



For immediate release

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CEC Applauds White House Nominee for OSERS

Arlington, Va., Nov. 16, 2017 – President Donald J. Trump announced on Wednesday his intention to nominate Johnny Collett as the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the U.S. Department of Education. Collett currently serves as the Director of Special Education Outcomes at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), where he works to support states in their efforts to raise expectations and improve outcomes for children and youth with disabilities. Previously, he served as Director of the Division of Learning Services and State Director of Special Education at the Kentucky Department of Education as well as worked as a high school special education teacher.

The Council for Exceptional Children is pleased to support the nomination of Collett. “We urge the U.S. Senate to swiftly confirm this well qualified nominee,” said Deborah Ziegler, CEC director of policy and advocacy. As a special educator, Mr. Collett will be a key member of the Secretary’s cabinet and comes to the table with expertise in special education research, policy and practice at the local, state, and national level. In an April 2017 CCSSO interview, Collett stated, “So, as we think about improving academic achievement and outcomes for students with disabilities we must talk about both high expectations and appropriate supports.”

“I am encouraged by the nomination of Collett as the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Children and youth with disabilities who are served by CEC members deserve to have someone at the helm who has expertise in the field and can ensure the provision of a free appropriate public education and early intervention services. CEC looks forward to a collaborative working relationship with him,” said Mikki Garcia, CEC president.

CEC stands ready to partner with Collett to achieve the successful implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and to ensure that all children and youth with disabilities have access to the necessary supports and services to attain their developmental and educational outcomes.

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The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the educational success of children and youth with exceptionalities that accomplishes its mission through advocacy, standards, and professional development. Learn more about CEC at www.cec.sped.org.