

COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

CEC's Principles and Guidelines for Developing Position Statements (Approved by the Board of Directors July 2020)

The Council for Exceptional Children is a professional association of educators dedicated to advancing the success of children with exceptionalities. We accomplish our mission through advocacy, standards, and professional development.

The organization has a long history as a leader in advocating on behalf of children and young adults with exceptionalities for the human and fiscal resources necessary to enable each individual to attain their highest level of education and employment and life success.

CEC's influence in shaping the policies that support publicly funded education, special education and early intervention is well recognized and valued by legislators and other policy makers as well as other professional organizations.

a. Principles

The following principles have been adopted as a guide for developing policy and advocacy priorities. Policy priorities should be reviewed at least annually to determine status and to recommend revisions and replace the prior two-year Public Policy Agenda.

Guided by the following principles, CEC strives to meet the needs of infants, toddlers, children, and young adults with exceptionalities by:

1. Protecting and supporting the core principles of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Specifically,
 - a. ensuring that all children with disabilities are afforded a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living;
 - b. that the rights of children with disabilities and parents of such children are protected;
 - c. that educators and parents have access to the necessary tools to improve educational results for children and young adults with disabilities by supporting system-wide improvement activities; coordinated research and personnel preparation; coordinated technical assistance, dissemination of evidence-based research and practices, and support; and
 - d. that states and local school districts receive the resources necessary to provide for the education of children and young adults with disabilities as well as a system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers who would be at risk of having substantial developmental delay and their families.

2. Protecting and expanding policies and programs that are outside the scope of the IDEA but support students with exceptionalities.
3. Strengthening the professions that provide the specialized interventions, education and services to infants, toddlers, children and young adults with exceptionalities, including teachers, administrators, early interventionists and other instructional staff through high quality preparation and professional learning opportunities focused on the needs of all learners.
4. Leading efforts to make certain that all public schools, early education settings and service providers receive the funding necessary to ensure that infants, toddlers, children, and young adults with exceptionalities are provided access to the materials, devices, and service providers that allow them to meet the highest possible learning outcomes and quality of life that respects their dignity, culture, language, and background.
5. Advocating and supporting policies that promote safe, inclusive, and supportive schools where children and youth with exceptionalities have positive learning environments.

b. Procedures

1. The Policy Steering Committee will be charged by the Board of Directors to develop policy or position statements. A policy or position statement may also result from a report or set of recommendations from the Policy Steering Committee.
2. The Board of Directors will charge the Policy Steering Committee to seek input in developing a draft policy or position statement from CEC units and members with the most expertise in the relevant topic or area including those units that are likely to be impacted by the policy or position statement.
3. The Policy Steering Committee may choose to submit for review a draft policy or position statement to selected others, including non-CEC members.
4. A final draft of the policy or position statement must include a statement regarding what information including peer input and review considered by the Policy Steering Committee in development.
5. The draft policy or position statement will be recommended to the Board of Directors in the form of a Motion.
6. The Board of Directors will take action to consider adoption of the policy or position statement.
7. If adopted, the policy or position statement will be disseminated to CEC leadership, units, and the general membership using an official CEC publication or other means of communication.
8. The policy or position statement will be used by CEC in all discussion and action relevant to the issue(s) addressed.