



CEC 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION Candidate Biography

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Kenyon Andrews, Ed.D., is an exceptional needs specialist, international researcher, author, adjunct instructor, and educational leader who aligns educational policies with practical classroom instruction. He implements inclusive pedagogy frameworks to establish equitable support systems for students with multidimensional sociocultural identities.

Dr. Andrews holds an Educational Doctorate in Transformational School Leadership from Barry University, a Master of Science in Developmental and Child Psychology, and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the Southern New Hampshire University.

Dr. Andrews' prior clinical and instructional experience includes serving as a Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Specialist, Literacy Interventionist, Inclusive Pedagogy Educator, and Applied Behavior Specialist across multi-state school districts. Dr. Andrews also brings valuable organizational insight from seven years spent as an instructional design and corporate educator prior to his full transition into EC-12 education.

Dr. Andrews directs policy and advocacy initiatives through his service on the Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) Policy Steering Committee, the Information & Artificial Intelligence Teacher Advisory Council, and the Teacher Advisory Board. He also maintains multi-year service commitments to local Economic Development and Health & Wellness Committees. Dr. Andrews maintains active memberships in the Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD), the Division for Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL), and the Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES).

Recognized globally for his structural impact on the profession, Dr. Andrews is a 2025 CEC Special Education Rising Star, NEA Global Learning Fellow alumni, Special Education Legislative Summit (SELS) scholarship recipient and state leader, Teach Plus fellow, student research award from DDEL,

Kenyon Andrews, Ed.D



**Exceptional Needs Specialist
Somerset Academy
Adjunct Faculty Instructor
University of the People**

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION (cont'd)

2026 Top 50 Educators, and an honored listee from Marquis Who's Who.

Dr. Andrews enjoys traveling and spending time with his family, expanding his special education community, writing, and is a karaoke connoisseur.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

Why do you want to run for the CEC Board of Directors and what is a goal that you have for the organization?

In my daily work, I see exactly where our special education systems succeed, and where they miss the mark. We have mastered the art of procedural compliance and physical access, but we still struggle to create genuine, cultural belonging.

I am running for the CEC Board of Directors because I believe our organization is uniquely positioned to bridge that gap. The CEC has always been my professional home, a space that continually sharpens my advocacy for diverse and intersectional learners. Now, I want to step into a governance role to ensure our national policies actually reflect the lived realities of the students and families we serve.

My primary goal for the CEC is to make culturally sustaining practices the standard, not the exception. I want to help shift our field from a mindset of compliance to an "empathy imperative." Specifically, I want to advance initiatives that give educators the practical tools to recognize and mobilize a family's cultural wealth as a primary asset in the IEP process, rather than viewing differences as deficits.

By leading this charge at the board level, the CEC can empower a new generation of practitioners to dismantle the systemic barriers in our schools, ensuring every exceptional child isn't just given a seat at the table, but is fundamentally valued within the room.

What leadership experiences within CEC (student and/or local chapter, state/provincial unit, special interest divisions or state/provincial subdivision, CEC international committee/workgroup) have prepared you to lead in this capacity?

There is a distinct difference between working in the system and working on the system. My journey within CEC has been a deliberate progression from frontline advocacy to macro-level governance, preparing me to help design the strategic blueprint for our organization's future.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (cont'd)

Serving on the CEC Policy Steering Committee fundamentally shifted my leadership lens. In that capacity, the focus wasn't on managing day-to-day operations, but on analyzing how proposed legislative frameworks would impact our most marginalized learners nationwide. It required stepping back, synthesizing diverse stakeholder perspectives, and helping steer CEC's collective advocacy posture at the highest level.

Similarly, my strategic involvement with the DDEL, including my candidacy for Vice President, challenged me to ask critical governance questions. I had to look beyond immediate initiatives and ask: How do we structurally embed culturally sustaining practices into the very fabric of CEC's long-term objectives? Furthermore, my ongoing collaboration with the DISES has expanded my capacity to govern with a global, intersectional perspective.

While I deeply value the operational work of building equitable MTSS frameworks in my daily practice, I understand the Board's mandate is different. The Board exists to secure and elevate CEC's future. I am fully prepared to leverage my committee and division experiences to govern collaboratively, ensuring our strategic direction dismantles systemic barriers and cements CEC as the definitive voice for transformational, inclusive education.

Board members must engage in strategic thinking, advocacy, and collective decision-making. Describe a time you influenced change related to special education, equity, or inclusion. What was your role, and what did you learn from the experience?

As an MTSS Specialist, I frequently sat in intervention meetings where the default question was, "How do we fix this student's behavior?" We were legally compliant, but we were fundamentally missing the mark. Our systems were unintentionally penalizing diverse students for cultural differences, pushing them toward special education referrals rather than adapting our own classrooms.

I knew a top-down mandate wouldn't change hearts or daily habits. So, my role shifted from an intervention coordinator to a cultural translator. I brought general educators, special education staff, and families to the same table to reshape our approach. Instead of focusing on deficits, we started asking a relatable, human-centered question: "How can we modify our teaching to actually value and use this student's cultural background as a strength?"

We created a simple framework that required teams to evaluate a student's "cultural capital" before ever discussing a special education referral. The shift was incredible. By humanizing the process, we didn't just reduce biased referrals; we created classrooms where students finally felt they truly belonged.

CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (cont'd)

This experience taught me that real, lasting change doesn't happen just because a new policy is written. It happens when you build shared consensus. You have to give educators both the perspective to see systemic bias and the practical, everyday tools to dismantle it. That is the collaborative, grounded approach to strategic decision-making and advocacy I am eager to bring to the CEC Board.

CEC is committed to diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility. Discuss your commitment to DEIA.

For me, DEIA isn't a separate initiative or a box to check—it is the very lens through which I view education. My commitment to DEIA is rooted in a simple but profound belief: true inclusion requires moving beyond mere legal compliance and physical access, toward cultivating deep, unapologetic belonging.

In my daily practice designing MTSS and researching the intersectional realities of exceptional Black youth, I see the friction between well-intentioned policies and systemic barriers. Too often, our traditional systems view cultural differences as deficits to be remediated. My work centers on flipping that script. I advocate for an "empathy imperative," where we actively recognize and mobilize the cultural capital of diverse families as a vital asset in our instructional design.

Committing to DEIA means asking the hard questions in the room. It means transforming IEP meetings from procedural hurdles into collaborative spaces that validate a student's lived experience. It means ensuring that when we say "all students," we are actively dismantling the historical biases that have disproportionately marginalized culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

I am deeply aligned with CEC's core values because I believe our field must lead this charge. My commitment is to ensure that our governance, advocacy, and daily practices don't just open the door for exceptional children, but actively celebrate and sustain the multidimensional identities they bring to the table.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Years of CEC Membership: 3

Division Membership(s):

Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD)

Division for Culturally & Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL)

Division of International Special Education & Services (DISES)