



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 12, 2025

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities

Route To: Directors of Special Education, Child Study Team Members

From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Register By: April 16, 2025

Dare to Dream 2025 Student Leadership Conferences

This spring the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Special Education (OSE) will sponsor nine regional Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences that highlight strategies to promote self-advocacy skills for middle and high school students with disabilities. Each conference will feature keynote presentations from accomplished students from local educational agencies (LEAs) across the state and presentations from young adults with disabilities who have demonstrated exemplary self-advocacy and leadership skills. Additionally, the conference program will include a variety of student-led workshop sessions on topics such as self-discovery, student self-advocacy, preparing to lead your individualized education program (IEP) meeting, and understanding your rights and responsibilities as a high school student in college and the workplace.

The Dare to Dream Student Leadership conferences will be held at the following locations and dates:

- The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) in Ewing – May 13, 2025
- Stockton University in Galloway – May 20, 2025
- Mercer County Community College in West Windsor – May 21, 2025
- Kean University in Union – May 23, 2025
- Rutgers University in New Brunswick – May 27, 2025
- Monmouth University in West Long Branch – May 28, 2025
- Brookdale Community College in Lincroft – May 30, 2025
- Ramapo College of New Jersey in Mahwah – June 5, 2025
- William Paterson University in Wayne – June 10, 2025

Please encourage staff, students, and parents to participate in this worthwhile conference. **Due to the popularity of these events, registration priority will be given to LEAs that have students presenting a breakout session, musical performance, or keynote presentation.** Please visit the [Office of Special Education webpage](#) to view a selection of exemplary student keynote presentations.

There is no charge for students, parents, or staff to attend this conference. Professional staff from LEAs must provide adequate supervision of their students throughout the event. [Register here](#) for the conference or for further information on participating in a Dare to Dream Student Leadership Conference.

For questions regarding the Dare to Dream conferences, please email oseinfo@doe.nj.gov.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group