

TO THE POINT

Membership Development



**Council for
Exceptional
Children**

**2900 Crystal Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22202-3557
Toll Free: 888/232-7733
TTY: 703/264-9446
Web site: www.cec.sped.org**

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4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.01 HOW TO INCREASE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Members are the lifeblood of CEC. Each member makes CEC a stronger and more effective association.

Despite its use as a ready excuse, dues levels are NOT the primary reason for non-affiliation. The primary reason for non-affiliation is that “no one asked me!” An invitation to join from an enthusiastic colleague is hard to resist.

Your knowledge of CEC's professional benefits and the programs and activities of your CEC unit—plus your enthusiasm—can sell membership. Here are some ideas...

Guidelines for recruitment of new members include:

- Make CEC visible. Highlight your activities using bulletin boards, newsletters, announcements, flyers, and any other news medium.
- Plan a relaxed social event for the first meeting of the year with your potential new members; make everyone feel welcome.
- Put together a display of what your unit does and rotate it to area schools or the public library to interest potential new members.
- Invite new faculty to meetings.
- Send invitations to all special educators in the district when holding your next CEC event/meeting.
- Share valuable resource information available exclusively to CEC members. Leave a CEC journal in the lunchroom or teachers' lounge with contact information.
- Ask people to participate, and then to join.
- Use personal, direct contact as much as possible.
- Hold an orientation meeting for prospective members to talk about CEC and all the member benefits available. (Use CEC products as door prizes. “Give away” a year's membership.)
- Subsidize new member dues.
- Use your CEC membership materials and contact CEC's Constituent Services Center (toll free 888/232-7733, e-mail service@cec.sped.org) when you need more.
- Have each member bring a non-member friend who might be interested in joining CEC to your meetings and social events.
- Include a membership application and the name of a contact in information packets for new faculty.
- Have an "officer's challenge" to get new members.
- Make your fall and spring conference rates a bargain for those joining CEC—use a high nonmember registration fee to make membership financially attractive.
- Invite your student teacher to your next meeting.
- Co-sponsor a special meeting with another special interest group and use it as an opportunity to recruit new members such as administrators, regular education personnel, or paraeducators.
- Display CEC brochures and flyers at other organizations' conferences.
- Invite all conference speakers to join CEC if they are not already members.
- Organize a phone tree to extend personal invitations to prospective members. Remember, everyone likes to be ASKED to be part of an important group.

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.02 HOW TO RETAIN YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Keeping members is as important as finding new ones. Members will most likely continue their CEC membership if value is perceived. Those who do not know about or use the resources and contacts available through their membership may waver when it becomes time to renew for another year. The most effective way to retain your members is to inform and involve them—and to reach out to them as individuals.

People are most excited about their CEC membership when they first join. The decision to renew is one that they will make in the first six to nine months, so that's the time when we should be most active with our retention efforts.

How to get new members involved and help keep new members and build CEC membership:

- Establish a “welcoming committee” that phones or writes each new member to greet and welcome them to the CEC family. Personally invite them to your next meeting or activity. Let them know that, if they desire, there are many ways to get involved with your unit. If your contact is by mail, you might want to include a copy of the most recent issue of your newsletter.
- Create a “Getting to Know You” questionnaire that asks for pertinent information to help you get the member involved. Be sure to explain what benefits (tangible and intangible) the person will get from their membership in your unit.
- Make a special effort to identify and recognize first-time attendees at your meetings, conferences, and other activities.
- Use the “buddy system” to pair up long-time members with new ones. The long-time member can share experiences, introduce the new member to other members, and explain the many benefits of CEC membership.
- Hold an orientation meeting or reception twice a year to welcome new members as a group and give them an opportunity to mix and mingle with established members.

Guidelines for informing and involving all members so they will continue their CEC membership include:

- Send members written communication on a regular basis that summarizes plans and describes unit activities; personal computers have revolutionized the job of publishing newsletters, and e-mail makes it easy to contact anyone anytime!
- Frequently publish the names and phone numbers of officers so members can contact them easily.
- Once a year, invite families of members to participate; it can be fun and informative for everyone.

Guidelines for reaching out to all members so they will continue their CEC membership include:

- Publish new members' names in your newsletter; share news, congratulations, sympathies, etc., of all members through the newsletter.
- Don't wait for someone to volunteer for an important job—personally invite them to handle it, but be sure to help.
- Publicly thank members who made a contribution of any kind.
- When appropriate, see that the member's supervisor is aware of CEC involvement.

- Preferably phone, or write or send an e-mail message to members who are about to have their membership lapse; contact all persons on the lapsed member list to invite them to renew. See the sample letters and telephone scripts in this section.
- Do a regular needs assessment to find out what members really want and plan programs with this information in mind.
- Vary your programs and formats according to what your members desire.
- Use a buddy system for going to meetings; invite less active members to accompany the more active members.
- Use your time efficiently at meetings; start and end on time.
- Plan a variety of activities: social, business, informational, make and take items, service activities, etc.
- Be organized and have events well planned and publicized; give your members a calendar of events.
- Encourage members to come to meetings with their friends.
- Use a telephone tree that operates well to contact members.
- Set-up a group on your e-mail to send announcements and important messages via e-mail.
- Encourage administrators and college supervisors to attend; their participation will encourage others.
- Give an award to the member who brings in the most new members.
- Nominate your members for federation and international awards.
- Co-sponsor a meeting with another CEC unit; members can exchange ideas with other CEC members.
- Have more leadership training retreats where intense concentrated sessions can provide members with opportunities to brainstorm where they are and should be in their careers.
- Find new exciting projects that interest and motivate your "experienced" members.
- Develop competition among units or members of a unit for attendance, membership, or participation.
- Invite the boss (director, superintendent, dean, faculty member, etc., for student chapters) to help reactivate an inactive unit.
- Print the names of members renewing in newsletters and minutes.
- Establish a history file and show past contributions of members who have renewed and stayed active.
- Pass names of graduating student members on to the regular chapters in areas where the new professional will work after graduation.
- Vary your program dates and types of events to appeal to more members.
- Provide more area or regional workshops in spread-out areas.
- Give more "hands on" and "how to" sessions and activities for classroom teachers.

The most important aspect of a good retention program is to establish a **RELATIONSHIP** between the new member and the organization **AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE**. This is not a one-time event but an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining rapport and sharing experience and information that will give **VALUE** to their CEC membership.

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.03 WHAT TO SAY WHEN "SELLING" MEMBERSHIP

About CEC

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities—students with disabilities and/or the gifted. CEC accomplishes its worldwide mission on behalf of educators and others working with individuals with exceptionalities by advocating for appropriate governmental policies; setting professional standards; providing continuing professional development; advocating for newly and historically underserved individuals with exceptionalities; and helping professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

The Council represents members in the United States, Canada, and in over 50 countries serving more than 5 million children with disabilities and 2.5 million gifted. CEC members are special and general educators, administrators, teacher educators, college students, related services professionals, parents and others who work on behalf of children with disabilities and children who are gifted. Through the power of an extensive and active membership, CEC is relentless in providing advocacy for individuals with exceptionalities.

Join the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), and share in the richness of the CEC experience. Get the training, resources, and peer-to-peer support you need to meet today's new challenges in special education with confidence and greater competence...and make a difference for exceptional children.

CEC Membership Benefits

As a CEC member, you'll access:

CEC Publications

Stay on the cutting edge with the high-impact, up-to-the-minute information you'll receive from your subscription to CEC's member publications:

- *TEACHING Exceptional Children* – actionable and useful articles to teach and administer programs for children with disabilities and/or who are gifted (6 issues per year).
- *Exceptional Children* – original research on the education and development of children with exceptionalities in practical terms that you can bring into your classroom (4 issues per year).
- *CEC Today* – member newsletter (now online!) keeps you up-to-date on professional and legal developments (6 issues per year).

Books, Media and Training

CEC's articles, books, tapes, CD's, and DVD's cover the entire agenda of social, legal and educational issues of children with exceptionalities. Our catalog is crammed with resources and materials specifically for special educators.

Career Development

CEC's continuing education programs, including the CEC Annual Convention & Expo, with more than 800 educational sessions, and CEC's workshops and Web seminars provide groundbreaking information, state-of-the-art resources, and new ways of reaching students.

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Advocacy and Support

CEC members are an integral part of CEC's advocacy efforts for the rights of children and youth with exceptionalities, as well as the needs of the educators who serve them. CEC was instrumental in passing such important legislation as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the 1997 IDEA Reauthorization and the latest reauthorization—IDEA 2004, the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). No other organization is more active—or more effective.

Professional Divisions

Join one or more of CEC's 17 special interest divisions to tailor your participation to your area of expertise. Each division publishes journals and newsletters, sponsors conferences and other professional development activities, facilitates political action on issues that directly affect your practice and interests, and provides networking opportunities to bring you closer with experts and your professional peers.

Peer Networking and Leadership Opportunities

As a member you'll gain access to a network of more than 35,000 members—the most extensive network of professional special educators in existence today. CEC also provides a wide range of opportunities for members to serve in leadership positions at the local, state/provincial, and international level.

Up-to-the-Minute Access via the Web

At the CEC Web site <www.cec.sped.org> you'll get the latest updates on news in special education, participate in CEC's blogs, join or renew CEC membership, register for professional development events, and order books and other quality resources online.

Discounts on Educational Resources

CEC members enjoy savings of up to 30% on all CEC publications and professional development events including the CEC Annual Convention & Expo.

CEC Online Career Center

Register your resume, view special education job postings, and access a list of recruiters—all at SpecialEdCareers.org—the largest job bank on the Internet devoted exclusively to special education professionals.

Insurance and Financial Services

CEC members are eligible for group rates on a variety of insurance plans including professional liability and other insurance programs. Student members can purchase a low-priced professional liability policy. CEC members are also eligible to apply for a special CEC credit card and other money saving programs.

New Services for CEC Members!

- ***CEC SmartBrief*** keeps you up-to-date on special education trends and developments with concise reports delivered to your e-mail inbox in one convenient package.
- ***CEC Policy Insider*** provides you with the latest public policy information and news as it happens directly to your desk via e-mail.
- **Installment Method for Dues Payment** now available for members to pay their CEC dues in three monthly installments via credit card.

Step Into a Network of Professional Support – Join CEC Today!

CEC membership offers you a wide range of personal and professional benefits you can't afford to be without. Step into this network of professional support. Join CEC today!

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4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.04 HOW TO ENHANCE MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH UNIT ACTIVITIES

Why do professionals join CEC? There are as many reasons as there are members, yet two reasons are the most important.

1. CEC is the most active and widely recognized association in the world representing special education professionals.
2. CEC's direct and indirect benefits are a good value.

Given this, the primary reason why professionals do not join CEC is that no one asked them!

A successful membership program for units has as its focus CEC professional activity--not mere sales pitches. Therefore, units should try to involve new members and nonmembers, as well as current members, in its activities. **Here's a 16-step process for planning unit activities that will help recruit new members:**

1. Identify several professional issues in which the members of your unit are interested (e.g., inclusion, availability of trained and experienced aides, budget allocations, etc.)
2. Identify a "drawing card." Your local school board president, mayor, budget director, state/province special education director, university department chair, etc., are candidates.
3. Decide on the most professionally interesting or controversial topics that match your prospective drawing card. Write the topic out so that the focus is clear and the phrasing will stimulate professional involvement. "Meadville's Education Budget—Impacts Upon Special Educators and Students" is one example.
4. Call your drawing card—even before you have a firm event date! Suggest two or three alternative dates, then ask for his or her preference.
5. Once the topic, featured speaker or panel, date, and time are firm, find a suitable location for the event. Avoid "cold" environments such as auditoriums and all-purpose rooms; try to use your local library's meeting room, or a small or medium sized conference room of a local company or government entity. A slightly overcrowded but intimate environment is much more preferable than an empty, sterile setting.
6. Plan the details of the event, such as who will introduce, moderate, arrange refreshments, etc.
7. Prepare a one-page description of the event. Since the event is of concern to all special education professionals, arrange for your promotion to be printed at school at no cost, if possible, and deposited in teachers' mailboxes.
8. Supplement the above by preparing a brief press release and public service announcement; send these to newspapers and radio/TV stations. Make contact with local reporters—ask if they have seen your press release—and invite their attendance. Place a few of the promotion sheets on shopping center bulletin boards and elsewhere.
9. Call active CEC members in your area personally and urge them to attend. Your goal is to have a room full of people, with about half CEC members and half nonmembers.
10. Call "prime prospects"—professional colleagues whom you feel should be CEC members—and personally invite them to attend.
11. On-site at the event, have a table with refreshments in an easily accessible location. Next to the refreshment table, place CEC materials such as membership applications.

12. Circulate a clipboard asking for name, address (including zip/postal code), phone number, and whether a current CEC member.
13. When the formal part of the program is over, provide "social time" to discuss issues, reactions, next steps, etc. Officers and active members should try hard to mingle and interact cordially with nonmembers.
14. After the event, follow up with nonmembers in person or by phone, discussing the merits of CEC membership in the context of the recent program. Now you can be direct in asking a colleague to join CEC without an uncomfortable sales pitch.
15. Keep track of responses. Send names of nonmembers at your event to CEC Membership Services (membership@cec.sped.org, or fax 703/620-4334) for follow-up action.
16. Keep inviting your colleagues to events. Often, a person will accept a second or third opportunity, having declined the first.

For more ideas for utilizing effective programming to recruit and retain members, see TO THE POINT Section 3.0—Unit Activities.

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.05 STUDENT MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

Membership recruitment should go on all year. Most members join at the beginning of the school year or at the beginning of a semester. Sponsoring interesting activities is sometimes not enough. You have to begin by getting people involved. Some of the following activities may help. Try those you think will be most beneficial to recruiting members for your chapter.

Suggested activities:

First of the Year Activities: First impressions are most important, especially to incoming freshmen. Let them know you're out there. Let them hear about CEC—really impress them. Some of the following activities may help:

- At freshman orientation, volunteer to represent CEC. Set up a booth and have available membership forms, scrapbooks, CEC information, posters, etc. Send a letter to freshmen explaining CEC and inviting them to attend the first meeting.
- Visit special education classes and regular education classes to invite students to the meetings and activities and to encourage students to join. Don't forget non-education classes, too, such as nursing, physical therapy, music, art, physical education, and business. Stress activities or speakers that would be of interest to them.
- Conduct Welcome Week Activities similar to a freshmen orientation. Serve donuts and coffee in a common gathering place to welcome all students. Don't forget to invite them to join CEC.
- Write personal welcome letters to incoming freshmen and prospective members.
- Design a chapter member manual containing information on CEC, definitions of common terms, disabilities, simulations and a list of local agencies that provide services for persons with disabilities. Give to all members free as an incentive to join.
- Organize a phone tree and call members prior to a meeting or activity.

Recruitment Efforts During the Year: Try some of these:

- Hold membership drives at least twice a year.
- Have your chapter represented at all school functions—especially during parents' weekend.
- Design a chapter banner complete with a logo to display at all chapter or school sponsored events.
- Disseminate a monthly letter to faculty to remind them of CEC activities to announce in classes.
- Hold a pizza party or other social activity to meet members and get acquainted.
- Ask the campus newspaper to print announcements of meetings and feature on special activities.
- Have membership applications available at all chapter activities.
- Post announcements about upcoming meetings and activities in the special education department and in the departments of other related fields.

Recruiting Non-Education Majors Into Your CEC Chapter

Who says all CEC members have to be elementary/secondary education or special education majors? Recruiting non-education majors can be beneficial to your chapter, to the non-education majors, and to the entire CEC organization.

Special education majors are not the only ones who will be working with individuals with exceptionalities. Because of career education for individuals with disabilities and/or are gifted, many job opportunities are available for individuals with special needs. CEC can help others gain an acceptance and understanding of individuals with special needs. Therefore, everyone should be involved. What better way to do it than through the largest professional organization in special education?

Guidelines for recruiting non-education majors into your chapter include:

- Co-sponsor activities with other campus organizations
- Invite speakers who would be of interest to both education and non-education majors
- Sponsor field trips
- Visit regular education, psychology, sociology, pre-med, etc. classes; inform students about CEC and invite those who are interested to your next activity
- Distribute flyers about upcoming chapter activities
- Invite the campus newspaper to "cover" a special activity in order to get more exposure; use the newspaper to sensitize all students about the needs and capabilities of persons with disabilities
- Conduct an Exceptional Children's Week on your campus

Looking for more member recruitment ideas? See TO THE POINT Section 3.0—Unit Activities.

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.06 STUDENT MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

Now that you have recruited MANY members into your chapter, how do you keep them active and involved? This is what membership retention is all about. First, ask your members what they are interested in. Then, try to get them involved in the planning of activities. Finally, regardless of the turnout or the type of program, it has to be well planned and well executed to effectively retain members.

Some suggested program activities include:

Speakers

- Invite professors from your university to come and talk about their area of expertise or their current research
- Invite individuals who have disabilities to talk about their abilities
- Invite special education teachers to come in and talk about teaching
- Invite local leaders, politicians, or school officials to address hot topics in education
- Invite staff from the recruitment/career center on campus to discuss interviewing skills and résumé writing

Fun Activities

- Have a graduation party for seniors
- Rent a roller skating rink and have a party with students with disabilities
- Promote and attend state/provincial and international conventions
- Develop awards such as outstanding member, freshman, etc.
- Have a mini-workshop on sign language, organize a field trip, etc.
- Arrange for members to volunteer in school classrooms
- Conduct an Exceptional Children's Week in your community

Ideas to Keep Members Interested

- Publish a newsletter
- Call or e-mail members to let them know what is going on in the chapter
- Provide seniors with information to join their local regular chapter
- Organize committees and involve members in planning events
- Develop a chapter membership manual
- Thank people for their help, support, and involvement
- Offer awards such as "Outstanding Rookie Member," "Most Involved Member," etc.
- Start/sponsor a Club for Careers in Special Education

For more ideas, see TO THE POINT Section 3.0--Unit Activities.

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.07 HOW TO WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

WHY welcome new members? A new member has just made the decision to join CEC and is already asking himself or herself the question, "Am I glad I joined?" The purpose of the suggested activities below is to introduce each new member to you and your members, to your activities, and to CEC as a resource-rich professional association. The goal is to help each new member feel a part of CEC and to continue his or her membership beyond the first year.

<i>WHO</i>	<i>WHAT</i>	<i>HOW</i>	<i>WHEN</i>
Membership Chair	Call or drop a note to welcome each new Member	Review membership list to identify new members	Upon member joining
Membership Chair & Newsletter Editor	Welcome and list new members in a special column in the newsletter	Membership Chair sends list of new members to Newsletter Editor	Upon member joining
Membership Chair	Greet members at unit programs	Set up a check-in table at the entrance to welcome all who attend...especially new members	At every unit program
Membership Chair	Get to know new members' interests and potential areas for involvement	Develop a "getting to know you" member survey form**	After first official welcome call or letter
Program Chair	Conduct a paid-up membership dinner or special activity	Hold one event for members and their guests only; personally introduce each new member, and recognize members who are having significant membership "anniversaries"	Annually
Membership Chair	Remind all members, especially new ones, to renew	Call or send a personal letter	3 months before membership expiration date

*Sample welcome note included in this section.

**Sample new member survey included in this section.

SAMPLE NEW MEMBER WELCOME LETTER

Date

Dear [member's name],

Welcome to The Council for Exceptional Children and to the Wilco Chapter #1999! We are extremely happy to have you join us in our work to promote the education of exceptional students.

As a member of CEC, you will receive *Exceptional Children*, *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, and our state newsletter, *The Call*.

Our chapter holds a membership meeting the first Tuesday of every month in the cafeteria of Lee High School, 18 First Street, Thistown, PA 19130, starting at 7:00 pm. We invite you to come to the next meeting so we can meet you and share the chapter's upcoming activities. At the August 10th meeting, we will discuss our plans for the state conference this fall. Our September meeting will include a mini-workshop, "Homing in on Homework."

We look forward to working with you on behalf of exceptional children.

Sincerely,

[your name], [position]

[unit name]

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SAMPLE NEW MEMBER SURVEY

WILCO CHAPTER #1999 NEW MEMBER SURVEY

Please take a moment to complete this survey and return it to us. Your responses will help us plan our chapter's activities. The information you provide will be kept confidential. Thank you!

Please circle all that apply.

1. How do you prefer to receive information about chapter activities?
 - A. Phone call
 - B. E-mail
 - C. Written announcement

2. Which of the following meeting formats do you prefer?
 - A. Business meeting
 - B. Dinner or social
 - C. Program on specific topic
 - D. Combination of above

3. When would you be most likely to attend meetings?
 - A. Evenings
 - B. Saturdays
 - C. Other (please specify): _____

4. Which of the following programs/topics interest you?
 - A. Accessing Curriculum
 - B. Performance Assessment
 - C. Discipline
 - D. IEP/Transition
 - E. Other (please specify): _____

5. I would like to become involved in the chapter by:
 - A. Serving on a committee. My area of interest is: _____
 - B. Sponsoring a meeting or program in my district/school
 - C. Organizing social activities
 - D. Other (please specify): _____

So that we can contact you about getting involved, please provide:

Your name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: JENNY JOHNSON
123 MAIN STREET
THISTOWN, PA 19130

THANK YOU!

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4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.08 SAMPLE RENEWAL LETTERS

TO SEND PRIOR TO MEMBER'S RENEWAL DATE

Date

Dear [member's name]:

Although you have already received a membership renewal notice from CEC Headquarters, I wanted to add my perspective for your consideration.

As a practical fact, CEC's strength—fiscally, politically, and professionally—is directly related to the number of special education professionals and supporters who make up its membership. To speak as one voice about the needs of exceptional learners and to support our efforts to provide educational services, CEC leaders need your membership.

CEC is a great value. In addition to the professional materials and latest information in the field, we have access to insurance and financial programs at significant discounts because of the group rate. The professional liability program is one of the best available.*

Speaking of value, it's worth it to me to know that there is an organized, vocal, and effective voice looking out for exceptional children in [state/provincial] government. Just knowing that CEC leads the way in advocating for individuals with exceptionalities and in the effort to improve the conditions and resources available to the educator makes me feel that my membership is valuable.

On the local level, I enjoy meeting and getting to know other professionals in our field. We're all busy and I realize that not everyone takes part in all activities, but the fact that our [unit] offers activities and programs in our area is a great benefit.

I urge you to renew today. There's so much for you to gain as a professional special educator. Please let me know if you have any questions about our [unit] or about the many CEC member benefits, in general.

Sincerely,

[your signature], [position]
[unit name]

**CANADIAN CHAPTERS - Please omit this paragraph.*

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TO SEND AFTER MEMBER'S RENEWAL DATE

Date

Dear [member's name]:

It has come to my attention that your membership in the Council for Exceptional Children has expired. I wanted to write to you as a fellow professional and explain how I see the advantages of CEC membership, especially in [name of your community or state/province].

First, I'd like to quote from a CEC brochure:

"High teacher certification standards are essential; we must **extend access** to quality special education for underserved populations, for preschool, gifted, and post-transitional students. Special educators need more access to **required resources**. And having won the children's right to the least restrictive learning environment, we must now also fight to win the **most productive teaching environment** in which best practices flourish, protected from undue interference. **The highest quality** special education must be required, recognized, and rewarded. Together, we can achieve this goal for ourselves and for our students."

I feel sure that we both agree with these statements, but I also know that an international group effort toward these goals is more effective than individual efforts. Our unified voice is one of the primary advantages of CEC membership.

CEC membership is also a great value. The professional materials, latest information in the field, program and publication discounts, and other benefits are well worth the cost of membership.

On the [local/state/provincial] level, (please add two sentences on the value and effect of your unit activities).

I hope you will renew your CEC membership. For your convenience, I have enclosed a membership application form, already filled out with your CEC membership number and our unit number. Please let me know if you have any questions about our [unit] or about the various CEC member benefits, in general.

We look forward to having you rejoin our professional ranks.

Sincerely,

[your signature], [position]
[unit name]

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4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.09 TELEMARKETING...HOW TO CALL LAPSED MEMBERS

Telemarketing is a successful technique used by many associations. Basically, the concept entails a personal phone call to a member whose membership has lapsed or whose renewal date is at hand. It has proven effective in several ways. Renewals have increased and members receiving calls feel that they are valued by the organization. The callers collect valuable feedback about the services and programs offered by the association.

In recruiting callers it is important to find members with enthusiasm and thorough familiarity with CEC who have the time to complete the project. Callers could be retired members, previous unit officers, current membership committee members, or past/present unit leaders.

Suggested steps to follow in a telephone campaign include:

- Agree upon a reasonable goal (the number of renewals or reactivated memberships you hope to obtain).
- Identify your target membership. Your unit may wish to target long term members initially. This group has some group loyalty and may have valuable input if there is a problem with member retention. Also, you are more likely to have early success with this group.
- Design a work sheet to tally responses.
- Decide the number of callers needed to conduct the campaign.
- Recruit and train callers in use of script and response sheet. Supply them with current CEC information.
- Prepare them with answers to possible comments and questions which may come up in the phone conversation.
- Make calls.
- Follow up calls with appropriate written communication.
- Analyze the results.
- Recognize the contribution of the callers.
- Develop a short script or tailor the script on the next two pages for your use.

Making the call

- Try to use the member's name at least twice during the call to create a personal connection.
- Identify yourself and your affiliation with CEC.
- Be friendly and quickly establish a rapport.
- State your reason for the call.
- Deliver the message: *We value your membership and would like you to renew.*
- Remind the member of CEC benefits.
 - Networking opportunities and friendships.
 - Stimulating programs and information.
 - A chance to share ideas.
 - An opportunity to make a difference in the field of special education.
 - Uninterrupted mailing of publications and journals.
 - Supporting the association that supports your profession.

**TELEPHONE SCRIPT AND TIPS
TO ENCOURAGE YOUR LAPSED MEMBERS TO RENEW**

1. Immediately identify yourself.

“Hello, may I speak to Mr./Ms. _____? Good evening! My name is _____. I am calling for the (unit name) of the Council for Exceptional Children.”

2. Establish rapport by acknowledging that you are colleagues in the field working toward common goals.

“I’m a (position) at (location) and work with students (with disabilities, who are gifted) and have found that my CEC experiences have enhanced my professional growth.”

3. Deliver the message/state the reason for your call.

“I’m calling because your CEC membership expired on (date). I want to help you renew your membership so that there will be no further interruption in your benefits.”

4. Handle responses.

a. “Yes” response

“I’m glad you have decided to renew. Do you need a membership application or would you like to renew over the phone with a credit card?”

“It’s been a pleasure talking with you. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting on (date). Good-bye.”

b. “No” response

“It would help us to know what we could have done differently to help you decide to renew your membership.

“We have appreciated your membership support, and we hope you will consider rejoining in the future.”

Thank the person for taking the time to talk with you.

See item #5 for handling refusals and reverse side for further assistance on how to approach refusals.

5. Handle refusals and buffer complaints by presenting CEC membership benefits.

“Mr./Ms. _____, this is what you get with CEC membership: (e.g., next unit activity, next conference, publications).”

Use your personal testimony and/or the Membership Benefits Card as a guide. (Also see TO THE POINT Section 4.03—What to Say When “Selling” Membership.) *Remember:* Frustration and lack of time and resources are common issues facing special educators that deter active participation.

How do I approach refusals? (see next page)

6. Tally your results.

Use 3x5 index cards for each person you contact and write down comments after each call. Use a tally sheet to show members who renewed and members who did not renew. List reasons.

7. Discuss telemarketing responses with your Membership Committee. Also share this information with your Board.

8. Contact CEC Headquarters staff for additional tips and strategies.

Membership Services
Council for Exceptional Children
2900 Crystal Drive, Suite 1000
Arlington, VA 22202-3557
866/509-0218
membership@cec.sped.org

HOW DO I APPROACH REFUSALS?

1. "CEC membership is too expensive."

(use one or a combination of the following responses)

"Membership in CEC is an investment in yourself and your future."

"CEC dues are comparable to dues for other educational and professional organizations."

"CEC makes a difference in the lives of children with exceptionalities and those who serve them."

"CEC members receive discounts on products, publications and conferences, and have opportunities to meet and network with today's leaders in the field. In addition, CEC continues to publish TEACHING Exceptional Children, Exceptional Children, and *CEC Today* for its members. If you break it down, it's just a few dollars per month for great resources."

2. "I don't get anything for the money I pay." "What has CEC done?"

"You may be aware that CEC lobbied diligently to ensure the reauthorization of IDEA and to increase funding for special education. CEC has launched a comprehensive program to make the educational community and the public aware of teacher shortages and special education teaching conditions. CEC will continue its advocacy efforts on behalf of individuals with exceptionalities and the professionals who serve them. Also, your CEC membership offers you opportunities to expand career options and develop new skills."

OR

"Have you read the latest articles from TEACHING Exceptional Children, Exceptional Children, and *CEC Today*?" (State recent articles that were of interest to you.) "These are the type of resources made available by CEC."

3. "I don't have time to attend meetings or participate in unit activities."

"Your dues support the work of CEC, even when you don't have time to actively participate in person."

4. "I already belong to another professional association and/or to NEA/AFT."

"CEC offers something unique to special educators that other organizations/unions don't. Not only does CEC keep you apprised of the latest trends, but it provides educators with opportunities to obtain the best resources, improved teaching environments, and support from local networks."

5. "Maybe I'll rejoin later."

"There's so much useful information that you stand to lose by not renewing now. By renewing right away you'll prevent your CEC membership benefits and services from being interrupted."

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4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.10 MEMBER SURVEYS

Surveys are a useful tool for gathering information. At the start of a new year, your unit may wish to gather information to be used by the executive committee to plan the unit's meetings and activities for the year. At other times, surveys can be used to evaluate the success of a particular program or activity.

The survey printed in this section can be used as-is or customized with your own questions. Samples of other questions you might ask include:

- Did you attend the June 10th meeting with Bob Jones as our guest speaker on IEP's?
 - A. Yes
 - 1. Was the topic of interest to you?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - 2. How do you rate Bob Jones as a speaker?
 - a. Excellent
 - b. Average
 - c. Poor
 - B. No
- Which formats do you prefer for professional development activities?
 - A. Lectures
 - B. Workshops
 - C. Demonstrations
 - D. Combination of above
- Do you read our chapter newsletter, *The Tyler Tymes*?
 - A. Yes. The sections most useful to me are:
 - 1. District News
 - 2. Legislative Update
 - 3. Tips From Teachers
 - 4. Chapter Chatter
 - B. No, I don't read it because:
 - 1. I don't have time.
 - 2. The content is not relevant, interesting, or important to me.
 - 3. I have not received the newsletter.

When developing your survey, remember to:

- Keep it short. People are most likely to complete a survey they think will only take a few minutes of their time; if it is too long, they may throw it out without even reading it!
- Provide the name and address of the person the survey should be sent to.

SAMPLE MEMBER SURVEY

WILCO CHAPTER #1999 MEMBER SURVEY

Please take a moment to complete this survey and return it to us. Your responses will help us plan our chapter's activities. The information you provide will be kept confidential. Thank you!

Please circle all that apply.

1. How do you prefer to receive information about chapter activities?
 - A. Phone call
 - B. E-mail
 - C. Written announcement

2. Which of the following meeting formats do you prefer?
 - A. Business meeting
 - B. Dinner or social
 - C. Program on specific topic
 - D. Combination of above

3. Which of the following programs/topics interest you?
 - A. Accessing Curriculum
 - B. Performance Assessment
 - C. Discipline
 - D. IEP/Transition
 - E. Other (please specify): _____

4. Are you a new CEC member?
 - A. Yes -- I joined within the past year.
 - B. No -- I have been a CEC member for _____ years.

5. In the past 2 years, I have attended:
 - A. Meetings or programs for this chapter or another chapter
 - B. The convention for this state or another state
 - C. CEC Annual Convention
 - D. None of the above

6. Do you attend chapter meetings?
 - A. YES
 - B. NO. I don't attend chapter meetings because:
 1. They are held at times not convenient for me.
 2. They are held in locations not convenient for me.
 3. I never know about the meetings.
 4. Meeting topics aren't interesting, relevant, or important to me.
 5. I'd like to attend, but have too many other obligations.

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7. When would you be most likely to attend meetings?
- A. Evenings
 - B. Saturdays
 - C. Other (please specify): _____
8. I would like to become involved in the chapter by:
- A. Serving on a committee. My area of interest is: _____
 - B. Sponsoring a meeting or program in my district/school
 - C. Organizing social activities
 - F. Other (please specify): _____

So that we can contact you about getting involved, please provide:

Your name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY AUGUST 15 TO: JENNY JOHNSON
123 MAIN STREET
THISTOWN, PA 19130

THANK YOU!

4. MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

4.11 PROBLEM SOLVING...WHAT TO DO WHEN A MEMBER'S UNHAPPY

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Description/Cause</u>	<u>What to Do</u>
Incorrect Address	Member moved; address not legible on form; keying error	Members can update/correct their membership record online at their convenience. Go to the Membership section at www.cec.sped.org. Or call CEC's Constituent Services Center at 888/232-7733, or e-mail service@cec.sped.org .
Misspelled name	Name not legible on application; keying error	See above
Chapter number	Number not on application; wrong number on application; keying error; member moved to new area without transferring chapter membership	See above
Member received bill for membership dues	Miscalculated division dues; used old application; chapter number indicated specific state/province which may have an assessment	Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center
Division membership	Member's division(s) incorrect; member or keying error	Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center
Membership card	Misspelled name; missing/wrong divisions; delay in receipt	Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center
Cannot access "Members-Only" materials on CEC Web site	Member cannot locate their login and/or password; membership has lapsed	To obtain login and/or password or renew membership, contact CEC's Constituent Services Center
Receipt of "junk mail"	The CEC mailing list is a popular list for vendors to rent; before the list is rented, the material is carefully evaluated for its appropriateness and interest to CEC's membership	Members can indicate on their application and renewal forms that they do not want to receive mailings from non-CEC sources; or contact CEC's Constituent Services Center to have their name removed from the list

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<u>Problem</u>	<u>Description/Cause</u>	<u>What to Do</u>
Receipt of e-mail from CEC	CEC contacts members via e-mail with legislative updates and news and information of interest to CEC members. CEC never provides members' e-mail addresses to vendors or other organizations.	Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center to have their name removed from the e-mail list
Journal issue not received	Member not in the cycle for that issue; address change not reported/ updated before labels were printed; label fell off in the mail	All membership types except Associate receive 4 issues of <u>EC</u> and 6 issues of <u>TEC</u> during their membership year. Associate members have online access only to the CEC journals (no paper copy). Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center if there seems to be a problem. Note: <i>CEC Today</i> is published online only.
Damaged journal	Infrequently, a journal will be accidentally damaged in the mail	Contact CEC's Constituent Services Center

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