
The voice and vision of special education

***Calling All CEC Professional Members:
Join the CEC/CEC Pioneers Division Mentoring Program!***

BACKGROUND

The Student Transitional Work Group comprised of student members, student chapter faculty advisors and first year professionals met at CEC Headquarters in May 2006 to develop strategies/recommendations to encourage and support student members as they transition to professional membership status. The work group recommended the creation of a network of experienced professionals to mentor/support novice professionals. A steering committee for the CEC Mentoring Project was created to develop a plan for conducting a pilot for this project.

The pilot was conducted from September 2007 through June 2008. The findings of the final evaluation of the Pilot recommended the continuation of the Mentoring Pilot as a program of the Council. The mentors, faculty advisors, and students fully supported this recommendation. The program is now in its fifth year of operation.

The Mentoring Program has been included in the CEC Strategic Plan in the area of transitioning student members to professional CEC membership, and has been placed in the CEC Program Plan and Budget.

The Mentoring Program provides mentors to CEC student members in order to provide support and technical assistance during the students' pre-service training (junior and senior years), the student teaching experiences or graduate studies, and during the time of transition from student membership to professional membership in CEC.

GOALS OF THE MENTORING PROGRAM

The goals of the Mentoring Program are:

- Support student members of CEC
- Provide technical assistance to address specific questions from the students
- Offer advice concerning job search skills
- Supply information regarding the programs and services of CEC
- Encourage the transition from CEC student membership to CEC professional membership

MENTORING

Mentoring may be provided in the following areas: technical assistance in content area accommodations, assessment techniques, behavior management, and transition strategies; CEC structure and governance; services/benefits/products from CEC; job search techniques; tips for making the most of attendance at the CEC Convention & Expo; and professional development activities. The areas of mentoring can also be further specified based on the nature and degree of the special education exceptionality area (learning disabilities, developmental disabilities,

sensory impairment, gifted), ages of the students (early childhood through secondary), and/or the service delivery model (inclusive setting, special class, community based education).

Most requests for mentoring have involved general support, requests for some reference sources as papers/projects were being prepared by the students, suggestions for work with a specific child/adolescent, and requests for information about the benefits of CEC membership.

The primary method of contact between the mentors and mentees is via e-mail, but telephone, texting, etc. may be used as agreed upon by the participants. The amount and duration of the contacts between the mentors and mentees has been determined as the relationship between the mentor and student develops. However, on average, mentors have spent an hour or less per month mentoring the students.

WE INVITE YOUR PARTICIPATION

The members who have participated all agreed that it was a worthwhile experience and the students certainly have benefitted from the additional expertise offered them by the mentors. In order to expand the Mentoring Program to include additional student chapters and students, additional mentors are needed. For the 2012-2013 Mentoring Program, the Pioneers Division invites CEC Premier, Professional, and Retired members to participate. Membership in the CEC Pioneers Division is **not** required to serve as a mentor in this program.

If you are interested in joining this worthwhile program, please submit your completed Mentor Information Sheet by August 1, 2012, or contact Pam Gillet, Coordinator of the Mentors, at pamelagillet@aol.com or 407/654-6708.