

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) 2027-2028 Convention Program Co-Chairs Call for Applications

Deadline for Applications: October 31, 2025

This is YOUR Leadership Opportunity!

The Council for Exceptional Children seeks two Program Co-Chairs for the 2027 (Columbus, OH) and the 2028 (Chicago, IL) Convention and Expo, to lead the Convention Program Advisory Committee (PAC). The Convention Program Co-Chairs will work with the current co-chairs to play a pivotal leadership role in the success of CEC's annual convention, the largest and most comprehensive professional development event in the field of special education. The term begins March 2026 through March 2028.

CEC is seeking applications for the Convention Program Co-Chairs for the two positions (**one special education professional working in higher education and one special education professional representing those working with individuals' birth-Grade 12**). The Co-Chairs along with representatives from CEC's Divisions and individuals representing various topics and areas of expertise comprise the Program Advisory Committee and collectively select the sessions that comprise the conventions learning program.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Convention Program Chairs will collaborate with CEC divisions, units, staff, and the field. The Chairs will preside over program planning process, the development and selection of the program components and serve as program spokesperson, as necessary. Specific responsibilities include:

- Soliciting input from CEC leadership, divisions, state and provincial units, and the field to determine content areas of high interest to the profession, identify emerging areas of research and/or importance and consider demographic trends and their effect on schools and the profession.
- In collaboration with the Program Advisory Committee, develop a comprehensive, focused, in-depth, and balanced professional learning program reflecting the current needs in the field of special education.
- Identifying content gaps and soliciting sessions, as needed, to ensure a rich program reflective of new and current directions in special education, research, evidence-based practices, and public policy.
- Collaborating with the Program Advisory Committee, CEC units and staff to recommend convention keynote speakers. (All invitations and negotiations will be conducted by CEC staff.)

- Overseeing the proposal review and selection process to ensure the program is diversified and of the highest quality.
- Facilitating continuous quality program improvement through innovation, creativity, and evaluation.
- Representing and promoting the program during the annual convention and expo and other professional meetings, as requested throughout the Chairs' term of service.
- Collaborating with CEC staff and reporting to the Board of Directors on the direction and status of program planning, as needed.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Broad knowledge of the professional development needs of teachers, administrators, teacher educators, researchers, and others concerned with the education of children and youth with exceptionalities.
- Knowledge of trends and issues in the field with proven ability to engage and collaborate with a variety of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds representing distinct perspectives.
- CEC member in good standing.
- Strong interpersonal skills: demonstrated ability to communicate and collaborate effectively with others.
- Demonstrated organizational and management skills; ability to commit on average 1-2 hours per month to the position.
- Previous experience with the CEC program or another professional development planning is preferred.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONVENTION WEEK. The Program Chairs will introduce the opening keynote speaker, host the First Timers' session, and attend and monitor Program Chair featured sessions throughout the week.

POST CONVENTION. Program Chairs will submit a report offering convention feedback and recommendations for future conventions to the CEC professional development staff. The report is due 45 days following the convention.

LODGING, TRAVEL, AND REGISTRATION. CEC provides compensation for travel to and from the convention and complimentary lodging and registration for the dates of the 2026 and 2027 CEC conventions.

SELECTION PROCESS. CEC staff, along with selected reviewers, will review applications and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

APPLICATIONS. Special note: Program discussions around the 2027 Convention and Expo programming will begin in March 2026. More information will be sent to the Program Advisory Committee ahead of the initial meeting.

CEC members who wish to be considered should submit:

1. Letter of intent (maximum 400 words)
2. Response to the following (maximum 150 words each):
 - A statement of the extent of the applicant's participation in previous CEC conventions or other professional development events.
 - A statement of the applicant's assessment of the most critical issues and trends affecting special education over the next 3 years and how these could be addressed through the convention program.
 - A statement of how the convention program (program content, formats, presenters), should advance diversity, equity, and professional practice.
 - A statement addressing ideas and suggestions on attracting teacher participation and overall attendance.
3. Curriculum vita is required for those currently employed in higher education; a resume or one-page outline of professional experience and education is required for those applying to represent those working with individuals' birth-grade 12.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: October 31, 2025

Email your response to:

CEC Professional Development Team

(E-mail) convention@exceptionalchildren.org