

Welcome to *Board Brief*, a summary of recent decisions and actions from the CEC Board of Directors. The following are key outcomes from online votes in August and the November 5-6, 2022, Board of Directors meeting. Many of these decisions/actions help to advance CEC's [Mission and Strategic Plan goals](#).

CEC's MISSION:

Cultivating, supporting, and empowering education professionals who work with individuals with disabilities.

Goal 1: Develop and support an effective and diverse workforce of special education professionals.

Goal 2: Intentionally embed diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility within CEC.

Goal 3: Increase the impact of CEC's policy agenda for education professionals and for individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents.

Goal 4: Establish CEC as a globally recognized leader in the field of special education.

The **Emerging Special Educators of Color Leadership Travel Award (Goals 1 and 2)**, approved for a second year, will provide \$500 for up to 30 CEC member recipient teachers and early career professionals (first 7 years in role) from Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) backgrounds to support travel to CEC's annual Convention & Expo.

Special opportunities for networking and mentoring will be provided at the in-person convention. Also, the award is hoped to increase engagement of culturally diverse members and provide members in the profession with opportunities to connect with state/provincial units and special interest divisions, which has the potential to retain recipients as long-term members of CEC. [Applications](#) will remain open until November 30th.

The new **Racial Justice Grant (Goals 1 and 2)**, open to CEC members, will encourage and support work focus on addressing the issues related to the ongoing racial disparities in educational experiences, opportunities, and outcomes for students with disabilities from minoritized racial groups.

The grant supports ongoing and new implementation of initiatives to challenge and foster a culture of racial equity at the intersection of disability in educational settings. Preference will be given to practitioners for projects demonstrating direct application to individuals in our schools. Three awards of up to \$1000 will support active engagement in initiatives with practitioners, children/youth, families, or other stakeholders in support of students with disabilities.

Further information will soon be available on [CEC's website](#).

A new **Student Teacher Success Network (Goals 1)** will be a program designed to support student teachers working in special education, and develop CEC membership, by creating a semester-long program of support (resources, training, mentoring) for students during their semester(s) of student teaching. As part of the support, pre-service teachers will receive free CEC membership (and liability insurance for their practicum) during the six months of their student teaching. More information will be released in December.

A new **Teacher Recruitment/Resource Campaign (Goal 1)** will be developed to recruit new teachers to the field of special education.

This program will roll out in two phases:

- 1) Develop a resource website that showcases the positive stories from the field and proactively provides the information needed to consider a career in special education.
- 2) Launch multiple campaigns showcasing those stories that direct individuals back to the resource website (YouTube, social media, press coverage, virtual career fairs, localized campaigns by chapter/unit, etc.).

CEC President Danielle will be appointing an advisory workgroup in the coming weeks to support both the Student Teacher Support Network and the Teacher Recruitment/Resource Campaign

CEC Leadership

Jennifer Lesh, Ph.D., was appointed as **CEC Treasurer** for a three-year term (Jan. 1, 2023-Dec. 31, 2025).

Dee Berlinghoff, Ph.D., was appointed as **Chair of the Professional Standards and Practice Committee** for a three-year term (Jan. 1, 2023-Dec. 31, 2025). Dr. Berlinghoff has been a member of the [Professional Standards and Practice Committee](#) since 2020; a program reviewer since 2016; co-chair for CEC's Standards Development Workgroup, which revised the Initial Practice Based Professional Preparation Standards for Special Educators; and co-author of the new [Practice-Based Standards for the Preparation of Special Educators](#), a complete update to the earlier *What Every Special Educator Must Know: Professional Ethics & Standards*.

Theresa Garfield, Ed.D., was appointed as **CEC Convention Program Advisory Committee Co-Chair** for the [2024 and 2025 conventions](#). Dr. Garfield brings deep and multi-faceted experience to the position with her roles in special education as a teacher, principal, professor, Acting Director of Graduate Studies, etc., as well as her history as an CEC volunteer leader in the Professional Standards development processes, chair of the [Professional Standards and Practices Committee](#), a peer reviewer, and as a frequent presenter at CEC Conventions.

A proposal to create **Legacy Proclamations and an annual public "In Memoriam" (Goal 4)** proposal, submitted by the [Pioneers Division](#), was approved. Their impetus was to resurrect similar activities previously carried out by CEC staff to elevate and promote the work of education professionals who work with individuals with disabilities and to showcase and celebrate the diversity and expertise of CEC members.

The **CEC Pioneers Division Name Change Request** was approved, and it will now be known as the **CEC Division for Leaders and Legacy (CEC-DLL)**.

The [Pioneers Division's](#) Board has been considering a name change since June 2021, when a member first brought to their attention the many hurtful connotation of the term "pioneers." The Board studied the issue and found a number of convincing arguments that the name was not representative to their commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion, while the new name is more future facing, less stigmatizing, and may appeal to a broader membership.

The board polled their members and decided to move forward exploring the issue. An ad hoc committee studied suggestions from the survey to provide options that would communicate the division's new mission. Suggestions from the committee were studied by the board. Options were put to an advisory vote by the membership.

Operational Items

A new **Executive Director Succession Plan** was created to address the short- or long-term absence of the executive director. It should be reviewed by the executive committee and executive director each fall and re-approved by the Board if changes are made.

The **2023 Program Plan and Budget** was approved. It forecasts a positive surplus for the fourth consecutive year. Total revenue is budgeted to increase by \$253K, or 4% over 2022 projections.

The board approved the following **Debt Reduction and Reserves Contribution Policy**, as recommended by the Finance and Audit Standing Committee (FASC) to ensure the future financial stability of CEC.

CEC will contribute funds annually to reduce outstanding debt or increase its reserves. Under this policy, to contribute funds, CEC must have a net operating surplus of at least \$100,000 and have net assets of at least \$100,000 at prior year-end. Debt reduction will supersede reserves contributions until CEC is debt-free. If debt-free, CEC will contribute to reserves in accordance with CEC's Investment Policy.

Questions? Contact Executive Director [Chad Rummel](#).