

## About Merit Academy

Merit Academy is a regional special education school placement for children and adolescents with a variety of emotional and behavioral disabilities. Elementary, middle, and high school students who are referred by their local school districts are eligible for placement in the program. **All referrals should go to Kristen Wilson.**

### Kristen Wilson

Unit Director  
203-365-8901  
wilsonk@cestrumbull.org

## What Parents Say

*"My daughter has never done as well as she is doing at Merit Academy. She's happier than she's been in years because she can feel good about herself."*

*"Merit Academy saved us. My son made tremendous progress. Your staff was nurturing and caring and helped us all during his years at Merit Academy. We are sorry to be leaving. But I know you are always there and only a phone call away."*

*"I wanted to give you all something to thank you for all that you have done for my son, but everything just seemed ... inadequate. I loved the program."*

## About C.E.S.

Cooperative Educational Services is a public educational authority pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 10-66 and is one of six Regional Educational Service Centers in the state. The agency is governed by a Representative Council made up of Board of Education members from the 16 Fairfield County school districts served by CES: Bridgeport, Darien, Easton/Redding/Region 9, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Ridgefield, Shelton, Stamford, Stratford, Trumbull, Weston, Westport, and Wilton.

The CES main office is located  
at 40 Lindeman Drive in Trumbull.

### Cooperative Educational Services

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### Dr. Mike McGrath

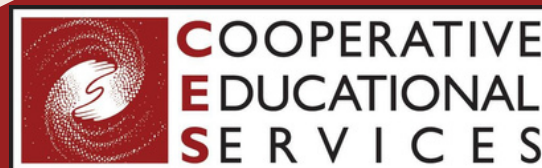
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## MERIT ACADEMY

K-12 THERAPEUTIC DAY PROGRAM AT  
COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

A Regional Program for Students with Emotional and Behavioral  
Disabilities



## Program Overview

Merit Academy is a regional special education school that provides comprehensive treatment for elementary, middle, and high school students in the Fairfield County area who have emotional and behavioral difficulties. The program includes educational, psychological, psychiatric, and parent counseling/support services to improve a student's overall functioning and ultimately return them to a school placement within their school district.

## Population Served

The program enrolls students with a wide range of difficulties in the areas of emotional, behavioral, social and academic functioning. Included in this population are students who exhibit disruptive and acting-out behaviors as well as students who exhibit internalizing symptoms such as depression, anxiety and withdrawal. Diagnoses common for students enrolled in the program include Bipolar, OCD, ODD, ADD/ADHD and high functioning ASD. The students enrolled in the program are highly diversified with regard to socio-economic status and ethnicity.

## The Merit Academy Staff

The program staff includes:

- Highly skilled Special Education teachers, Educational instructors and Instructional Aids.
- Clinical team consisting of social workers and school psychologists
- Consulting psychiatrist
- Speech pathologists
- Occupational and physical therapists
- Secretarial and administrative staff

## Program Philosophy

The Merit Academy offers a comprehensive and flexible approach to addressing the complex needs of students with emotional and behavioral difficulties. By combining educational and clinical services, the program creates a safe and supportive school environment that promotes positive behavior through high rates of positive reinforcement, clear behavioral expectations, appropriate interventions, social skills instruction, emotional regulation strategies, and positive staff interactions. Additionally, the program emphasizes the importance of a positive peer culture that encourages prosocial behaviors and mutual support between students.

## Program Highlights

**Features of the program include:**

- Low student-to-staff ratio and small class size
- Positive reinforcement and structured environment with a structured classroom environment
- Comprehensive behavior management and social skills training
- Counseling, therapy, and nursing services
- Individualized academic programs and frequent parent contact
- Vocational-transitional services
- Educational planning based on data analysis



It is the policy of CES that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any service or program on account of race, color, religious creed, age, marital or civil union status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, residence, veteran status, victim of domestic violence, present or past history of mental disorder, mental retardation, learning disability or physical disability including, but not limited to, blindness, or pregnancy and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Inquiries regarding CES nondiscrimination policies should be directed to the Associate Executive Director's office, CES, 40 Lindeman Drive Trumbull, CT 06611; 203-365-8831.