

Since 1922, CEC has collaborated with its members and its partners to advance its mission and vision.

CEC's Mission

The Council for Exceptional Children is an international community of professionals who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. CEC's mission is to improve, through excellence and advocacy, the education and quality of life for children and youth with exceptionalities and to enhance engagement of their families.

CEC's Vision

The Council for Exceptional Children is a premier education organization, internationally renowned for its expertise and leadership, working collaboratively with strategic partners to ensure that children and youth with exceptionalities are valued and full participating members of society. As a diverse and vibrant professional community, CEC is a trusted voice in shaping education practice and policy.

Timely, Relevant Resources

An essential element in CEC's vision for special education is having well-prepared special educators working with all children and youth, birth through age 21, with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC works to increase the knowledge, skills, diversity, and cultural competence of the profession by providing the resources its members need to succeed and be at the top of the profession. To achieve these goals, CEC provides special educators with:

- A world-class Convention & Expo that is the premier professional development event in the field.
- Cutting-edge webinars and products.
- Online resources, networks, and communities.
- Respected journals – TEACHING Exceptional Children and Exceptional Children continue to win awards and Exceptional Children is the most cited special education journal.

Special Education Professional Standards

CEC's respected expertise has been instrumental in improving special education practices. It was CEC that developed the first certification standards for new special educators and the advanced role content standards for experienced special educators, representing a vital step toward consistency and quality in special education services and laying the groundwork for reciprocal state-to-state certification. CEC also has:

- Developed innovative, model policies for special education practices.
- Provided National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) recognition of university special education programs approved by CEC, thereby setting the highest standards for special education accreditation.
- Published all CEC standards and ethical practices in *What Every Special Educator Must Know: Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines*, Sixth Edition Revised.

For more information on all of CEC's programs, products, and services, please visit

www.cec.sped.org

Evidence-based Practice

CEC works to foster and effectively communicate the use of evidence-based practices in general education, special education, and early intervention. CEC is working to develop and implement a valid, reliable system for evaluating the evidence bases, to disseminate information about these evidence bases of practice and inform the research agenda, and to provide guidance and incorporate the wisdom and values of families and professionals.

Public Policy and Advocacy

CEC's vision that all children and youth, particularly those with disabilities and gifts and talents, receive a high-quality education is reflected in its critical governmental policy and advocacy work. As an unflinching advocate, CEC ensures the needs of children with exceptionalities and those of special educators are heard and heeded, and works with an active grassroots network to share CEC's critical messages. CEC's advocacy is focused around the following issues and the laws that affect them:

- Assessment and accountability.
- Quality conditions for teaching and learning.
- Response to intervention.
- Universal design for learning.
- Teacher evaluation systems.
- Increased special and gifted education funding and research.
- Early childhood.
- Restraint and seclusion and positive behavior supports.
- Common Core State Standards.

Engaging Educators Around the World

CEC works to foster mutual understanding and reciprocal international partnerships to support the profession in improving the lives of individuals with exceptionalities. A significant part of CEC's work in international special education is its collaboration with the Division of International Special Education Services (DISES) and the Step by Step Programs to improve inclusive education around the world. CEC offers professional development resources and multi-media training tools to international educators on its Web site, where international educators can access materials to guide their work. CEC also provides these educators with mentoring from U.S. and European experts, as well as technical assistance on disability issues.

Building Professional Communities

CEC is an international association of more than 33,000 members representing all facets of the field of special education, including teachers, early interventionists, administrators, and faculty members who are training the next generation of special educators. CEC's membership offers great value and provides excellent benefits, including two journals, discounts on conferences and meetings, access to resources and electronic newsletters, and discounts on products, just to name a few.

Through CEC state and provincial units, special educators gather to network, learn, and share. CEC's 17 special interest divisions provide members with additional benefits helpful to their own professional development, focusing on critical issues for special education: developmental disabilities and autism; behavioral disorders; administration; diagnostic services; communicative disabilities and deafness; cultural and linguistic diversity; early childhood; learning disabilities; physical, health and multiple disabilities; research; global issues; career development and transition; visual impairments; gifted; teacher education; and technology.