



**CANDIDATE FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE**

**Mitchell Yell**

**Fred and Francis Lester Palmetto Chair  
of Teacher Education  
University of South Carolina**

**Columbia, SC, USA**



**REMEMBER TO VOTE!  
Sept. 23 – Oct. 21, 2020**

**Candidate Statements:**

**What inspired you to apply to the BOD? (Limit 150 words.)**

I believe that CEC is absolutely the most important resource available to special education teachers and administrators, students with disabilities, and their parents in these uncertain times. I have been involved with CEC and my state unit of CEC (South Carolina) for over 30 years. For the past 3 years, I have been honored to serve on the CEC Board of Directors. I have also served on the IDEA Reauthorization Work Group and the 2019 Special Education Legislative Summit (SELS) Planning Committee. In the past 3 years, I have witnessed first-hand how devoted CEC staff and the Board of Directors are to special education and how tirelessly they work for administrators and teachers of students with disabilities. I hope to continue to be a part of this effort and assist our organization in any way that I am able to.

**Describe how your leadership experiences, professional or volunteer, have had an impact on fostering change. (Limit 250 words.)**

In my career, I have worked as a teacher of students with disabilities, an administrator, and a professor of special education at the University of South Carolina. During this time, I have found that special education is built on partnerships with (a) special education teachers and administrators, (b) general education teachers and administrators, (c) the legislative and executive branches of state and federal government, and (d) parents of students with disabilities. It is critical to help our field progress that we recognize the importance of these partnerships and understand that CEC needs to be a vital and active organization that prepares our members to be involved and become effective advocates for our students and work with these different constituents. I have both the experience and desire to serve CEC in these areas.

**People who apply to a Board of Directors usually stress their communication and collaboration skills. What three additional skills would you bring to the board and how do you believe they would be beneficial? (Limit 150 words)**

Three areas of skills that I will bring to my service on the board are my (a) legal and policy knowledge in special education, (b) on the ground experiences from my 14 years as a special education teacher in Minnesota, and (c) state and national level experiences in serving CEC in the South Carolina Unit of CEC and work in the national CEC, CCBBD, CEDS, and CASE. I believe that these experiences, along with my legal and policy expertise, will enable me to be an effective advocate for CEC as I serve our organization.

**What are your three major achievements and/or experiences that will help you be successful on the board and why? (Limit 150 words.)**

Three major achievements/experiences that I believe will help me to be a successful board member are as follow. First, as a parent of two children with disabilities, I understand the needs of special educators

from a parent's perspective. Second, as a former teacher for children and youth with disabilities for 14 years, I understand the on the ground needs of teachers and administrators in terms of resources professional development needs. Third, as a researcher in special education law and policy development, I understand the challenges our field faces in terms of national and state policy.

**Other than time, what would the biggest challenges be for serving on the board and how would you address this/these challenge(s)? (Limit 150 words.)**

I believe the biggest challenge that I, and all board members, will face is advocated for special education administrators and teachers in a time of decreased resources in a time of increased needs. These problems are certainly being exacerbated by Covid-19. I believe the way we address these challenges is through advocacy with local and national leaders. To that end, we must prepare our members in procedures to become effective advocates for our profession.

#### **Professional Position(s) and Education:**

##### **Primary Professional Position:**

Fred and Francis Lester Palmetto Chair of Teacher Education  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC

##### **Highest Degree:**

Ph.D.; University of Minnesota, Special Education

#### **CEC Membership Information:**

**Years of CEC Membership:** 30 years

##### **Division Membership(s):**

Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)  
Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)  
Division for Research (CEC-DR)  
Council for Educational Diagnostic Services (CEDS)  
Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES)  
Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD)  
Teacher Education Division (TED)

**YOUR Association. YOUR Vote. YOUR Voice.  
REMEMBER TO VOTE!  
Sept. 23 – Oct. 21, 2020**

