

**COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Minutes

(Approved May 4, 2020)

February 7, 2020
Oregon Convention Center
Portland, OR

1.0 Call to Order and Official Items

President Jennifer Lesh, Presiding Officer of the Representative Assembly (RA), called the meeting to order at 12:32 p.m. She introduced President Elect Dennis Davitt, Immediate Past President Mary Lynn Boscardin, Treasurer Yvonne Bui and Executive Director Chad Rummel.

President Boscardin recognized the meeting monitors: CEC Past Presidents Bill Bogdan, Robin Brewer, Parthenia Cogdell, Mary Ruth Coleman, Susan Fowler, Jim Heiden, Diane Johnson, Suzanne Martin, and Jackie Mault.

She then recognized the members of the Representative Assembly Committee: Joe DeMarsh (Chair), Kathryn Kreiser, Emilie Maule, and Cheryl Wold. Jennifer Katz-Borrin was unable to attend. DeMarsh and Maule provided general and logistical information about the operation of the RA meeting.

1.1 Determination of Quorum

110 representatives were reported prior to the RA meeting. 95 representatives and alternates from 39 of the 54 active units, all 18 divisions and the student membership checked in at the meeting, constituting a quorum. A list of the number of representatives for each is included with these minutes as Attachment A.

1.2 Adoption of Standing Rules

RA Committee member Kathryn Kreiser moved to adopt the Standing Rules. The Standing Rules were adopted as printed.

1.3 Adoption of Agenda

RA Committee member Cheryl Wold moved to adopt the agenda. The agenda was adopted as printed.

2.0 Recognitions

2.1 In Memoriam

During the past year, CEC was informed of the passing of the following members:

Susan Albrecht	Indianapolis, IN
Sandy (Robbins) Amante	Acworth, GA

Stacy Bland	Paintsville, KY
Mary Kate Bell Brearley Glasser	Columbia, SC
Mary Jane DeWeerd	Alexandria, VA
Rosalind K. Guild	Deerfield Beach, FL
Joan G. Guilianelli	Highland Park, IL
Norris G. Haring	Kirkland, WA
Mary K. Hawley	Staunton, IL
Robert A. Henderson	Urbana, IL
Frada Kaplan	Lyman, NH
Martin J. Kaufman	Eugene, OR
Helen Margaret (Peg) Mock	Toronto, ON
Gerald J. Reynaud	Kansas City, MO
Carolyn M. Shumate	Olympia, WA
Jackie Trapp	Hamilton, ON

The names were read by RA Committee members Kathryn Kreiser and Cheryl Wold. There were no additions. Following the reading, the Assembly observed a moment of silence.

2.2 Courtesy Resolutions

Courtesy resolutions honor members who have made a significant and sustained contribution to CEC and, thereby, to the field of special and gifted education. These resolutions recognize major contributions made to the organization’s welfare. The content of the resolutions also provides a historical record of the development of the field of special and gifted education and describes how CEC has contributed to the evolution of the field.

Members must have had held leadership positions within CEC and made significant contributions to the international organization.

2.2.1 Luann Purcell

The resolution honoring Luann Purcell, Executive Director of the Council of Administrators of Special Education, was read by Michelle Starley on behalf of Georgia CEC, Gary Myrah, Gina Scala, Kindel Mason and Phyllis Wolfram on behalf of the Council of Administrators of Special Education, and Past President Mary Lynn Boscardin on behalf of CEC Headquarters. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

A copy of the resolution was presented to Dr. Purcell at the meeting.

2.2.2 Gerald J. “Gerry” Reynaud

The resolution honoring CEC Past President Gerald Reynaud was read by Phyllis Wolfram on behalf of the Council of Administrators of Special Education; Luann Purcell on behalf of the Council of Administrators of Special Education and the CEC Pioneers Division, and Past President Bill Bogdan on behalf of the CEC Pioneers Division and CEC’s Past Presidents. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

2.2.3 Lynn Ziraldo

The resolution honoring Lynn Ziraldo was read by Amy Shannon and Cindy Perras on behalf of Ontario CEC and Mary Ruth Coleman on behalf of the CEC Pioneers Division. The resolution was unanimously adopted.

3.0 Organizational Items

3.1 Policy Update

CEC Senior Policy Advisor Kuna Tavalin presented an update on CEC's new Policy Steering Committee (PSC).

Chair Margaret McLaughlin reviewed applications and, with the approval of CEC President Jennifer Lesh, appointed members. At its meeting earlier in the week, the committee establish its first items of business. Specifically, those are to:

- Set the 2020 policy agenda
- review and update, as needed, CEC policy positions
- establish a formalized, yet nimble, vetting process for new policy issues/statements as they arise

The purposes of the PSC are to:

- develop recommendations for Board consideration regarding special education legislative and regulatory issues at the national, state and local levels
- assist CEC in developing policy and position statements
- contribute to the development of advocacy campaigns
- monitor and advance issues related to the practice of special education
- support CEC's members, divisions, and units in advocating for legislation supporting professionals serving students with exceptionalities

She also provided an update policy and advocacy actions since October 2019.

- Relationship Building: Capitol Hill
 - House/Senate Majority and Minority committee staff, Labor-H appropriations staff
 - Special education champions
- Policy
 - U.S. Department of Education regulatory activity
 - National Center for Research on Educational Access and Choice (REACH) Policy Advisory Board
- Member-facing
 - Webinars for: CAN Network; full membership; past presidents
 - Convention sessions and pre-conference workshop
 - Updated "asks" for CEC's Legislative Action Center
 - Weekly Policy Insider, with an emphasis on relevance for CEC members

3.1 President's Report

President Lesh referenced her written report that was posted in the RA's online community prior to the RA meeting. She provided the following information and updates:

Volunteer Leadership Opportunity

The application for the Representative Assembly Committee will be online this spring. Members wishing to apply for a two-year term on this committee, from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022, must be a current or former RA representative. Two positions will be open. Contact Sharon Rodriguez with any questions.

Leadership Institute

CEC's Leadership Institute will be July 11-12 in Alexandria, Virginia. The Leadership Institute is designed for unit and division leadership teams, including Presidents, Presidents-Elect, Treasurers, Membership Chairs, and Children and Youth Advocacy Network (CAN) Coordinators. The Institute will bring attendees together with other CEC volunteers to enhance leadership through powerful conversations, real-time collaboration, and high-level discussions with association experts around the issues identified as critical to unit/division success—finance, membership, professional development, and grassroots advocacy.

Advocacy

CEC works year-round in Washington, DC to ensure our policy and advocacy agenda is being heard. Its voice is strengthened by the support of its members, who hail from all parts of the country and have diverse professional experiences and expertise to bring to this work. The following are at least two important ways that members can contribute their voices and help move the needle for students with exceptionalities and the professionals that support them.

Legislative Action Center

Our Legislative Action Center is an online tool that we employ to create a large volume of written support for CEC's policy and advocacy priorities. At the Legislative Action Center, you can use or personalize letters to your Members of Congress.

CEC prompts its membership to write to Congress through the Legislative Action Center at strategic touch-points throughout the year, but it is always open for business through the CEC homepage. Lesh encouraged attendees to familiarize yourself with the Legislative Action Center and to share our enthusiasm about this grassroots tool with other members of CEC. While each letter to Congress may seem like a small act, collectively we make an impact.

Legislative Summit

Due to its success in the past, CEC will again join forces with the Council of Administrators of Special Education to host the 2020 Special Education Legislative Summit in Alexandria, Virginia this summer. The Legislative Summit kicks off on Sunday, July 12 at 3 PM with an evening of learning, discussion, and overview of the days ahead. Monday brings a full day of in-depth advocacy training as attendees prepare for visits to Congressional offices. Tuesday, July 14, attendees will head to Washington for Congressional visits. On Wednesday, attendees will gather to reflect on the amazing advocacy work and how to keep the momentum going all year.

When our members support our policy agenda by voicing what works and what needs to be improved at the national, state, and local levels, whether in-person or through the Legislative Action Center, it adds a

critical dimension to our policy and advocacy work. We love to see our members become active participants and get involved.

CEC 2021

Start planning now and save the date for the CEC 2021 Convention & Expo, February 10th – 15th in Baltimore, MD. CEC’s annual convention and expo is the largest special education professional development event for all educators! It’s also a great opportunity for attendees to engage and network with other special education professionals from across the US and Canada, and around the world.

There will be unparalleled access to high-quality, evidence-based professional development, not to mention the world’s largest expo of special education products and services.

3.2 Executive Directors Report

Executive Director Chad Rummel reported the following:

In his time so far, he has:

- had calls with each Board member and a few unit/division presidents
- has seen or will be seeing 17 of 18 divisions this week
- proceeding with planning for the Special Education Legislative Summit, with a meeting of the Steering Committee scheduled at the convention
- continuing with development and dissemination of resources on High Leverage Practices

Looking forward for the remainder of the year:

- Website relaunch and content strategy development
 - Launch by August
 - State/division webpages and EC/TEC incorporated by the end of the year
 - Focus on development of content hubs in 2021
- Rolling out revised standards and expanding professional development
- Rethinking our approach to recruitment and how administrators can support practitioners’ membership, and how that applies to retention
- Explore fundraising / endowments
- Renegotiating journals publication contracts with SAGE
- Continuing expansion of policy and advocacy work
- Looking at expanding business development
- Expanding organizational networks (attending Michigan CEC Conference, OSEP Summit - Leading by Convening)

3.3 Treasurer’s Report

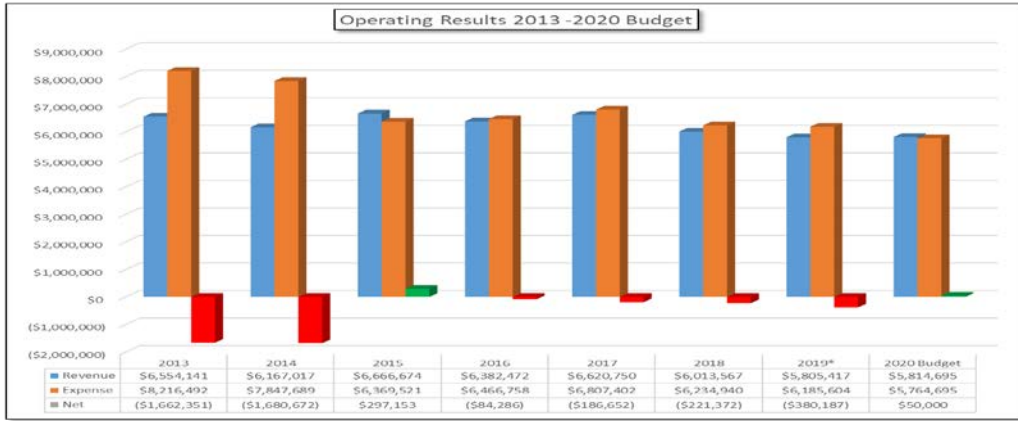
Treasurer Yvonne Bui reviewed the following items:

2019 Financial Results & Highlights (unaudited)

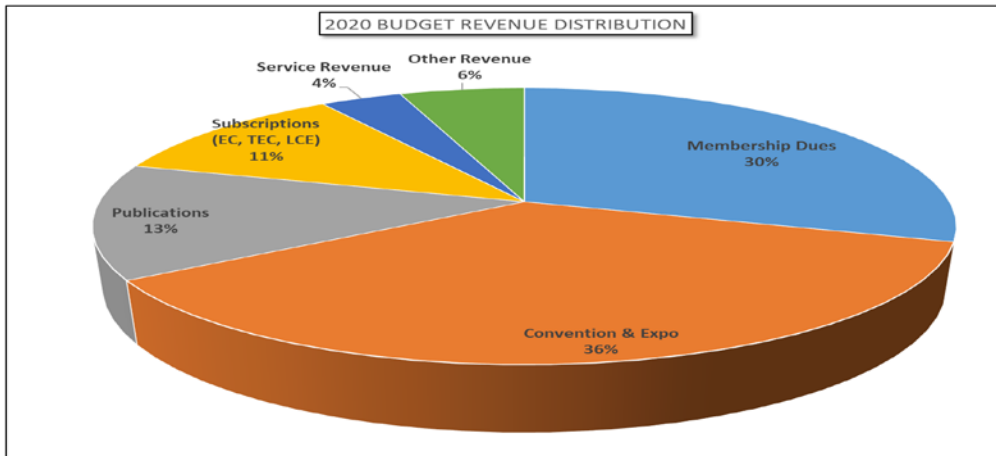
- Net Operating Loss = (\$380K)
- Year-to-Year Results (2018 – 2019)
 - Publication Revenue Up 23% / \$133K
 - Subscription Revenue (LCE, TEC, EC) Up 10% / \$56K

- Webinar Revenue Up 82% / \$34K
- Membership Dues Revenue Up 1% (accrual basis)
- Indy Convention / Expo Net Surplus Down 28% / \$361K

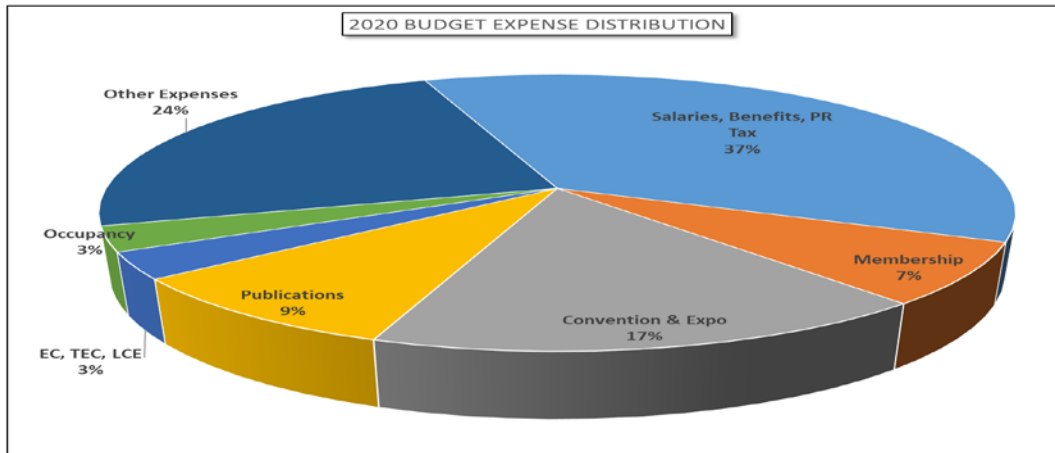
Operating Financial Trends



2019 Revenue Distribution



2019 Expense Distribution



Ratio / Peer Comparisons

	<u>CEC 2020 Budget</u>	<u>Peer Avg*</u>
Revenue Allocation		
Membership Dues	30%	35%
Convention & Meetings	36%	24%
Publications & Subscriptions	25%	12%
Grants & Contributions	1%	9%
Other Revenue	8%	20%
Revenue / Employee	\$342,041	\$152,726
Expense Allocation		
Salaries & Benefits	35%	38%
Occupancy	3%	4%

*Peer Data from ASAE Operating Ratio Report, 15th ed. (2016):

Professional Membership Associations; Revenue <= \$8 million; Staff Size >= 18

Total Organizations in Peer Group = 337

CEC staff + Part-Time Contractors = approx. 17 full-time staff

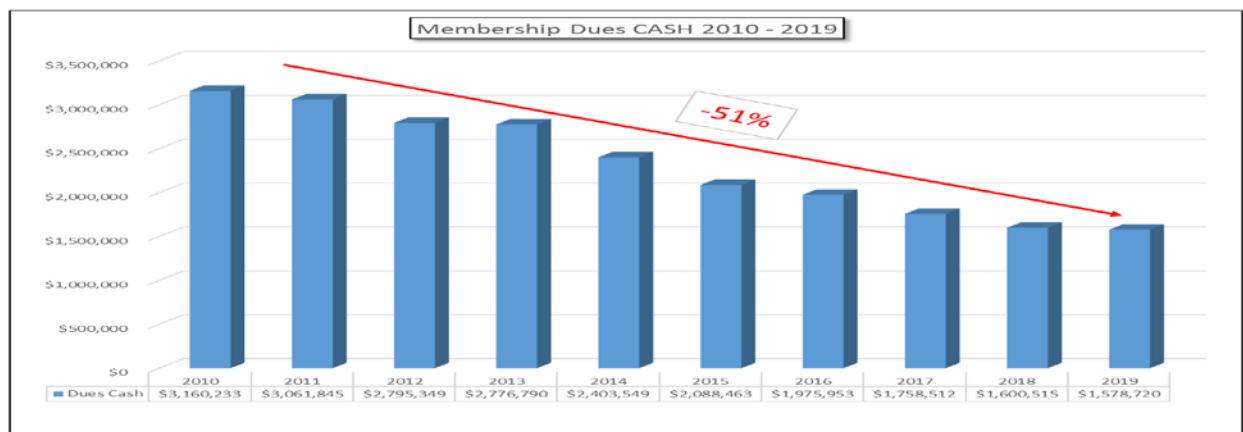
CEC Financial Condition

CEC has faced two major financial challenges over past several years:

- a 20-year lease (2010 – 2030) at \$1 million per year; and
- Declining Membership & Dues Revenue

The challenge of the 20-year lease has been resolved following protracted discussions with the owner. CEC was able to successfully negotiation early termination of the lease and entered into a new lease at a new location. Offices were relocated in August 2019. The new lease structure saves CEC \$6.5 million over seven years.

Challenge #2, declining membership dues, persists. Although Financials will show a small increase on an accrual basis from 2018 to 2019, cash collected declined 2.3%



2020 Major Initiatives

Savings from Lease Allows for Expansion:

- Hire a Professional Standards Director
- Hire a Digital Content Manager

Membership Expansion:

- Upgraded Website
- State Initiatives (State DOEs purchase a professional development package from CEC at a bulk discount and partners with CEC Unit to engage these new members.)
- Dues Structure Study (Early Career)
- Division Membership Marketing

3.4 Leadership Development Committee Report

To supplement the 2019 Annual Report posted prior to the meeting and [available here](#), Immediate Past President Mary Lynn Boscardin provided the following 2019 achievements:

Developed Board KSAs

With input from a workgroup of the board, the LDC develop KSAs for the board, and board members will complete an anonymous, online, self-assessment annually to indicate how well they believe they meet the newly-established Board KSAs. These two steps, in addition to the annual board needs assessment, are important in helping the LDC know what KSAs to look for in potential candidates, as differing strengths lead to a diversity of perspective

Developed Treasurer KSAs

The position of Treasurer requires a different and more specific set of skills related to financial experience and understanding than members-at-large of the Board of Directors. KSAs for the Treasurer were developed by the Leadership Development Committee, with input from the Finance and Audit Standing Committee.

Revised Treasurer Eligibility Criteria

The board approved a motion from the LDC to revise the eligibility criteria for Treasurer based upon the new KSAs. The previously required board service does not necessarily mean a person has those skills. As well, as the size of the board decreases, it will be increasing difficult to fill the positions that currently require board experience (President Elect, Treasurer, and LDC Chair).

Revised LDC Chair Eligibility Criteria

The board approved a motion from the LDC to add having served on the LDC for at least two year to the current requirement of having served on the board of directors. Members of the LDC are equally qualified, if not more so, than members of the Board of Directors, by being familiar with responsibilities, operations, processes, etc., of the committee. As well, as the size of the board decreases, it will be increasing difficult to fill the positions that currently require board experience (President Elect, Treasurer, and LDC Chair).

Increased Application "Equity" Across Professional Roles

The LDC developed guidance on application "statement length" to ensure equity between candidates who adhere to the word limit and those who do not. The guidance reads as follows:

The statement length indicates the expected length of responses. While it is acceptable to go slightly over or under, the general rule of thumb is to stay within 10% of the statement length. Responses that exceed more than 10% of the statement length will be scored only on the allowable excess.

The LDC has also recognized that the current application process focuses on experiences and achievements that are sometimes difficult for school-based personnel to achieve and, for that reason, they have a difficult time competing with other professional roles that have more flexibility and support for volunteer leadership. The LDC application was revised to be more equitable by requesting only the "Highest Degree Earned" in the education portion and limiting the resume for all candidates to three pages."

The LDC recommends that education and experience be reviewed with the individuals' time in the field and experiences in mind. Applicants should be evaluated based on an individual's growth potential and his/her ability to enhance the diversity, engagement, and potential of the organization. In addition, language should be added to the application to clarify that applicants' overall experiences and CEC participation are reviewed and that the LDC recognizes that some individuals' professional positions prevent them from extensive volunteer activities.

Honing Applications and Rubrics

As it continues to learn from research and experience, the LDC has spent significant time discussing revisions to the applications and rubrics for the board and LDC in order to better glean information that will help identify well-qualified candidates that will also be a good fit with the board.

Two-Step Application Process to Identify Soft Skills

The LDC developed and will implement a two-step application process for the LDC and board. The first part includes the written, on-line application. The second part will incorporate a recorded, web-based interview (e.g., GoToMeeting) of highly rated candidates from an initial slating, followed by a final slating based on review and rating of the interviews. Recordings will facilitate the ability of all members of the LDC (even if not directly participating in them) to view/listen to the interviews in order to better assess the soft skills and dispositions that come through in a one-on-one conversation.

Convention Volunteer Leaders Networking Sessions

In addition to the "Be A CEC Leader" session held last year and again this year, the LDC the year implemented two open networking opportunities, held in causal "meet and greet" settings, to provide opportunities for members interested in volunteer leadership to network with and ask questions of current CEC leaders.

CQI

The committee is continually evaluating outcomes to make improvements. It has deep and thoughtful discussions about what the critical systemic processes are that it is trying to improve. It researches options and ideas to broaden its shared perspective and inform its work.

Board members have affirmed that, since the LDC began its work, new directors are more knowledgeable, better skilled, contribute more collaboratively, resulting in a more productive environment the more efficiently contributes to the overall health of the organization. "

4.0 Small Group Discussion and Working Session: CEC's Research to Practice and Next Steps

On December 19, 2020, representatives received the following information and reports referenced about the small group discussion and working session portion of the meeting.

Since 2017, CEC has invested thousands of dollars, and hundreds of hours, conducting research to identify opportunities to better serve the unique needs and challenges of early career professionals to ensure relevance, impact and a strong future for both CEC and the field at-large.

The three studies, and associated costs, are:

1. The Professional Development Needs Assessment: CEC spent \$14K for the third-party consultant, survey design help and the report of the findings.
2. The State of the Special Education Profession (SOTP) CEC spent \$15K for the study, and the CEC Pioneers Division contributed \$5K. The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign distributed and tracked survey responses.
3. The Early Career Research Project; CEC spent approximately \$38K for the third-party consultant and survey/interview incentives.

The results of the first two have already been shared with units/divisions through various modes of communication, including unit/division online communities, the Representative Assembly, TEACHING Exceptional Children, and webinars. The Early Career Research Project had just wrapped up in September, and CEC had only recently received the final report and was conducting a feasibility assessment around recommendations.

These studies provide critical information to help units and divisions better support special educators, early career professionals in particular, to better understand their needs and pain-points, and to recruit, engage, and retain them in their organizations. For example, since the Professional Development Needs Assessment was completed, CEC's webinar registrations and revenue exceeded annual budget goals by more than 150% each year (2018 and 2019). It is important to note that CEC's PD strategy and planning was not based on the needs assessment alone; we also looked at historical trends in workshop attendance, past evaluation feedback from attendees, other current research from the field (SOTP, etc.) and interest level in various topic areas across CEC and the field at large.

Representatives were asked to review the attached RA 2020 Small Group Discussion & Working Session Background and share the findings with their fellow unit/division members in order to solicit input to respond to the following questions during the small group discussion and working session.

1. What activities or supports does your unit/division currently offer to early career professionals?
2. Based on what you have learned from these reports, what would you recommend your unit/division do to increase its value proposition in order to better recruit, engage and retain early career professionals?
3. Rank the top three ideas from the previous question that will be most realistically implemented.
4. What resources might your unit/division need or reallocate to successfully implement those initiatives?
5. Based on what you have learned from these reports, what would you recommend your unit/division do to address special education teacher recruitment, retention and attrition?
6. Rank the top three ideas from the previous question that will be most realistically implemented.

7. What resources might your unit/division need or reallocate to successfully implement those initiatives?
8. Is your unit/division interested in collaborating with other units and/or divisions? If so, which ones and on what?

Input will be shared back with units and divisions following an assessment by CEC.

5.0 New Business

There was no new business.

6.0 For the Good of the Order and Adjournment

Lesh thanked the representatives for their commitment their position on behalf of their unit/division and participation in the work done during the meeting. Without objection, the Representative Assembly Meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.