The Center is funded through an agreement with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection and Western Connecticut State University.
Dear School Safety Partners,

I am excited to announce that our newsletter is up to approximately 1,000 subscribers! We have also been making strides in several school safety initiatives:

- We are in the process of hiring two additional Regional School Safety Coordinators (RSSC). One in the North Central region, who will be reporting out of CREC, and one for the Eastern region, who will be reporting out of LEARN. (More information to follow as we onboard them).
- I am excited to announce that the six RSSCs have hired Trauma Coordinators. These Trauma Coordinators will provide valuable resources throughout the state. (Please see the Trauma Coordinator section below for more information).
- Our research team continues to compile and analyze the data for SRO Efficacy Research project. Thank you so much for your participation with the research.
- We held our first meeting for our Preventing Targeted Violence in CT Schools Working Group. (More resources, training, and guidance to follow in the upcoming months).

If you have any safety-related questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We want to be a resource for the entire school community.

Your partner in school safety,

Amery

Amery Bernhardt, D.M.
Director
CT Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation

Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
Thank you for signing up to get this important newsletter. As always, please feel free to contact me with any school plan questions.

Your partner in school safety,

Bill Turley
Region 3 Coordinator
School Safety Program Lead for the State of Connecticut
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security
william.turley@ct.gov

DEMHS School Plan Points

- All School plans are due to DEMHS by November 1.
- Who must submit their plan:
  - Municipal
  - Regional
  - Magnet
  - Charter
  - CT Tech schools
  - RESCs
- Please submit the entire plan including the signatory page(s)
- Ensure the signatures are dated and the plan has been revised to the current school year.
- Each school must have a Safety Committee and a Safe School Climate Committee. They may be combined but ensure all members and their position/title are listed.
- Every school must have a safety and security assessment every two years. Ensure the most recent assessment is included in the plan with the date it was conducted and who conducted the assessment.
- Drill logs for each school are due to DEMHS by July 1 each year. If you have not submitted last years log, do so as soon as possible.
- The school safety committee should be reviewing and revising the plan regularly. Using the Self-assessment checklist, the committee can ensure the plan meets the 14 standards set by the state.
- A 14th standard was added this year due to legislation. PA-21-92 requires all schools, public and private, to have “Emergency Action Plans for Interscholastic and Intramural Athletic Events” Annex N was added this year to place those plans into the overall school plan. If your school does not participate in these activities, keep annex as placeholder and document that fact.
- K-12 School Emergency Plan Self-Review Checklist

We are currently revising the school Emergency Operations Planning class we presented in prior years and bringing on new trainers, to bring that class back to the road.

Thank you everyone for your commitment to school safety. I'll provide more school safety plan information next month.

Your partner in school safety,
Bill Turley
School Safety Program Lead for the State of Connecticut

Resources and Information
EdAdvance, through its SAMHSA-funded MHAT-WCT initiative, offers no-cost Mental Health First Aid, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Teen Mental Health First Aid, and QPR Suicide Prevention training classes to adults and teens throughout Western CT. Contact is Abby Peklo at peklo@edadvance.org or 860.567.0863 ext. 1166.

Keep CT Safe It’s Your Job Too Download the App Today Flyer - provided by the State of CT Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Training Video on School Emergency Response Terminology - The Center partnered with DEMHS, Bethel Public Schools, and Bethel Police to create a brief basic overview of school emergency response terminology.

Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) Trauma Informed Coordinators: The CT General Assembly recently passed legislation requiring Regional Educational Service Centers (RESC) to develop a statewide training program to assist public school educators in dealing with trauma. Each of Connecticut’s six RESCs will appoint a “Trauma Coordinator” to facilitate the training development and implementation and serve as a resource for schools across their region. The legislation can be found here (it begins on page 25). Please contact your local RESC for more information.

9-8-8 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number on student IDs: The CT General Assembly recently passed legislation for the school year commencing July 1, 2023, that students in grades 6-12 (and higher education) will have the 9-8-8 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline number on students’ IDs. The legislation can be found here (it begins on page 36).

New Addition to Annexes for 2022-2023 school plan templates. Added this year is a new standard, #14, Emergency Action Plans for Intramural and Interscholastic Sports. This requirement applies to both public and private schools. A new annex, Annex N, was added for the schools to use for these action plans. For questions or to request more information, please contact the DEMHS School Security Group at SchoolSecurityPlanStandards@ct.gov.

Free Vaping Prevention Resources, provided by Victoria Adams, M.Ed., NCTTP, Tobacco Program Coordinator, Health and Human Services, Southern Connecticut State University.


Invent2Prevent (I2P) is an experiential project that challenges high school students to create and activate their own peer-developed initiatives, products and tools to prevent targeted violence and help create safe schools and communities. Invent2Prevent is sponsored by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). All participation is free of cost.

Fostering Family Engagement in School (On-Demand) – This on-demand webinar from the National Center for School Safety addresses how schools can foster family involvement and engagement to increase student feelings of belonging and academic success.

National Preparedness Month Activities and Resources
This Ready.gov webpage shares information on National Preparedness Month and resources to raise awareness about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies.

Emergency Preparedness & School Safety for K-12 Schools Infographic
This infographic highlights the five mission areas of emergency preparedness and how schools can use them to take a comprehensive approach to school safety and emergency planning.
CISA School Safety Resources for Back to School

This blog post outlines CISA resources, tools, and community-wide stakeholder events to help K-12 schools and districts enhance and strengthen their safety and security.

RESC Trauma Coordinators

We’d like to take this opportunity to introduce the Trauma Coordinators working across the State of Connecticut:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESC</th>
<th>Coordinator(s)</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACES</td>
<td>Cynthia Ratchelous</td>
<td><a href="mailto:cratchelous@aces.org">cratchelous@aces.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CES</td>
<td>Dana Bossio</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bossiod@cestrumbull.org">bossiod@cestrumbull.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREC</td>
<td>Diana Perry</td>
<td><a href="mailto:diperry@crec.org">diperry@crec.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EASTCONN</td>
<td>Jacquelyn Dubois</td>
<td><a href="mailto:j.dubois@eastconn.org">j.dubois@eastconn.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alexandra Pierce</td>
<td><a href="mailto:apierce@eastconn.org">apierce@eastconn.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>EdAdvance</td>
<td>Alisha DiCorpo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dicorpo@edadvance.org">dicorpo@edadvance.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer Harris</td>
<td><a href="mailto:harris@edadvance.org">harris@edadvance.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACES

Cynthia Ratchelous serves as the Regional Trauma Director for the Area Cooperative Educational Services (ACES) catchment. In collaboration with the CT RESC Alliance, she will plan, develop, implement and evaluate a trauma informed training program for local school districts. Before earning her Sixth-Year Certificate in School Leadership from Southern Connecticut State University, Cynthia received her Master’s degree in Special Education from Southern Connecticut State University and a Bachelor’s degree in Special Education from the University of Connecticut. Prior to her role as Regional Trauma Director, Cynthia worked for more than 14 years as an ACES building administrator at ACES Mill Road School, a PK-8 school that serves students with significant behavioral challenges. While at ACES, Cynthia has had the opportunity to participate in the nationally recognized Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP), collaborate with Child Psychiatrists from the Yale Child Study Center, and work in partnership with several local universities to supervise students completing internships and student teaching assignments. Cynthia’s first experience working with children who have experienced significant trauma was while employed as a teacher and Educational Liaison at Yale University’s Child Study Center School. This experience gave Cynthia the foresight to see that addressing student trauma was just as important as behavioral intervention programming. While at Mill Road School, she led the development of a pilot trauma informed classroom program. The pilot was so successful that the model was adopted in all elementary classrooms at the school.

CES

Dana Bossio serves as the Regional Trauma Coordinator for Cooperative Educational Services (CES). A certified school psychologist, Dana earned her Master’s degree and Sixth Year Certificate from the University of Connecticut. Prior to joining CES in 2021, Dana worked for the Fairfield Public Schools as a building-level school psychologist for 10 years before transitioning to the role of Teacher Leader for School Psychology and Social Work in 2017. In her role, she was afforded the opportunity to work with staff, students and families at the district level, providing consultation and support in comprehensive evaluations and training coordination/development, with particular focus on the assessment of English Language Learners, dyslexia, autism and trauma-informed practices. Throughout the COVID 19 pandemic, Dana worked collaboratively with colleagues to establish resilience and wellness practices for students, staff and families, and developed guidance to aid educators in adapting assessment/service provision in response to COVID 19. An advocate for SEL, trauma-informed practice and suicide prevention, Dana has worked in collaboration with staff, families and community organizations to develop and revise system-wide initiatives focusing on early identification and intervention for students requiring social-emotional and behavioral support.

CREC

Dr. Diana Perry (CREC) is a member of the NCTSN’s Implementation and Sustainability Committee, and sits on the Steering Team for CT’s Trauma-Informed School Mental Health (TISMH) Task Force. Prior to joining CREC, Diana was a Senior Project Coordinator for the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI), providing training, clinical & implementation consultation, and technical assistance for schools and districts interested in offering evidence-based, trauma-focused groups to their student body. Also at CHDI, Dr. Perry co-conceptualized Educate-SMART: an online 19-module TI professional development training curriculum designed for anyone working within a school building. Last, Diana co-developed an Affinity Group for CHDI staff focused on talking more openly about issues of racism, privilege, and institutional oppression. Prior to CHDI, Dr. Perry was a clinician for 12 years in NYC, San Francisco, and New
Dr. Jacquelyn DuBois is a senior Educational and Behavioral Consultant and Licensed Psychologist at EASTCONN’s Psychological and Behavioral Consultation Services (PBC) department. She earned her doctorate in School Psychology from Northeastern University, and is a Nationally Certified School Psychologist (NCSP). Before earning her doctorate, Dr. DuBois received her Master’s degree in Applied Educational Psychology from Northeastern University and her Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Cornell University. She completed her doctoral internship at Devereux Foundation Center for Effective Schools, where she assisted urban and alternative schools in developing, implementing, and evaluating multi-tiered systems of support. Dr. DuBois has experience in public school systems, community mental health, hospitals, and early intervention settings. Within EASTCONN, Dr. DuBois has worked with public school districts to develop and support implementation of multi-tiered systems of support, provided professional development trainings, coaching, and technical assistance, evaluated student behavioral supports and programs, and conducted functional behavior assessment (FBAs). She serves as Doctoral Internship Coordinator, which includes overseeing and providing supervision to doctoral interns in school psychology. Dr. DuBois is also EASTCONN’s Trauma-Informed Training Coordinator, collaborating with the RESC Alliance to develop, provide, and evaluate training in trauma-informed practices in schools. Lastly, Dr. DuBois is a current CASEL SEL Fellow, expanding her expertise in social and emotional learning (SEL) and networking with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) and regional leaders across the nation.

Dr. Alexandra Pierce is an Educational and Behavioral Consultant for EASTCONN’s Psychological and Behavioral Consultation Services (PBC) department. She earned her Doctorate and Master’s degrees in school psychology from the University of Connecticut and her Bachelor’s degree in psychology from Boston College. Dr. Pierce completed her doctoral internship at the May Institute, where she consulted with specialized programs for students with autism and developmental disabilities to support the implementation of best practices in academic, adaptive life skills, and behavioral intervention. Previously, she has held clinical positions in specialized treatment settings, providing direct intervention to children with significant social-emotional and behavioral needs using a trauma-informed lens. Dr. Pierce has worked with schools across Massachusetts to support the implementation and sustainability of multi-tiered systems of social-emotional and behavioral support. In addition to her work at EASTCONN, Dr. Pierce conducts applied research focused on implementation science, interventions to support educators in implementing and maintaining student interventions with fidelity, and educator stress and burnout.

EdAdvance

Alisha DiCorpo is the newly appointed Special Projects Manager for EdAdvance. She is currently certified as an Elementary Educator, School, and District Administrator, as well as holds the Superintendent of Schools certification. Alisha served as an elementary educator for ten years. She served as an Assistant Principal and as a Principal overseeing grades Pre-K through grade six. At the district level, she has served as a Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment as well as an Assistant Superintendent and as Superintendent of Schools. In these roles, she has worked collaboratively on district-level initiatives involving trauma informed practices, school climate and SEL.

Jennifer Harris spent the last sixteen years as a school psychologist in a district in Northwestern Connecticut. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the
University of Maine at Farmington prior to obtaining her Master of Sciences and 6th year Certificate in School Psychology from the University of Hartford. Most recently she completed the Intermediate Administrator Program at Sacred Heart University and holds active certification in both School Psychology and Intermediate Administration and Supervision. Jennifer is passionate about providing students with a quality education that meets both their academic and social-emotional needs. Jennifer’s areas of focus include social emotional learning, neurodiversity, executive functioning skills, and trauma informed practices. Jennifer’s strength is connecting with students and staff and to make sure that social-emotional needs are met so children are available for instruction and staff feel prepared to reach their students. Jennifer has been trained in the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence’s RULER approach and has served on district-based RULER implementation teams. As part of her role on the implementation teams, she facilitated teacher roll-out of the lessons within the classroom.

LEARN

Tianna L. Hill is the Regional Trauma Coordinator at LEARN. Over the last decade, she has worked closely with school districts throughout Connecticut to implement practices to support a positive school climate and student well-being. In 2019, she became a Fellow of Georgetown University and provided expertise on school-based diversion models. She has extensive knowledge of mental health and juvenile justice, trauma-informed care, adolescent development, and research methods. She received her Master’s in Social Work from the University of Connecticut and earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from Goucher College. Currently, she serves as Chair of Communications and Marketing for the University of Connecticut School of Social Work Board of Champions and is a member of the Area Health Education Center Urban Service Track Alumni Advisory Committee.

Meetings - Please look for meetings in your region.

Regional Suicide Advisory Board Meetings (RSAB)
- **When:** 2nd Friday of month, Quarterly; from 12-2pm (12/9/22, 3/10/23, 6/9/23)
- **Where:** Virtually
- **Who Should Attend:** Open to all; from Southwestern CT, interested in working to address suicide. Focus on strategically planning, coordinating and supporting suicide awareness and safety efforts across the continuum of prevention, intervention, postvention and grief support, and recovery.
- **For more information:** please see [The Hub CT](#)

Catchment Area Council Meetings
- **When:** Every other 3rd Thursday of month; from 2:30-4pm (11/17/22, 1/19/23, 3/16/23, 5/18/23)
- **Where:** Virtually
- **Who Should Attend:** (Open to anyone interested): Open to all; 51%-65% of participants must be individuals with lived experience with mental illness and/or substance misuse; other participants include providers, family members, and advocates.
- Focus on sharing resources, identifying needs, and advocating to improve the behavioral health treatment and recovery system.
- **CAC 1-4** (covering Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Weston, Westport, Wilton, Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Monroe, Stratford, Trumbull)
- **For more information:** please contact [Kaitlin@ryasap.org](mailto:Kaitlin@ryasap.org).

TBA - DEMHS Region 1 School Safety and Security Meeting
- **For more information**, please contact [Robert Kenny](mailto:robert.kenny@ct.gov) at robert.kenny@ct.gov.
Region 1 Gambling Awareness Team Meetings
- **When:** 2nd Tuesday of the month, Quarterly; from 2:30-4pm (1/10/23, 4/11/23, 6/13/23)
- **Where:** Virtually
- **Who Should Attend:** (open to anyone interested): Open to anyone from Southwestern CT interested in raising awareness about problem gambling and gaming. Focus on raising awareness and developing prevention and treatment capacity in the region.
- **RSVP** to [ingrid.gillespie@liberationprograms.org](mailto:ingrid.gillespie@liberationprograms.org) for meeting link.

The DEMHS Region 2 School Safety & Security Group Meeting
- **When:** 11/16/22 from 2-3pm
- **Where:** Virtually
- **For more information:** please contact **Jeff Nielsen** at [jnielsen@milforded.org](mailto:jnielsen@milforded.org).

The DEMHS Region 3 Capitol Emergency Management Meeting
- **When:** 12/15/22 from 1-2:30pm
- **Where:** In-Person
- **Who should Attend:** This meeting is for Administrators, Facility Directors, Business Officials, SRO’s, Security Personnel, Emergency Management Personnel, Mental Health Professionals, Technology Leaders, etc.
- **If you are interested in attending:** please email **Linda Powell** at [powelll@granbyschools.org](mailto:powelll@granbyschools.org) or call (860) 844-5259.

The DEMHS Region 4 School Safety and Security Working Group is coming soon!
- **If you are interested in joining,** please email **Mike Caplet** at [mike.caplet@ct.gov](mailto:mike.caplet@ct.gov).

The DEMHS Region 5 School Safety and Security Working Group
- **Where:** Virtually
- The mission of this group is to provide a school safety and security network consisting of school resources who can share lessons learned and quality information pertaining to maintaining a safe and secure environment for our schools.
- **If you are interested in attending:** please email **John Field** at [john.field@ct.gov](mailto:john.field@ct.gov).

The Western Regional Crisis Team Meetings (covering RESC regions of EdAdvance & CES)
- **When:** Tuesdays from 8:30-10:30am (11/29/22, 12/20/22, 1/31/23, 2/28/23, 3/28/23, 4/25/23, 5/23/23, & 6/06/23)
- **Where:** Virtually (Possibly Hybrid)
- **Who Should Attend:** These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals servicing our K-12 students.
- **For more information or to join the Team:** please email **Gabe Lomas** at [lomasg@wcsu.edu](mailto:lomasg@wcsu.edu).

CT School Safety and Crisis Response Committee/ACES Regional Crisis Team Meeting
Pathways to Violence will be presented by **Marc LaFrance**, Behavioral Analysis Coordinator and Threat Management Coordinator for the FBI in Connecticut.
- **When:** 11/2/22, from 9-11am
- **Who Should Attend:** These meetings are geared towards the mental health professionals servicing our K-12 students.
- **Where:** Zoom
- **For more information or to join the Team:** please email **Sadie Witherspoon** at [witherspoons@wcsu.edu](mailto:witherspoons@wcsu.edu).

CT School Safety and Crisis Response Committee/ACES Regional Crisis Team Meeting
Presentation will be given by the **CT Regional Trauma Informed Specialists**.
- **When:** 12/7/22, from 9-11am
Research

Connecticut Research
In the spring of 2022, the Center worked with key partners to conduct a needs assessment of K-12 schools throughout the state of CT. The full report can be accessed here.

Purpose: The main objective of this assessment was to examine the perspectives of a variety of school employees to determine the needs related to safety, security, and mental health issues in Connecticut schools.

Methods: A survey was developed and deployed to school professionals servicing the Connecticut schools with a variety of roles. The survey, comprised of 22 questions and covering 8 sections, was conducted over the internet.

Key Findings:
- The most prevalent safety concerns in schools were mental health (76%), bullying (57%), culture and climate (43%), and cyberbullying (41%).
- In the category of physical safety training needs, 55% of respondents identified school behavioral threat assessment, 37% identified safety and security assessments, and 31% identified digital threat assessment.
- The most prevalent request for emergency operations training was for active shooter response training at 39%, followed by emergency operation plan development at 26%, parent reunification at 21%, exercise design at 19%, and the National Association for School Psychologists PREPare training at 18%.
- The requested law enforcement trainings include the National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Basic School Resource Officer (SRO) course with 25% of the responses, NASRO Advanced SRO course with 12% of the responses, SRO Supervisors and Management training with 15% of the responses, and other trainings with 3% of the responses.
- Regarding the frequency of school climate surveys, 55% indicated they are done at least once per year and 37% did not know how often they were done.
- Regarding which school climate instrument was used to measure climate in their school buildings, a large percentage (48%) indicated unknown.
- When asked which threat assessment model was used in their district, most (75%) indicated unknown.
- When asked about threat reporting, a large percentage (48%) reported not knowing which method is used.

Trainings

- Comprehensive School Threat Assessment Guidelines (CSTAG) Training - The CSTAG Model is an evidence-based behavioral threat assessment and intervention model for
preventing school violence. The Center can bring this training directly to your school district. Our goal is to make trainings accessible to all Connecticut schools, so our trainings are low cost. However, because we do not want cost to be a barrier, we offer scholarships for individuals and districts who are unable to afford training costs. Please contact Dr. Amery Bernhardt at Bernhardt@wcsu.edu to schedule a session or for more information.

- 11/1-11/3: **National Summit on K-12 School Safety and Security** - Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)

- 11/2: **The Courage to Speak Foundation Presentation** by Ginger Katz - CT Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services. For more information, please contact Ginger Katz at gkatz@couragetospeak.org

- Register by 11/2: **AWR 148: Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents: Partnering Rural Law Enforcement, First Responders, and Local School Systems** - CT DEMHS Region 5, also see flyer


- 11/9: **Free QPR Suicide Prevention Webinar Training and Certification** - Western CT Coalition (WCTC), QPR Institute, and DMHAS. Trainings are on Zoom, and held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Register here


- 11/14-11/18: **Law Enforcement Against Drugs & Violence (L.E.A.D. K-12)** "On the Street and in the Classroom" - New England HIDTA Training

- 11/17: **Meet the Providers Series - Learn more about the Child and Family Resources in Western CT** - Presenting Family and Children’s Aid IICAPS & Newport Healthcare (Zoom) - Connecting to Care Western Network of Care hosted in partnership with Region 5 Regional Advisory Council

- 11/22: **Overdose Prevention Training Webinar** - Western CT Coalition (WCTC) Naloxone (Narcan) is a medication that reverses an opioid overdose. This training is on Zoom. Trainings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month. For more information, please contact Abby Wood at awood@wctcoalition.org. Register here

- 12/1: **Beyond Compliance Workshop Series- Parent Reunification** offered by the CT Center for School Safety. Free - Virtual Training: This workshop is for members of the School Security and Safety Committee. The focus of the workshop will be on working through a Parent Reunification process. There will be a review of the state requirements, best practices, and a tabletop exercise. During the tabletop exercise, your school/district will be in a breakout room to discuss the scenario and test your plan. The registration deadline is 11/28.

- 12/7: **Virtual is Real - Ending Online Violence Against Women and Girls Webinar** - Grace Farms Foundation and The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Save the Date! Registration Coming Soon! Attend in Person or Via Zoom Webinar.

- 6/20/23-6/22/23: **Tobacco Treatment Specialist (TTS) Core Training** - Southern
Connecticut State University (SCSU) is offering this $1,300 training at no cost to participants, through a grant funded by the CT Dept. of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Please complete an Application to become a TTS. Email completed Applications to: Victoria Adams, M.Ed., NCTTP, Tobacco Program Coordinator, Health and Human Services, Southern Connecticut State University, email: Adansv2@southernct.edu

*Save the Dates - 8/07/23 thru 8/11/23* for the 2023 CT Center for School Safety Summer Conference - (Topics and Presenters to be announced).

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**CONTRIBUTE to our NEWSLETTER**
If you have content such as meetings, trainings, resources, and/or research to include in the next issue of our newsletter, please email Mary Pupazzoni at pupazzonim@wcsu.edu no later than the 15th of the month prior.

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