

**Anna Adl**

Special Education Program Support Teacher
& New Teacher Induction Coordinator,
School District of Cudahy (WI)
Franklin, Wisconsin, USA



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Oct. 3 – Oct. 19, 2022

Learn directly from Anna what inspired her to apply for the Board of Directors.

[Watch the video.](#) [Read the transcript.](#)

Biographical Information:

Anna has served as a special educator for the last 19 years and has taught every grade kindergarten through twelfth grade. She has a wide variety of educational experiences: charter, public, urban, suburban, and rural. As an educator, Anna has also served as mentor, lead mentor, and special education diagnostician. She currently serves as the special education program support teacher. She supports all special educators, para educators, and students at the elementary level. Some days she can be found reading over IEPs, other days collaborating with teachers around behavior supports, or supporting students in the cafeteria. In addition to being a special education program support teacher, Anna also serves as a new teacher induction coordinator. She runs orientation, her district's mentoring program, and oversees all of the professional development for roughly 50 teachers each school year.

Being a servant leader is core to her being. As such, she has served on two school PTA boards, the Wisconsin Division of Learning Disability Board of directors, the Wisconsin Council for Exceptional Children board of directors, and the CEC Leadership Development Committee and Leadership Development Program Subcommittee. Her favorite volunteer project thus far has been when she was able to make her friend Sydney's dream come true by having her speak at the Wisconsin Council for Exceptional Children's paraeducator conference in the Fall of 2019.

Beyond the education setting, Anna can be found at a variety of sport games cheering on any one of her four children. She loves to volunteer in their school and classrooms as well. During the summer months, the family can be found glamping across the state of Wisconsin. Every year they make sure to hit up the waterpark capital of the world, Wisconsin Dells.

Candidate Statements:

What makes CEC's mission meaningful to you? (Limit 150 words)

As an educator who joined CEC as a student, I find that several of the objectives within the mission stand out as meaningful. First, the idea that our mission is to cultivate, support, and empower educational professionals is of significance. As part of the local, state, and national organization, I would not be where I am today without the foresight, guidance, and influence of those members that believed and fostered me to be a leader. Secondly, my own core values of collaboration, kindness, and equity are echoed within the mission of CEC. As a volunteer leader, I make conscious decisions to give my time and energy to

organizations that are closely aligned to my own values. Lastly, and in my opinion the best part of CEC are the networks, partnerships, and communities. Living out the mission of CEC has allowed me to build lifelong friendships within the education field.

Provide three specific examples of how your leadership experiences, including professional and volunteer, have had an impact on fostering change or moving an organization/entity forward. (Limit 300 words)

As a servant leader, I strive to change in every organization I am involved in. In May of last year, I led a group of educators to apply for the Wisconsin School Based Mental Health grant. Over the grant cycle, our district will be awarded \$76,000 to develop a mental health pathway. The goal of the grant is to assure that all students receive timely mental health support so that they can succeed in school.

As a Wisconsin Council for Exceptional Children treasurer, I aim to impact our educators and students within Wisconsin. I have created a system by which our unit awards a \$500 teacher grant to a member each year. I developed the application process, application form, and award letters that are used each year. We have awarded grants to classrooms to implement cooking classes, a coffee business within school districts and nonprofit organizations in the state of Wisconsin.

As a program support teacher, my leadership skills impact our educators and staff on a daily basis. Throughout the course of the 2021-2022 school year, I have led a group of special educators through the state's special education procedural compliance. As a group, we reviewed IEPs and evaluations for state compliance, developed corrective action plans, and presented professional development around areas of needed growth.

With my personal core values of collaboration, equity, and kindness at the heart of my work, it would seem natural that I would start a teacher lead equity team for the School District of Cudahy. Over the course of the last two school years, a group of 22 educators have met monthly to discuss equity within our district. We have analyzed data, developed goals, and worked toward creating equitable systems that guarantee that everyone within our district knows their value.

Describe an idea you have to help CEC achieve one of the strategic plan goals, and explain how your knowledge, skills, and expertise will be applied to this idea. (Limit 250 words)

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 79% of public-school teachers are white. The classroom leaders in our nation do not reflect the diversity represented within our student body. As an educator embedded in a public school, I see firsthand how the lack of educator diversity impacts our students. While professional development on culturally responsive education, equity, and inclusion can and does make surface level change within educational systems it is simply that surface level. In order to fulfill the goal of developing and support an effective and diverse workforce of special educational professionals, our organization must be engaged with our future workforce.

While serving on my district's equity team, we have had conversations regarding the diversity of our staff members. While we desire to have a staff that reflects the same diversity as our student body, we do not have diverse applicants applying to our school district. The one idea that has resonated with our organization is that we need to develop our own students to be the future diverse educators.

I believe the CEC could achieve the aforementioned goal by partnering with high school organizations such as Best Buddies, Educators Rising, and Key Club to promote the special education career pathway. Each of these organizations is dedicated to improving the lives of students and promoting leadership. By

partnering with high school organizations, CEC has the potential to impact a future generation by providing both guidance and support as to what a special educator career entails.

What methods do you suggest would assist CEC to recruit more diverse members into volunteer and leadership positions, especially within units and divisions? (Limit 250 words)

When looking at the problem identified, I see several key stakeholders identified. I see CEC at the “motherhood” who needs to guide the units and divisions with strategies, resources, and time to identify diversity measures within units and divisions. I also see the unit and division leaders as partners in this work.

As a previous LDC member, I have a strong understanding of diversity through the CEC lens. I understand that CEC includes 14 different tenets within the definition of diversity. However, I know for certain other unit and division leaders have not taken a closer look at CECs definition of diversity. With diversity mentioned numerous times within the 2022-2026 strategic plan, I would see it worthwhile for unit and division leaders who attend Leadership Institute to review CECs unique definition of diversity.

Once leaders have a clear understanding of diversity, I would like to see CEC provide a template within which units and divisions can identify the diversity markers within their own units and divisions. Only by understanding the makeup of units or division members, can they identify areas of growth in both leadership and overall membership. Once areas of growth are noted division and units could develop goals related to diverse membership and leaders that could be measured over time. Time should be allotted at Leadership Institute to review membership data and have collaborative conversations across the organization. Membership data is often looked at from a numerical standpoint, not a diversity lens.

Professional Position and Education:

Primary Professional Position:

Special Education Program Support Teacher & New Teacher Induction Coordinator, School District of Cudahy

Highest Degree:

M.S., Special Education, Minnesota State, Mankato, 2005

CEC Membership Information:

Years of CEC Membership: 16 years

Division Membership(s): Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL)

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