

# SCSU Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

A presentation to the  
Select Committee on Children  
Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT

February 4, 2010

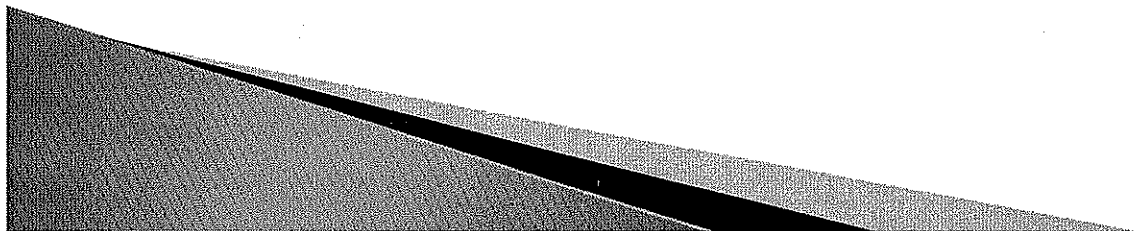
Ruth Eren, Ed.D.  
James Granfield, Ph.D.  
Co-Directors

Southern Connecticut State University

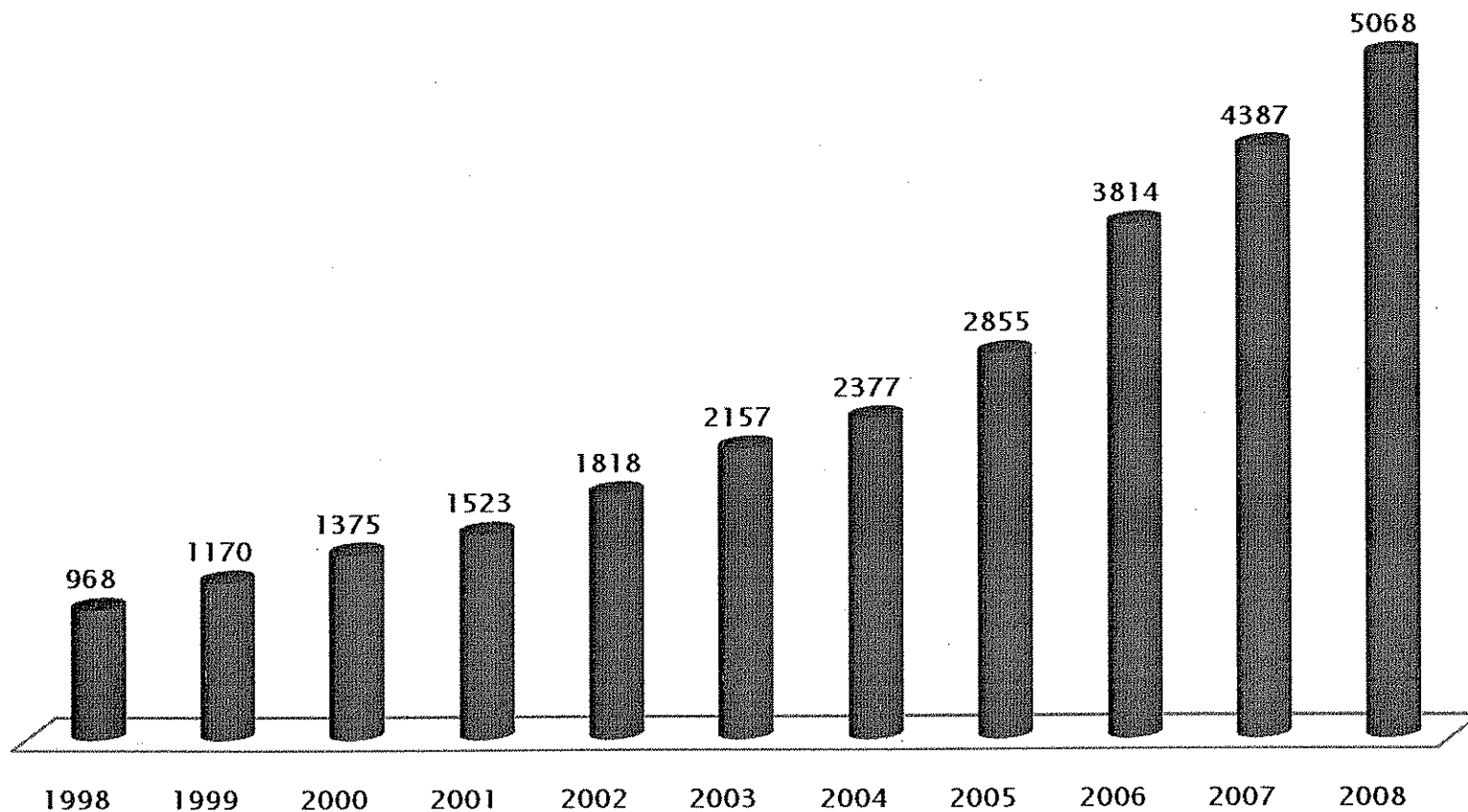


# SCSU Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

*Translating Research Findings  
into Instructional Practice*



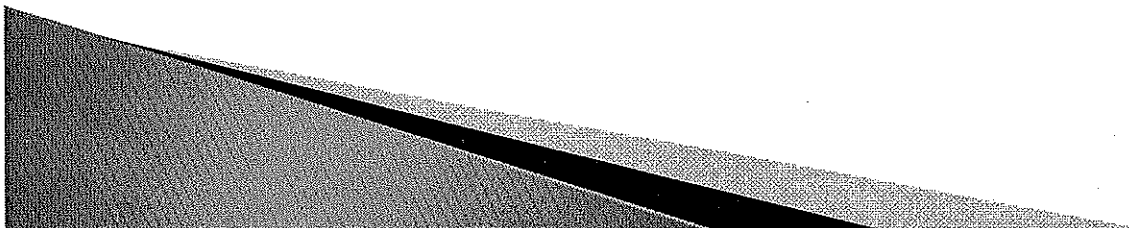
# Number of CT Students in K-12 with Autism Spectrum Disorders who receive Special Education Services



\* Source: CT State Department of Education

# State Activities

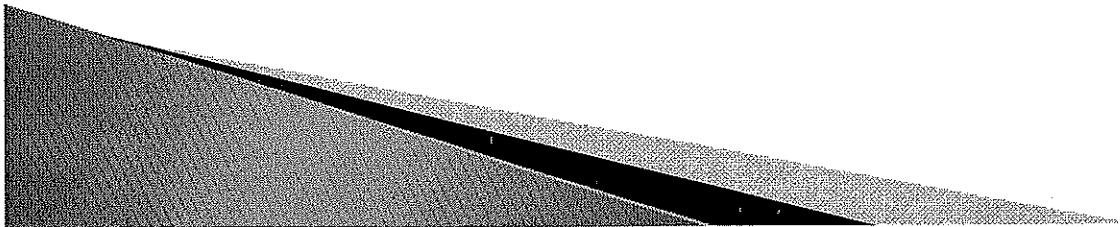
- ▶ July, 2005 - Autism State Task Force:  
*Guidelines for Identification and Education of Children and Youth with Autism*
- ▶ Special Act No.08-5  
*An Act Concerning the Teaching of Children with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*
- ▶ March 3, 2009 - *Report of the Study Group for Special Act 08-5* submitted to the CGA Education Committee



# Special Act 08-5

Charged the

- Commissioner – Department of Education
- Commissioner – Department of Developmental Services
- Commissioner – Department of Higher Education
- President of SCSU



# Special Act 08-5

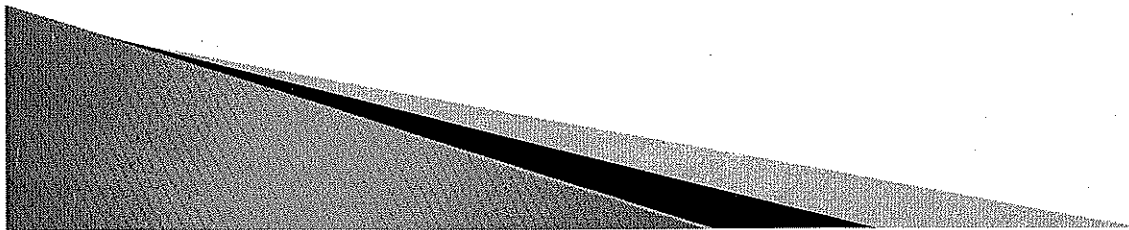
Define autism ... and develop recommendations for a statewide plan to incorporate methods of teaching children with autism ... into

- (a) preservice preparation programs;
- (b) requirements for teacher licensure
- (c) in-service training for educators;
- (d) training provided to school  
paraprofessionals, related school  
professionals, early childhood certificate  
holders, administrators, and parents.




# Recommendations from 08-5 Report

1. The Commissioner of the State Department of Education should seek advisement from a Consortium of agencies in addressing the teaching of children with autism...
2. State to establish a Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders at SCSU. Primary mission - coordinate information and training throughout the state to support children and youth with ASD
3. State Department of Education will identify and recognize effective implementation of Evidenced Based Practices throughout the state



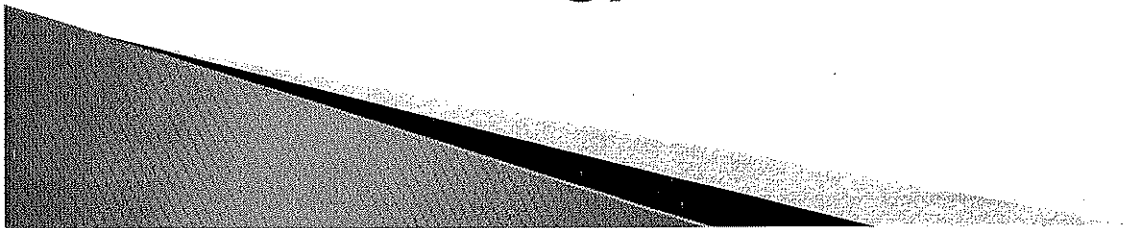
# SCSU Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders

- ▶ CSUS Board of Trustees approves as Higher Education Center of Excellence on December 10, 2009.
  - ▶ CSUS Board of Trustees approves the establishment of the Dorothy A. Goodwin Endowed Chair in Special Education within the Center.
  - ▶ SCSU receives first year core funding of \$300,000 from Federal appropriation to initiate Center in FY 2010.
  - ▶ Center staff submit grant proposal to support second year core operation and two grant proposals to establish research agenda.
- 



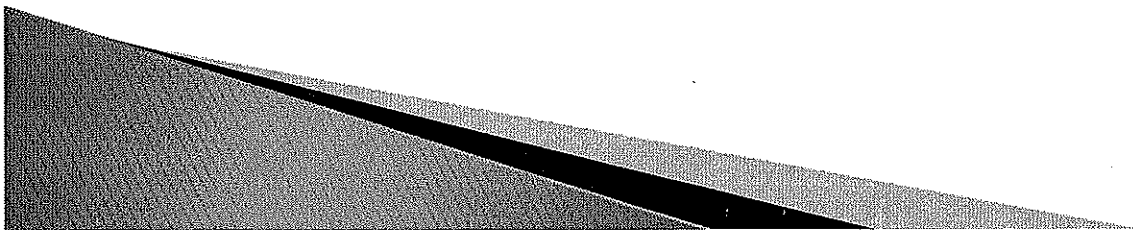
# SCSU Resources to Support Center

1. SCSU faculty involvement on Autism Task Force (Guidelines) and leaders of 08-5 report
2. SCSU is the only M.S. Degree Program in Special Education with a concentration in Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Developmental Disabilities
3. SCSU is the only university in the state that has a concentration in Assistive Technology



## SCSU Resources to Support Center

4. SCSU has departments that prepare professionals in areas that are pertinent to needs of individuals with ASD: Special Education, Elementary/Secondary Education, Counseling and School Psychology, Communication Disorders, Social Work, Nursing, Reading, Recreation
5. SCSU's Department of Special Education and Reading has established collaborative community relationships with agencies and organizations devoted to serving the ASD population

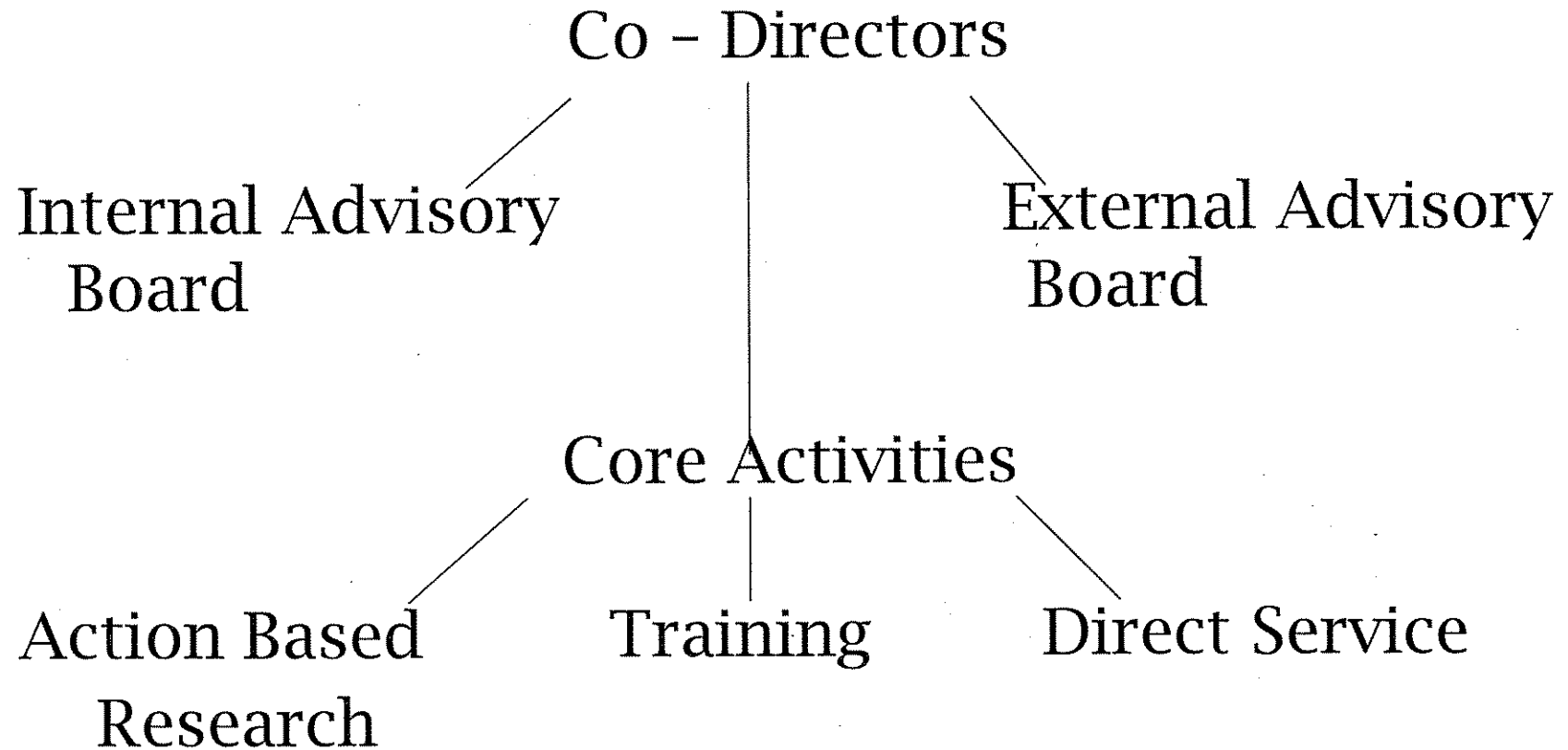


## SCSU Resources to Support Center

6. SCSU's Department of Communication Disorders had led the state in audiological, speech/language assessments for children with autism
7. SCSU has collaborative partnership with Yale Child Study Center for summer institute and a pending federal grant
8. SCSU bi-annually co-hosts the Autism Resource Fair
9. SCSU will have an Endowed Chair in Special Education who will be affiliated with the Center and provide funds for Center operation.



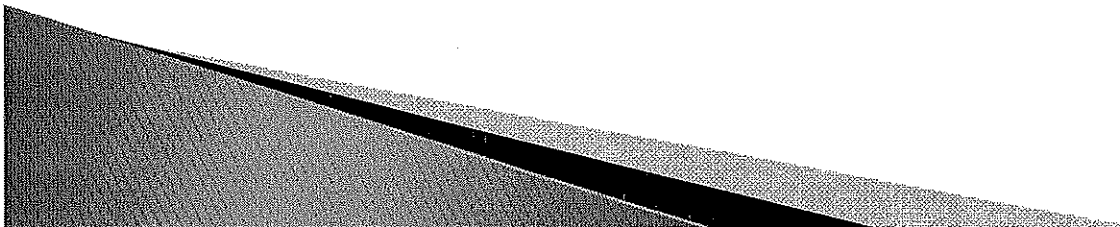
# Administrative Structure



# Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders: Core Activities

## Action Based Research

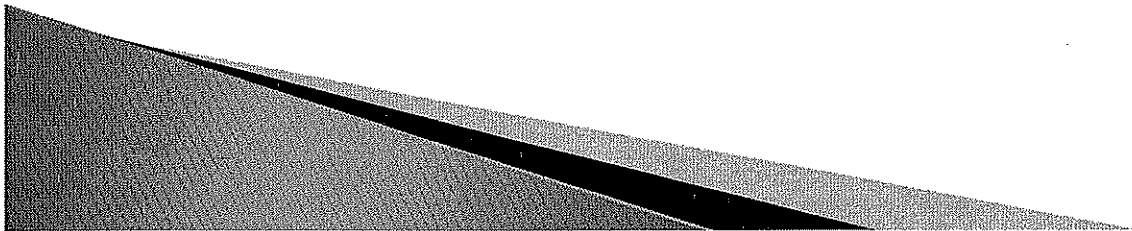
- ▶ Pursue grant funding
- ▶ Develop research projects with interdisciplinary faculty at SCSU and other universities that links research to instructional practice.



# Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders: Core Activities

## Training

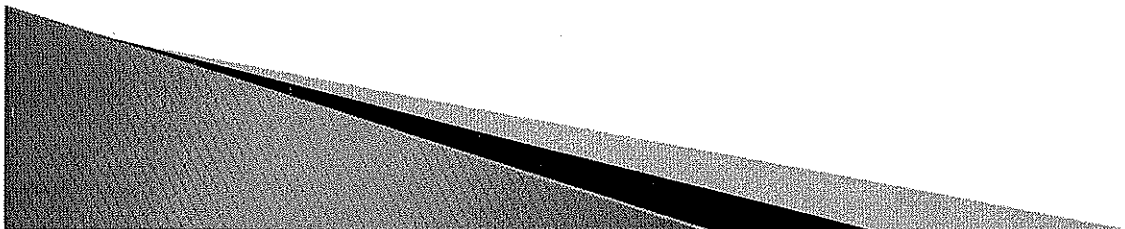
- ▶ Develop plan to address training needs across state by establishing partnerships with parents, service providers and related agencies, etc.
- ▶ Develop training materials for service providers, parents, and community groups
- ▶ Pursue grant funding
- ▶ Develop website
- ▶ Explore new graduate level program for additional credentials



# Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders: Core Activities

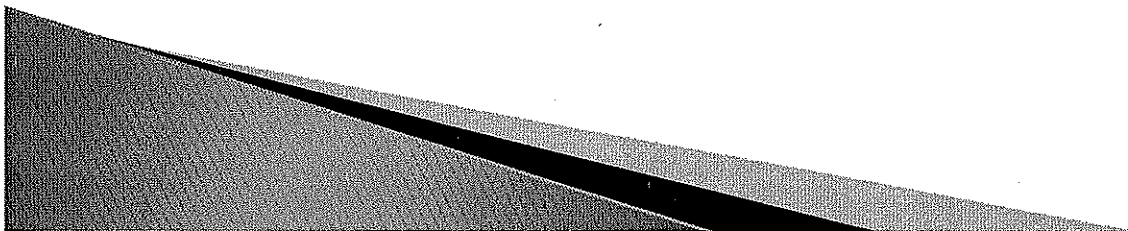
## Direct Service

- ▶ Conduct summer clinic
- ▶ Develop Seminar series
- ▶ Pursue grant funding
- ▶ Conduct student evaluations
- ▶ Special events



# Upcoming Challenges

- ▶ Obtain secure, core operating funds that will sustain the Center
  - Competitive grants
  - Private donations
  - Corporate sponsorship
  - State funding (low-cost initiatives)
- ▶ Facility renovations that will create space for Center activities, e.g., direct evaluations, curriculum, training, library resources, etc.





**Table 2: Center for Excellence in Autism Spectrum Disorders  
Project Activities - Year 1 (FY 2010) Year 2 (FY 2011)**

	Year 1	Year 2		Year 1	Year 2
1. Establish Advisory group of external/ internal stakeholders	*		10. Collaborate with community organizations to develop training materials for generic service providers (police, hairdressers/barbers, etc.)	*	*
2. Draft vision, mission and purpose of Center	*		11. Develop requests for funding, and submit to individual foundations and prospective grantors.	*	*
3. Review legislation and report from 08-5 Study Group	*		12. Develop Action Research arm to provide evaluations of impact of assessments and interventions provided	*	*
4. Professional competencies drafted and reviewed by Stakeholders	*		13. Develop seminar series on evidence-based practices in communication, social competencies, behavior and family concerns, etc.	*	*
5. Establish learner outcomes for training aligned with 08-5, CCCT and CEC standards	*		14. Collaborate with other state agencies to develop and maintain website of evidence-based practices and resource materials		*
6. Develop statewide plan for training	*	*	15. Provide online and on-ground training modules (CEUs) for teachers and other educational professionals and parents		*
7. Work with teacher preparation programs in CT to develop expertise in ASD	*	*	16. Conduct trans-disciplinary summer clinic for children/youth w/ ASD		*
8. Train one team in each RESC to function as training team for districts	*	*	17. Conduct children/youth evaluations leading to evidence-based interventions		*
9. Establish partnerships with multiple community organizations to provide parent training and resource dissemination	*	*	18. Explore graduate degree offerings in ASD to include online courses, and potential to establish BCBA certification training		*