

**Concetta Lewis**

Assistant Superintendent of Special  
Populations, Diversity, Equity, &  
Inclusion

Rochester (MI) Community Schools  
Southfield, Michigan, USA



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**Oct. 3 – Oct. 19, 2022**

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

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

**Biographical Information:**

Concetta Lewis has over twenty-five years of experience in PreK-12 education including assignments as a special education teacher, general education teacher, principal, and special education administrator in schools located in southeastern Michigan. Concetta is Vice-President of the Michigan Council for Administrators of Special Education (CASE)/the Michigan Association of Administrators of Special Education (MAASE), a Past President of the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children (MCEC) and presently serves as a member of the MCEC Legislative Action and Advocacy Committee.

Concetta is currently the Assistant Superintendent of Special Populations, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion with Rochester Community Schools in Oakland County Michigan, and previously served as Executive Director of Student Intervention & Support Services with Ann Arbor Public Schools. Concetta currently serves on the CASE Membership Committee and has served on the CEC Policy Steering Committee. Concetta has been awarded national fellowships for outstanding leadership and advocacy from America Achieves, Ford's Theatre, and the NEA. Concetta earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Michigan State University, a Master of Science in Administration from Central Michigan University, and an Educational Specialist degree from Saginaw Valley State University.

Concetta loves all genres of music, enjoys traveling, and can be found during the spring summer, and fall sitting on her patio reading a book, while admiring nature, yet she has a strong fear of bugs of any size.

**Candidate Statements:****What makes CEC's mission meaningful to you? (Limit 150 words)**

I appreciate the fact that we are considering how we can empower and support the many components of helping to facilitate positive outcomes for diverse groups of students across a continuum of abilities. CEC is not just about serving and supporting any one group of students, we are an organization that truly advocates for ALL.

Personally, I have always believed in advocating for equity and justice for ALL and understand that the most effective advocates are those who value the importance of partnering with others to increase the

ability of a group or individual to make an impact on change. I love how groups from different states and regions of the world with often different political views and affiliations come together to ensure that every child has the best opportunity possible to learn, grow, and thrive in life.

**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 an America Achieves National Teacher Fellow (2012 – 2016) I helped found the Michigan Educator Voice Fellowship in 2014. The fellowship provided training and opportunities for 50 Michigan educators to understand how to advocate for change and engage with policymakers at the local, state, and national levels. Several of the fellows have gone on to run for elected office and continue to engage with policymakers at the local, state, and national levels.

In addition, to my role as a Fellow for the Michigan fellowship, I continue to advocate for increased funding and training for ALL educators to ensure the best outcomes for students with disabilities. In addition, to writing op-eds, I regularly engage with education policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels. I was recently selected to serve on an advisory committee for State Representative Kyra Harris Bolden.

Additional examples of my leadership include being selected from hundreds of past participants in the US Department of Education's "Teach to Lead" initiative to share my team's idea at a national conference as part of a presentation with Former US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan as well as being asked to present at a US Congressional Briefing on the impact of lead poisoning and student achievement. During my presidency term with the Michigan Council for Exceptional Children, I helped to increase volunteer engagement through the implementation of a volunteer application process for serving on MCEC committees and increased opportunities for volunteer engagement. In addition, I made recommendations to the board of directors to utilize event management software.

**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)**

In today's educational environments most students who are eligible for special education receive most of their instructional support in a general education classroom from a general education teacher. It is important for CEC to be recognized globally as a leading organization in the field of special education. I would help CEC partner with organizations such as the NEA, AFT, AASA, ASCD, NASSP, NAESP, NASP, NASW etc. to help ALL educators understand the value of investing in CEC membership, supporting advocacy programs, and taking advantage of professional learning opportunities offered through CEC.

As a National fellow with America Achieves, I have been able to develop relationships with educators involved in every spectrum of teaching and learning from nearly every state in the United States. In addition, I have received specialized training and coaching on how to partner with other organizations for the purpose of advocacy and with elected officials and policymakers.

With critical shortages being at their highest in the history of special education and those shortages having an impact on school budgets as a whole, it is important that we take the lead in bringing the collective voice to those who need to make the changes in education policy and funding models. I look forward to helping CEC facilitate the voice for change in special education policy and funding of ALL educators.

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)

#### Professional Position and Education:

##### Primary Professional Position:

Assistant Superintendent of Special Populations, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion  
Rochester Community Schools, Michigan

##### Highest Degree:

Ed.S., Educational Leadership (Central Office Leadership and Special Education Directorship)  
Saginaw Valley State University, 2013

#### CEC Membership Information:

Years of CEC Membership: 11.5 years

##### Division Membership(s):

Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)  
CEC Pioneers Division (CEC-PD)  
Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL)

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