Council for Exceptional Children

New Leadership Model

February 2018
Workgroup Members

- Jim Heiden (Chair); 2015 President
- Robin Brewer; 2014 President
- Christy Chambers; 2013 President
- Denise Drinkwalter; 2011-13 Member @ Large, Canada
- Mikki Garcia; 2017 President
- Maggie McLaughlin; 2012 President
- Jane Quenneville; 2015-17 Member @ Large, Non-Designated
- Laurie VanderPloeg; 2017 President Elect
- Alex Graham (Ex-Officio)
- Sharon Rodriguez (Staff Liaison)
Governance Workgroup Charge

Fall 2016: the CEC Board establishes a workgroup to:

- Analyze the size, composition, and charges of CEC’s Board of Directors, committees (standing and non-standing), and advisory groups and make recommendations to address inefficiencies, if any, and incorporate best practices from the field of association management;
- Develop systems or policies to facilitate adaptability and promote innovation within CEC’s committees, workgroups and advisory groups; and
- Establish a process for on-going review of CEC’s governance structure(s).
- Recommendations were due December 2017.
Workgroup Deliverables

- Board of Directors
- Committees (Standing and Board-Appointed), Workgroups and Advisory Groups
- Representative Assembly
- Children and Youth Action Network
- CEC Organizational Structure (impact on governance and leadership)
Benefits of Leadership Reform

- Supports a diverse leadership pipeline
- Fosters a culture of knowledge, nimbleness, and trust
- Increases member input on governing actions that impact them
- Increases accountability and transparency
- Ensures all entities are high-impact and add value
- Maximizes volunteers’ time and financial investment in governance
- Supports efficient, effective and strategic decision-making
Transparency

Obtained input:

- **Board Members:** briefings at CEC 2017 & 2018, board telephone interviews, webinar, post-webinar interviews
- **Unit/Division Leaders:** IDC at CEC 2017 & 2018, Unit Leaders Breakfast at CEC 2017 & 2018, concurrent and repeating sessions at Leadership Institute in July 2017
- **Past Presidents:** Volunteers Leaders breakfast at CEC 2017 & 2018
- **Committee/Workgroup Chairs:** Volunteer Leaders breakfast at CEC 2017 & 2018
Why now?

- Nearly 20 years since CEC’s governance system has been examined as a whole
- CEC’s governance is not reflective of best practices in association management
- CEC is struggling to recruit diverse and committed volunteer leaders
- Radically changing nature of associations
CEC’s Governance Model, Est. 1999

Recommended CEC Governance Structure

- **Members**
  - **Membership Units**
    - **Student CEC**
    - **Chapters**
  - **Divisions**
  - **Federations/Branches**
  - **Subdivisions**

- **Representative Assembly**
- **Board of Directors**
- **Executive Director**
- **CEC Staff**

**Standing Committees**
- Nominations Committee
- Elections
- Advocacy and Governmental Relations
- Ethnic and Multicultural Concerns
- Finance and Operations
- Governance
- Membership and Unit Development
- Professional Development
- Professional Standards and Practice

- President-Elect and the at-large members of the Board of Directors are elected by eligible members.

**Responsible to**

**Advises and consults with**
Qualities of an Effective Board

- Culture of Candor, Respect and Inquiry
- Appetite for Continuous Learning and Improvement
- Capacity to Think and Act Strategically
Evidence-Based Resources
Process for Developing Recommendations

- Agreed that no changes would be recommended just for the sake of change.
- Engaged an external association/volunteer management consultant.
- Used evidence-based resources on best practices in nonprofit and association governance.
- Examined the characteristics of highly effective boards based on industry research and examples of common and innovative governing models in the association sector relative to the specific governance needs of CEC.
- Obtained stakeholder input:
  - Board members
  - Unit/division leaders
  - Past presidents
  - Committee chairs
- Obtained input from related associations about their governance reform experience.
- Followed CEC’s core values, especially the commitment to diversity, caring, and respect for the dignity and worth of all individuals.
Recommendation #1

- Institute a comprehensive and inclusive process to ensure a highly competent, diverse and inclusive pipeline of committed volunteer leaders by establishing a Leadership Development Committee.
The LDC will have a major commitment to and be accountable for ensuring diversity and inclusion through:

Planning: developing a detailed strategy with concrete goals, objectives, tasks, and timelines for putting its commitment into action.

Communicating: reaching out to CEC members to encourage participation from diverse populations in the leadership development program.

Assessing: measuring and reporting results on an annual basis to the board.

ANNUAL PROGRAM OF WORK

Prepare an annual schedule for board, standing and advisory committee member appointments. Conduct an annual gap analysis to determine board leadership needs. The board has the authority to determine annually the number of board members necessary to fulfill the mission of the organization based on the gap analysis performed by the LDC.

RECRUITMENT

Cultivate and recruit a diverse pipeline of potential board and committee members. Assemble a confidential, ongoing list of prospective board and committee members that addresses the needs of the organization as determined by the gap analyses over several years.

EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Produce and periodically update a leadership development curriculum for prospective board and committee members.

SELECTION

Provide to the board the names and qualifications of candidates for appointment to the board and as committee chairs. Provide to committee chairs, or chair designate where one exists, the names and qualifications of candidates for appointment of committee members. Board and committee members will be drawn from the pool of candidates that have been recruited, vetted and recommended by the LDC based on the established Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs).

ACCOUNTABILITY

EVALUATION FEEDBACK

Using the basic responsibilities and “best practices” literature of nonprofit boards, identify or create assessment (evaluation) tools.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Create a plan for ongoing leadership development for the board, the LDC, and committees.

ORIENTATION

Ensure orientation of new board and committee members each year.

APPOINTMENT

Board members will be elected by a majority vote of the sitting Board from the pool of candidates provided by the LDC. Committee chairs are nominated by the President, subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Committee members are nominated by the committee chair (or chair-designate when one exists) and approved by the President.
The LDC

- **Purpose:** Intentionally identify, cultivate, recruit, and orient, competent and diverse volunteer leaders for board and committee positions that are responsive to the current and future needs of CEC.

- **Goal:** Identify, nurture and develop leadership potential and skills in emerging leaders.
LDC Size, Composition, Terms & Eligibility

- The LDC will consist of 9-11 members, at least three fourths are CEC members. The total number shall include 1-3 thought leaders in voting positions.

- All members, other than thought leaders, should have CEC governance experience and meet the Knowledge, Skills, Abilities (KSAs) identified by the workgroup.

- Terms will be for three years (staggered), with two consecutive terms maximum.

- The Governance Assessment Workgroup will appoint the first LDC. The first chair will be the Immediate Past President.

- Members of the LDC are appointed by the Board based on recommendations from LDC.
Diversity

Understanding and valuing the range and variety of characteristics and beliefs of individuals who demonstrate a wide range of characteristics. This includes ethnic and racial backgrounds, language, age, abilities, family status, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religious and spiritual values, geographic location, and country of origin.
Diversity

- A more diverse board has been linked to a greater strategic orientation. Diversity is very important when it comes to:
  - understanding the changing environment from a broader perspective
  - developing creative new solutions to new problems
  - understanding the client populations served by the organization
  - planning effectively
  - monitoring and strengthening programs, services
LDC Knowledge, Skills & Abilities (KSAs)

- **Knowledge:**
  - Be familiar with the association’s mission, values, and goals (strategic plan)
  - Understand the specific responsibilities of the different leadership positions
  - Understand the roles and responsibilities of volunteers within the association
  - Understand the association’s governance structure and policies
  - Understand the association’s programs and services
  - Understand the needs of the association's members and stakeholders
  - Understand the special education profession in different contexts
  - Recognize and anticipate opportunities and threats in the special education field that may have direct implications for the association
Skills and Abilities

- Strategic Thinking
- Communication
- Decision Making
- Collaboration
- Leadership
Accountability - LDC

The LDC will be accountable to the Board for ensuring diversity and inclusion through:

- **Planning**: Developing a detailed strategy and concrete goals, objectives, tasks, and timelines for putting its commitment into action.

- **Communicating**: Developing a comprehensive, continuous and transparent communication plan that reaches out to CEC members from diverse groups, personally contacting and encouraging participation in the leadership development process.

- **Assessing**: Measuring and annually reporting the results of efforts to engage members of diverse groups in leadership development and appointment to leadership positions.

- **Training and Development**: Developing clear pathways to leadership and encouraging participation by all segments of the CEC membership in order to create a more diverse volunteer pool from which future leaders may emerge.
Recommendation #2

- Revise the eligibility, selection process, size and composition of the Board of Directors.
Board Eligibility and Selection

- Drawn from pool of candidates recruited, vetted and recommended by the LDC.
- Based on established Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs) to be developed by the LDC.
- Elected by a majority vote of the sitting board.
- Sitting board members will complete their terms and are eligible for consideration by the LDC for a second term.
Board Size and Composition

- No fewer than 12 members and no more than 15 (down from 21), including Thought Leader(s).
- After receiving the LDC’s annual gap analysis, the board will determine the specific number of new members necessary to fulfill the mission of the organization.
- Board members serve three year terms.
- At least one but not more than three Thought Leaders, for terms of one to three years.
Thought Leaders on the Board

- Board-appointed.
- At least one but not more than three Thought Leaders each year.
- Voting member.
- Not a member of CEC.
- May be outside of the field of special education, education, or disabilities.
- May be recruited and selected by the board or LDC at the request of the board.
- Brings specific in-depth knowledge and expertise in one or more areas that represent a pressing need of the board.
- Serves a minimum of one year; up to three consecutive years.
President Elect

- Must be an existing board member (and CEC member) who has served as a member of the board for a minimum of two years or has been on the board within the past five years.
- Elected by simple majority of the board.
- Serves for one year before assuming the role of President.
- President serves one year before moving to the position of Past President.
Treasurer

- Board selects the Treasurer from two applicants recommended by the LDC.
- Three year term with two consecutive terms maximum.
Accountability - Board

- The Board is accountable to the members.
- The Board President will issue a report on CEC’s volunteer leadership development program, including metrics around inclusion and diversity. The report will be communicated through Special Education Today, posted to cec.sped.org, as well as presented during the meeting of the Representative Assembly during the convention.
The Governance Assessment Workgroup had recommendations in three specific areas concerning CEC’s volunteer committees:

- type of committees
- the process by which a committee is formed
- the lifespan or tenure of the committee
Committees and Workgroups

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Reports to</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Established</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standing Committee</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td>On-Going</td>
<td>Decides</td>
<td>Bylaws</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Committee</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Advises</td>
<td>Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workgroup</td>
<td>Board</td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Advises</td>
<td>Board</td>
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Standing Committees

- Current Standing Committees
  - Elections
  - Finance and Audit
  - Nominations

- Approved Standing Committees
  - Finance and Audit
  - Leadership Development Committee
Criteria to Establish an Advisory Committee

- Purpose, Tasks & Defined Metrics
- Alignment with Strategic Plan
- Authority/Accountability
- Budget
- Timeline
- Size, Terms, Composition
- Operating Procedures
Lifespan of Committees

- “Sunset” all but the following committees by December 31, 2018.
  - Committees exempt in the first year: Professional Standards and Practice, Representative Assembly, Honors and Yes I Can Applications to reinstate an advisory committee, or to establish one, will be submitted to the board demonstrating alignment to strategic plan.
  - Board will determine criteria for review of advisory committees every 2 or 3 years (depending on terms of appointment).
Recommendation #4

- **Representative Assembly (RA)** -- Recommended that the RA Committee conduct a full review to determine how to best use the RA, including the issues management process. The review would include a survey of unit, division and student representatives. It is further recommended that the past chair of the RA Committee and president elect be included in the review.

- **Children and Youth Action Network (CAN)** -- Recommended that, upon the appointment of the Policy Steering Committee, it be charged with evaluating CEC’s grassroots advocacy process to determine how to update the advocacy network in terms of role, training, technology and support.
## Implementation Timeline

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>11/13-14/17</td>
<td>Revise Bylaws based on board-approved recommendations</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/15/17</td>
<td>Proposed Bylaws amendments to legal counsel for review</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/5/2017</td>
<td>Proposed Bylaws amendments to members for 60-day comment period; extended from 2/5 to 2/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/6-9/2018</td>
<td>Presentations/input opportunities at CEC 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/7/2018</td>
<td>Board vote on Bylaws revisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/19-4/30/18</td>
<td>Workgroup establishes LDC</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/1/18</td>
<td>LDC to begin work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2018</td>
<td>LDC presents candidates for board to elect and for appointment to committee positions</td>
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Comments

Comments on the proposed amendments to the bylaws are due by February 20 to president@cec.sped.org.