virtual

(Check [ctstuco.com](https://www.ctstuco.com) for schedule and more details)

About the event

Mission Meetup is our President's Forum program in which Student Council President's will be trained in CTRISES, specialized leadership training -such as the Tuckman's Stages of Group Development, The 7 C's of Leadership, and the 5 Keys of Leadership- as well as, NASC and CASC Council of Excellence Application requirements, and much more! President's will also receive information on ways their student council's can be involved at the state level. In addition, we will host an open forum at the end of each meeting where President's can share what they've been doing at their school as president that is effective, share concerns they have and how we could fix them, share project ideas, and come to me with ideas for the state board or initiatives they're student government would like to see at the state level.

2nd MENTAL HEALTH NIGHT

January 9, 2025

Virtual

(Check ctstuco.com for schedule and more details)

Virtual Mental Health Night will be taking place on January 9th at 6:00PM. CASC's second annual Virtual Mental Health Night is designed to bring helpful information, tips and tricks, and resources related to mental health in teens to high school students. During this event, students can learn about different ways they can manage stress, impacts social media has on mental health, and how to build better relationships. This event is split into 4 sessions, consisting of a keynote speaker from the CDHI, two breakout sessions, and a Mental Health Huddle.

SERVICE PROJECT LAUNCH!

January 22, 2025

Virtual

(Check ctstuco.com for schedule and more details)

Get excited! For the upcoming Connecticut Humane Society virtual conference on January 22nd, 2025 from 6:00pm-6:45pm. There will be a keynote speaker talking about the importance of adopting pets from animal shelters, and information about the Connecticut Humane Society organization. Additionally, the pet toys and food drive will be starting in January and will continue till the day before convention, which is March 6th 2025. All donations will be brought to CASC Convention 2025. The district with the most donations will be rewarded with a service project award. All donations will be donated to the Connecticut Humane Society.

Facilitator Training Session

February 8, 2025

LIVE - Cheshire, CT

(Check ctstuco.com for schedule and more details)

On February 8th we will be holding our second facilitator training. This session is open to all student leaders, but all students presenting workshops during symposium are required to attend this session. The link to sign up for convention workshops is now available at ctstuco.com. Thank you so much!

Executive Board Officer Applications Now Open!

February 15, 2025

Applications are now being accepted for students wanting to serve on the association's Executive Board. Applications must be submitted on our website <https://www.ctstuco.com> and received on or before midnight, February 15.

Contact the Executive Director with any questions ctomlin@casciac.org

The following positions are open on the board::

- President/Host convention school (1 year position)
- Secretary Treasurer (1 year position)
- Middle School Member at Large (1 year position)

District

- Eastern District (2 year school position)
- Western District (2 year school position) - *the incumbent school, Thomaston High School, after serving the maximum number of years, is required to cycle off the board this year.*

Staff

- Parliamentarian (1 year position)
 - Historian/Archivist (1 year position)
 - Student Workshop Coordinator (1 year position)
 - Legislative Affairs Coordinator (1 year position)
 - Service Coordinator (1 year position)
 - Mental Health Affairs Coordinator (1 year position)
-

Award and Competition Applications Now Open!

February 15, 2025

Applications are now being accepted for all CASC Awards and Competitions. If your Student Council/Government, or a member of it, has shown a commitment to *Citizenship, Recognition, Inspiration, Service, Engagement, and Spirit*, now is the time to celebrate their accomplishments and hard work by applying for one of CASC's awards.

As an award recipient, you will receive:

- An official certificate from CASC
- School name announced at Convention, as well as published in the advisors newsletter and on the CASC website.

Applications must be submitted on our website <https://www.ctstuco.com/recognition> and received on or before February 15.

Contact the Executive Director with any questions ctomlin@casciac.org

Competitions::

- Top Projects Award.
- CSV

Awards for SCG's::

- CASC Council of Excellence Award. (HS)

Awards for Students::

- Student Leadership Award (HS)
- Unsung Hero Award (MS/HS)

Awards for Advisors::

- The Ron Nedovich Advisor of the Year Award (HS/MS)
- Friend of the Association

CTRISES:: Project Ideas

Remember to be focusing on your **CT**(citizenship), **R**(recognition), **I**(inspiration), **S**(service), **E**(engagement), **S**(spirit). Looking for a new project to run this month in your student council/government? Think about incorporating some of these suggestions into your calendar.

Ideas for January

CITIZENSHIP

RSVP (Raising Student Voice & Participation)

National Student Council (NatStuCo) promotes student voice on high school and middle level campuses as an essential responsibility of student council leaders—but what is student voice, and what does it look like?

Student voice is the sharing of suggestions, ideas, and opinions of the student body, and the Raising Student Voice & Participation (RSVP) program provides the opportunity to take that collective voice and effect real change in schools and the community.

<https://www.natstuco.org/leadership-development/raising-student-voice-participation/>

TRAINING

Marketing and Social Media Management

Equip students with modern marketing and digital communication skills. Workshops on creating engaging social media posts, understanding algorithms, and promoting events. Group projects where students create a social media campaign for their club or a school event. Training on ethical use of social media and how to maintain a positive online presence.

RECOGNITION

Apply for Awards

CASC as well as NatStuCo offer a number of awards to recognize both individuals as well as Student Councils/Governments. Be sure you are taking advantage of these opportunities! Visit ctstuco.com or natstuco.org for more details.

INSPIRATION

Council/Government Retreats

If you didn't do anything in December to bring your group together to reconnect, January is a great time. Consider trips to the bowling alley, arcade, laser tag, or other indoor activities where your members can laugh and reconnect.

SERVICE

Class Council Volunteer Commitment

Submitted by:: Farmington HS

For each class to establish a strong connection with a local charity by committing to fundraising and volunteering at the same charity for all four years of high school.

Each class chooses a charity during their freshmen year and works with the charity by providing hours of volunteer work and monetary donations from dedicated fundraisers each year.

We have had amazing results with this policy, as it

has made a difference in the lives of both our students and community members. Our senior class has adopted the Farmington Services for the Elderly and the class has provided funds and volunteer hours for three plus years now. The community members look forward to their visits and truly appreciate the money donated through the multiple fundraisers dedicated to the charity.

ENGAGEMENT

Schoolwide Mental Health Activity

Consider hosting school wide Mental Health

Activities in preparation for Exams. Put positive affirmation cards notes on student's lockers, play soothing music between exams, set up a zen room for students to use between exam periods to study or decompress.

SPIRIT

Restaurant Percentage Nights

Have a restaurant pass out special school coupons that immediately donates a percentage of that profit to the school.

Ideas for February

CITIZENSHIP

Attendance at local town meetings

Attend a meeting of your town council or of your Board of Education. Check the agenda ahead of time and see if there is a topic of interest that you think would benefit the student body.

Host an Inauguration Watch Party

Members come together to watch the official ceremony of a new president's inauguration.

TRAINING

Financial Literacy and Fundraising Training

Host an event that teaches students how to manage money, raise funds, and budget.

- Activities:
 - Workshops on creating a budget for a club or event.
 - Training on how to write grant proposals and fundraising letters.
 - Learning about different fundraising techniques (e.g., online crowdfunding, events).
- Goal: Provide students with valuable skills for managing club finances and organizing successful fundraisers.

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INSPIRATION

CASC Convention

Be the inspiration for change by signing up to present a workshop session at Convention to share the amazing work that your Council/Government does.

SERVICE

Valentines Day Activities

Get together and make Valentines for the elderly. Then go deliver them to your local senior centers. Consider selling Valentines and delivering them to students with carnation flowers

ENGAGEMENT

Raise Money for Local Family in Need

February is the depth of winter and when people need the most help with heating bills and snow removal.

SPIRIT

Basketball/Volleyball Tournament

Some schools host yearly "Three on Three Tournaments." Others host "Teacher vs Student games." Encourage teams to sign up and

consider including awards for Teams with the most original name and best jersey. You can use these games as fundraisers or as Charitable games.

Coffee House With Open Mic/Poetry Reading

This is a great way to reach out to the diverse

***We are always looking for new and exciting projects or events to highlight, if your council has a project that you would like to see highlighted in a newsletter please submit it [here](#).*

groups within your school to increase school participation. Set up a mic and some stools, try to get couches or comfortable seating for the audience. Consider having relaxing background music playing during the night. Don't forget the food and refreshments!

Tips and Tools

How to Keep Working When You're Just Not Feeling It

by [Ayelet Fishbach](#) From the Magazine (November–December 2018)

<https://hbr.org/2018/11/how-to-keep-working-when-youre-just-not-feeling-it>

Motivating yourself is hard. In fact, I often compare it to one of the exploits of the fictional German hero Baron Munchausen: Trying to sustain your drive through a task, a project, or even a career can sometimes feel like pulling yourself out of a swamp by your own hair. We seem to have a natural aversion to persistent effort that no amount of caffeine or inspirational posters can fix.

But effective self-motivation is one of the main things that distinguishes high-achieving professionals from everyone else. So how can you keep pushing onward, even when you don't feel like it?

To a certain extent, motivation is personal. What gets you going might not do anything for me. And some individuals do seem to have more stick-to-itiveness than others. However, after 20 years of research into human motivation, my team and I have identified several strategies that seem to work for most people—whether they're trying to lose weight, save for retirement, or implement a long, difficult initiative at

work. If you've ever failed to reach an attainable goal because of procrastination or lack of commitment—and who of us hasn't?—I encourage you to read on. These four sets of tactics can help propel you forward.

Design Goals, Not Chores

Ample research has documented the importance of goal setting. Studies have shown, for example, that when salespeople have targets, they close more deals, and that when individuals make daily exercise commitments, they're more likely to increase their fitness levels. Abstract ambitions—such as “doing your best”—are usually much less effective than something concrete, such as bringing in 10 new customers a month or walking 10,000 steps a day. As a first general rule, then, any objectives you set for yourself or agree to should be specific.

Goals should also, whenever possible, trigger intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, motivation. An activity is intrinsically motivated when it's seen as its own end;

it's extrinsically motivated when it's seen as serving a separate, ulterior purpose—earning you a reward or allowing you to avoid punishment. My research shows that intrinsic motives predict achievement and success better than extrinsic ones do.

Take New Year's resolutions. We found that people who made resolutions at the start of January that were more pleasant to pursue—say, taking on a yoga class or phone-free Saturdays—were more likely to still be following through on them in March than people who chose more-important but less enjoyable goals. This is despite the obvious fact that aspirations for the New Year are usually tough to achieve; if they weren't, they wouldn't require a resolution!

Of course, if the external reward is great enough, we'll keep at even the most unpleasant tasks. Undergoing chemotherapy is an extreme example. In a work context, many people stay in their jobs for the money, feeling like “wage slaves.” But in such situations they usually do the minimum required to meet the goal. Extrinsic motivation alone is unlikely to help us truly excel.

The trick is to focus on the *elements* of the work that you do find enjoyable.

In an ideal world we would all seek out work roles and environments that we enjoy and thus keep our engagement high. Unfortunately, people often fail to do this. For example, my research shows that when asked whether positive relationships with colleagues and managers are critical in their current position, most people say yes. But they don't remember that office morale was key to success in past jobs, nor do they predict it will be important for them in the future. So simply remembering to consider intrinsic motivation when choosing jobs and taking on projects can go a long way toward helping sustain success.

In cases where that's impractical—we don't all find jobs and get assignments we love—the trick is to focus on the *elements* of the work that you do find enjoyable. Think expansively about how accomplishing the task might be satisfying—by, for example, giving you a chance to showcase your skills

in front of your company's leaders, build important internal relationships, or create value for customers. Finally, try to offset drudgery with activities that you find rewarding—for instance, listen to music while tackling that big backlog of email in your in-box, or do boring chores with friends, family, or your favorite colleagues.

Find Effective Rewards

Some tasks or even stretches of a career are entirely onerous—in which case it can be helpful to create external motivators for yourself over the short-to-medium term, especially if they complement incentives offered by your organization. You might promise yourself a vacation for finishing a project or buy yourself a gift for losing weight. But be careful to avoid perverse incentives. One mistake is to reward yourself for the quantity of completed tasks or for speed when you actually care about the quality of performance. An accountant who treats herself for finishing her auditing projects quickly might leave herself open to mistakes, while a salesperson focused on maximizing sales rather than repeat business should probably expect some unhappy customers.

Another common trap is to choose incentives that undermine the goal you've reached. If a dieter's prize for losing weight is to eat pizza and cake, he's likely to undo some of his hard work and reestablish bad habits. If the reward for excelling at work one week is to allow yourself to slack off the next, you could diminish the positive impression you've made. Research on what psychologists call balancing shows that goal achievement sometimes licenses people to give in to temptation—which sets them back.

In addition, some external incentives are more effective than others. For instance, in experiments researchers have discovered that most people work harder (investing more effort, time, and money) to qualify for an uncertain reward (such as a 50% chance of getting either \$150 or \$50) than they do for a certain reward (a 100% chance of getting \$100), perhaps because the former is more challenging and exciting. Uncertain rewards are harder to set up at work, but not impossible. You might “gamify” a task by keeping two envelopes at your desk—one containing a

treat of greater value—and picking only one, at random, after the job is done.

Finally, loss aversion—people’s preference for avoiding losses rather than acquiring equivalent gains—can also be used to design a strong external motivator. In a 2016 study scientists from the University of Pennsylvania asked people to walk 7,000 steps a day for six months. Some participants were paid \$1.40 for each day they achieved their goal, while others lost \$1.40 if they failed to. The second group hit their daily target 50% more often. Online services such as StickK.com allow users to choose a goal, like “I want to quit smoking,” and then commit to a loss if they don’t achieve it: They have to donate money to an organization or a political party that they despise, for example.

Sustain Progress

When people are working toward a goal, they typically have a burst of motivation early and then slump in the middle, where they are most likely to stall out. For instance, in one study observant Jews were more likely to light a menorah on the first and last nights of Hanukkah than on the other six nights, even though the religious tradition is to light candles for eight successive days. In another experiment, participants who were working on a paper-shape-cutting task cut more corners in the middle of the project than they did on their initial and final shapes.

Fortunately, research has uncovered several ways to fight this pattern. I refer to the first as “short middles.” If you break your goal into smaller subgoals—say, weekly instead of quarterly sales targets—there’s less time to succumb to that pesky slump.

Giving advice may be an even more effective way to overcome motivational deficits.

A second strategy is to change the way you think about the progress you’ve achieved. When we’ve already made headway, the goal seems within reach, and we tend to increase our effort. For example, consumers in loyalty programs tend to spend more when they’re closer to earning a reward. You can take advantage of that tendency by thinking of your

starting point as being further back in the past; maybe the project began not the first time you took action but the time it was first proposed.

Another mental trick involves focusing on what you’ve already done up to the midpoint of a task and then turning your attention to what you have left to do. My research has found that this shift in perspective can increase motivation. For example, in a frequent-buyer promotion, emphasizing finished steps (“you’ve completed two of 10 purchases”) increased customers’ purchases at the beginning, and emphasizing missing steps (“you are two purchases away from a free reward”) spurred consumption as buyers neared the goal.

This tactic can work for rote tasks (such as sending out 40 thank-you notes) as well as for more-qualitative goals (becoming an expert pianist). The person writing the notes can gain motivation from reminding herself how many she’s sent until she passes 20; then she should count down how many she has left to do. In the same way, a novice pianist should focus on all the scales and skills she has acquired in her early stages of development; then, as she improves, focus on the remaining technical challenges (arpeggios, trills and tremolos, and so on) she needs to master.

Harness the Influence of Others

Humans are social creatures. We constantly look around to see what others are doing, and their actions influence our own. Even sitting next to a high-performing employee can increase your output. But when it comes to motivation, this dynamic is more complex. When we witness a colleague speeding through a task that leaves us frustrated, we respond in one of two ways: Either we’re inspired and try to copy that behavior, or we lose motivation on the assumption that we could leave the task to our peer. This is not entirely irrational: Humans have thrived as a species through individual specialization and by making the most of their comparative advantages.

The problem is that, especially at work, we can’t always delegate. But we can still use social influence to our advantage. One rule is to never passively watch ambitious, efficient, successful coworkers; there’s too

much risk that it will be demotivating. Instead, talk to these peers about what they're trying to accomplish with their hard work and why they would recommend doing it. My research shows that when a friend endorses a product, people are more likely to buy it, but they aren't likely to if they simply learn that the friend bought the product. Listening to what your role models say about their goals can help you find extra inspiration and raise your own sights.

Interestingly, giving advice rather than asking for it may be an even more effective way to overcome motivational deficits, because it boosts confidence and thereby spurs action. In a recent study I found that people struggling to achieve a goal like finding a job assumed that they needed tips from experts to succeed. In fact, they were better served by offering *their* wisdom to other job seekers, because when they did so, they laid out concrete plans they could follow themselves, which have been shown to increase drive and achievement.

A final way to harness positive social influence is to recognize that the people who will best motivate you

to accomplish certain tasks are not necessarily those who do the tasks well. Instead, they're folks who share a big-picture goal with you: close friends and family or mentors. Thinking of those people and our desire to succeed on their behalf can help provide the powerful intrinsic incentives we need to reach our goals. A woman may find drudgery at work rewarding if she feels she is providing an example for her daughter; a man may find it easier to stick to his fitness routine if it helps him feel more vibrant when he is with his friends.

In positive psychology, *flow* is defined as a mental state in which someone is fully immersed, with energized focus and enjoyment, in an activity. Alas, that feeling can be fleeting or elusive in everyday life. More often we feel like Baron Munchausen in the swamp—struggling to move forward in pursuit of our goals. In those situations it can help to tap the power of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, set incentives carefully, turn our focus either behind or ahead depending on how close we are to the finish, and harness social influence. Self-motivation is one of the hardest skills to learn, but it's critical to your success.

Upcoming Events

Be sure to check the CASC Website (CTStuco.com) for a full calendar of our program and more information!

JANUARY

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MARCH

March 7:: CASC Convention (HS/MS)

This year being hosted by Woodland Regional High School in Beacon Falls. More details to follow as we get closer.

APRIL

April 8 - Start and Spark (HS/MS)

End of year activities and summer ideas, VIRTUAL Meeting 7:00-7:40

April 17:: CASC's 73rd Birthday

April 21-25:: National Student Leadership Week

MAY

May 21 - CASC "Adventures in Leadership," (HS/MS)

Ropes course designed to allow your newly elected leaders an opportunity to come together and begin to work as a team, while meeting leaders from across the state. More details to follow.