

New York State Disability Services Council 2022-2027 Strategic Plan

The vision of NYSDSC is to be recognized as experts in disability service in higher education in NYS and to be proactive in facilitating change for the benefit of students with disabilities.

The mission of NYSDSC is to strengthen the professional knowledge and expertise of the membership for affiliated campus communities and the greater education community, while actively advocating for the inclusion, equity and dignity of students with disabilities in higher education in New York State.

Values and Goals

One:

Access and Technology

Goal

NYSDSC will promote activities, ideas and projects which are designed to increase awareness of Universal Design as it relates to technology usage and facilitate access to technology for students with disabilities at our affiliated institutions.

Objectives

- Develop NYSDSC Access and Technology best practices in the area of assistive technology, 3rd party vendor purchasing, (VPATs), (e.g. ASL interpreting, state contracts for services);
- Educate members and campus professionals on how to evaluate emerging technology for universal access;
- Facilitate procurement processes on our campuses to ensure future technology is accessible;
- Create enough expertise within the organization to create campus leaders in the area of assistive technology.

Two: Professional Development

Goal

To meet the NYSDSC mission of “strengthen the professional knowledge and expertise of the membership for affiliated campus communities...”, NYSDSC will develop and nurture the expertise of all members, providing educational opportunities on best practices and emerging initiatives within the field of disability support in higher education.

Objectives

- Be a resource for the membership and the greater education community as a conduit of expertise and best practices leading to inclusive campus environments across New York State;
- Provide a venue and programming for professional development opportunities annually or semi-annually;
- Be responsive to the professional needs of the membership for training and resource sharing to meet the needs of students with disabilities in higher education;
- Encourage participation and membership with The Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), which NYSDSC maintains affiliation status, for the purpose of drawing from AHEAD’s professional resources and national reach.

Three: Institutional Collaboration and Responsibility

Goal

To meet the NYSDSC mission of being a “actively advocating for the inclusion, equity and dignity of students with disabilities...”, the NYSDSC will build a collaborative, comprehensive, and sustainable program of colleague-to-colleague development opportunities for campus professionals in the design of equitable campus environments.

Objectives:

- Support the membership in building awareness of institutional responsibility to provide equitable educational environments for students with disabilities from the point of design to the delivery of opportunities.
- Support the membership in building awareness that institutional responsibility and compliance is the floor of disability support services and effective inclusion requires a culture of acceptance, social justice and universal design.
- Identify campus professionals and stakeholders who need to be invested in our students before systemic change can be effective and facilitate connections in those relationships;

Four: Leadership and Governance

Goal

To meet the NYSDSC mission of “actively advocating for the inclusion, equity and dignity of students with disabilities...”, the NYSDSC will continue to develop, foster, and leverage working relationships with organizations, agencies, and governmental entities in the advancement of social justice for a diverse and emerging student population.

Objectives:

- Define and grow NYSDSC relationships and future needs with local, state and federal agencies and entities such as the New York State Education Department, the New York State Assembly, the New York State Senate, and other entities responsible for funding the learning and working environments of students with disabilities;
- Strategize other key relationships that need further development (e.g. Access-VR, OPWDD, CBVH, LDA Parent orgs, AHEAD);
- Provide a voice for students with disabilities and disability support professionals in higher education who are impacted by the allocation of public funds to higher education environments and opportunities;

Five: Diversity and Advocacy

Goal

To meet the NYSDSC mission to “actively advocate for the inclusion, equity and dignity of students with disabilities...” NYSDSC will actively promote the intentional inclusion of disability within the context of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives.

Objectives:

- Broaden the understanding and exposure of disability culture by sharing resources regarding the unique characteristics and lived experiences of students with disabilities.
- Advocate for meaningful change in how disability is valued, appreciated and celebrated in diverse environments.
- The NYSDSC will identify initiatives within the higher education community which require deliberate, intentional involvement of DSS professionals and students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Universal Design, and EIT Accessibility and will provide resources for the membership on integrating themselves to discussions occurring on New York State campuses;
- Create assessments that will gather quality data
- Identify existing higher education student-led advocacy groups on our affiliated campuses
- Explore supporting a statewide higher education student-led disability advocacy group
- Develop and continue collaboration with advocacy groups for individuals with disabilities in NYS which impact students in higher education (e.g. NYSED Advisory Council for Students with Disabilities in Post-Secondary Education)