



the voice and vision of special education

CEC is an international association of educators who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families through professional excellence and advocacy. CEC's vision is to be a diverse and vibrant professional community working together and with others to ensure that individuals with exceptionalities are valued and included in all aspects of life. Furthermore, CEC will be a trusted voice in shaping education policy and practice and will be globally renowned for its expertise and leadership. Since 1922, CEC has worked in collaboration with its members and partners to advance its mission and vision.

For more information on all of CEC's programs, products, and services, please visit
www.cec.sped.org

Disseminating Timely, Relevant Information

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 through development and dissemination of timely and relevant information. To achieve these goals, CEC provides special educators with the latest information on effective strategies through professional development opportunities, publications, and journals.

- Cutting-edge information
- World-class convention & expo
- Exceptional professional development
- Extensive online resources and communities
- Most cited and respected special education journals – *TEACHING Exceptional Children* and *Exceptional Children* continue to win awards and *Exceptional Children* is the most cited special education journal (as ranked by Thomson Reuters).

Improving Teaching and Learning Conditions

CEC's respected expertise has been instrumental in improving special education practices.

Professional Standards for Special Education

CEC developed the first certification standards for new special educators and the advanced role content standards for experienced special educators. These standards represent a vital step toward developing consistency and quality in special education services and provide the groundwork for reciprocal certification from state to state. CEC has also spearheaded the:

- Development of innovative, model policies for special education practices.
- Provision of 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.
- Publication of all CEC standards and ethical practices in the CEC publication *What Every Special Educator Must Know: Ethics, Standards, and Guidelines, Sixth Edition Revised*.

Evidence-Based Practices

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.

Ensuring Public Policy Supports All Children and Professionals

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 a staunch 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 consistently share CEC's critical messages. One of CEC's milestones in the United States was the passage of Public Law 94-142, now known as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, which established the right to a free, appropriate public education for children with disabilities. CEC's advocacy is focused around the following issues and the laws that affect them:

- Assessment and accountability
- Response to intervention
- Universal design for learning
- Restraint and seclusion, positive behavior supports
- Increased special and gifted education funding and research
- Early childhood
- Quality conditions for teaching and learning
- Well prepared educational workforce
- Differentiated compensation systems
- Common core standards
- Coordinated systems between the *Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA)* and *IDEA* in the United States

Engaging Educators from Across the Globe

CEC works to foster mutual understanding and reciprocal international partnerships to support the profession in improving the lives of individuals with exceptionalities. CEC has partnered with its Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES), the Center for Education Initiatives (CEI), and the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) to sponsor a July 2010 global conference – *Embracing Inclusive Approaches for Children and Youth with Special Education Needs* – which features global leaders in inclusion and inclusive practices around the world.

CEC joined with the disability community to advocate for and applaud the U.S. decision to sign the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In support of this treaty, CEC staff edited a recently published book *Inclusion for ALL! The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. The book provides the reader with an understanding of the historical perspective on human rights; the critical nature of inclusion; the Convention provisions; the necessity of honoring family culture and values; and the need for reducing poverty and social exclusion, guaranteeing deinstitutionalization and ensuring the provision of education, independent living, employment, and self-determination.

Building Professional Communities

CEC is an international association of more than 35,000 members representing all facets of the field of special education – including teachers, early interventionists, administrators, and faculty members who nurture 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 can 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.



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