

Special Education Advocates from 46 States Storm Capitol Hill

Arlington, Va., June 26, 2018 – The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the Council of Administrators of Special Education will gather over 260 special and gifted education and early intervention advocates for the 2018 Special Education Legislative Summit, July 8–11, 2018. The highlight of the summit will be Tuesday, July 10 when advocates storm Capitol Hill to advocate on behalf of the children and youth with exceptionalities and the professionals who work on their behalf.

“There are important policy issues before the U.S. Congress, which can have a positive impact on the outcomes for children and youth with exceptionalities,” said Laurie VanderPloeg, CEC’s president. “Advocating on behalf of these children is what the summit is all about.”

While on Capitol Hill, advocates will present their elected officials with four issues currently challenging the fields of special education and early intervention. Two hundred and sixty special education and early intervention professionals will ask the men and women of Congress to:

- Increase funding for special education and early intervention programs.
- Keep public funds in public education.
- Address the special education teacher and early intervention provider shortages.
- Provide support to ensure social and emotional learning, positive school climate, and mental health supports.

“If we consider ourselves advocates for children and youth with exceptionalities, then we need to be on the Hill—we need our legislators to see our faces and understand that these issues are important to us, our students, and their families. We’re not going away,” said Raul Escarpio, CEC Member.

After meeting with Members of Congress, the advocates will hear from senior personnel from the U.S. Department of Education, including Johnny W. Collett, Assistant Secretary, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services and Kimberly Richey, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

Kevin Rubenstein, CEC member and three-time summit attendee shared, “There is something that has to be said for bringing your voice to the Hill and doing it on behalf of the children and youth you work with every day. The summit has changed my role as a professional; it helped me become a better state-level advocate and has changed the way I advocate in my state’s capital.”

Over six million children and youth benefit from special education, early intervention, and related services prescribed by IDEA. Their voices will be heard by our elected officials thanks to the participation of a small but mighty army of volunteer special education and early intervention advocates.

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 cec.sped.org.



For immediate release
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The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) is an international professional educational organization which is affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) whose members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual in society. The mission of CASE is to provide leadership and support to members by shaping policies and practices which impact the quality of education. Learn more about CASE at casecec.org.

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