



## CEC 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTION Candidate Biography

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Allison “Paige” Pigott-Brown’s commitment to exceptional learners began in childhood, shaped by a family member with a significant cognitive disability. Seeing firsthand the impact of limited resources on individuals and families sparked a lifelong passion for advocacy, equity, and meaningful opportunities for every learner.

A 1997 graduate of Mississippi State University and a 2018 graduate of William Carey University with a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership, Paige brings 25 years of special education experience across disabilities and the full continuum of services in both rural and urban settings at local and state levels.

Her leadership experience includes service with the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Special Education, as a compliance monitor and Instructional Support Specialist. In these roles, she provided statewide professional learning, supported implementation of the Alternate Diploma, and contributed to Mississippi’s Alternate Academic Achievement Standards.

Paige has served eight years as a Special Services Director, including leadership for the Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. She currently serves as Special Services Director for North Pike School District, overseeing Special Education, Gifted Education, Section 504, foster care placed students, and district data.

Paige is a sought-after trainer in structured teaching and center-based instruction for students with significant cognitive and communication needs. Her training emphasizes individualized schedules and intentional classroom structures that help students understand where they should be, what they will be doing, and how long they will be doing it. She advocates for high-quality, evidence-based instruction and minimum standards for classrooms serving these students.

**Paige Pigott, M.Ed.**



**Special Services Director  
North Pike School District  
Summit, Mississippi**

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION (cont'd)

A dedicated CEC leader, Paige has served as Mississippi CEC Vice President, President-Elect/Conference Planner, and President. She is committed to strengthening educators, advancing effective practices, and ensuring exceptional learners are not simply included, but empowered to thrive.

## 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?**

For twenty-five years, my professional work has focused on improving educational outcomes for students with disabilities. I have served in multiple roles across the special education continuum—including teacher, behavioral interventionist, district special services director, state agency leader, and Mississippi CEC President. These experiences have provided me with comprehensive understanding of challenges educators face when striving to deliver high-quality services to exceptional learners.

I am seeking to serve on the CEC BOD because I believe CEC plays a critical role in shaping national conversations about the education of students with disabilities. One goal I would champion is the development of clearer national minimum expectations for classrooms serving students with significant disabilities. Across the country, these programs often vary widely in structure, staffing, training, and instructional expectations. Establishing stronger national guidance could help ensure that students with the most intensive needs have access to consistent and high-quality learning.

With my urban and rural experiences I have navigated the realities of implementing programs in districts with vastly different resources. My experience at district and state levels has also given me a strong understanding of funding limitations, policy considerations, and practical challenges leaders face when translating policy into practice. I have also contributed to statewide initiatives that strengthened guidance and instructional supports for students with disabilities.

CEC has long been a trusted voice for exceptional children and professionals who serve them. I would be honored to contribute my leadership experience and systems-level perspective to advance that mission and strengthen outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

**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?**

My leadership within the Mississippi Council for Exceptional Children has prepared me to serve

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (cont'd)

effectively at the national level. I have served in multiple leadership roles within our state unit, including Vice President, President-Elect, President, and currently Past President. Progressing through these positions provided me with a comprehensive understanding of organizational governance, strategic planning, and the responsibility of advancing CEC's mission.

During my presidency, I served as Conference Planner for the September 2024 Mississippi CEC State Conference. The event delivered high-quality professional learning opportunities for special educators while strengthening the financial stability of our state unit. The conference was financially successful, enabling us to continue offering annual professional development and provide teacher grants that directly support educators serving students with disabilities.

I also focused on strengthening the organization's operational foundation. I established Mississippi CEC's first board travel policy, procedures, and travel budget, creating a transparent and sustainable structure for board members to participate in activities that support educators and students with disabilities and grow our supports. As I transitioned leadership, I ensured the next conference planner inherited a financially sound budget and established systems to sustain future growth. These experiences have prepared me to contribute meaningful leadership and practical perspective at the national level.

**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?**

While serving as an Instructional Support Specialist with the Mississippi Department of Education, I led the development and implementation of Mississippi's Alternate Diploma option for students with significant cognitive disabilities. In this role, I strategically coordinated cross-agency collaboration to design a K-12 curriculum aligned to the state's college- and career-ready standards while ensuring accessibility for students with the most significant learning needs.

This initiative required navigating policy, instructional design, and stakeholder perspectives. I facilitated collaboration among state leaders, curriculum specialists, and educators across Mississippi to ensure the diploma pathway balanced high expectations with meaningful access for students. I also led statewide professional learning to support implementation and build educator capacity to deliver rigorous instruction aligned to the new standards.

Through these engagements, I worked directly with hundreds of educators serving students with significant disabilities. Their perspectives revealed substantial disparities in expectations, instructional access, and opportunities for these students across districts. This insight strengthened my advocacy for clearer statewide guidance and stronger instructional supports to promote equity.

## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS (cont'd)

This experience reinforced that systemic change requires both strategic leadership and collective decision-making. I learned that policy alone does not shift outcomes—educators must be supported with the vision, tools, and expectations necessary to ensure students with significant disabilities have access to high-quality learning and meaningful postsecondary opportunities.

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

My commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility is not just professional—it is deeply personal. First my eclectic and diverse family has taught me that true strength lies in varied perspectives. My first degree in sociology assist me daily in understanding differences in cultures and norms. As a person with a hearing impairment and auditory processing disorder, and a parent to children with disabilities, I have lived experience navigating systems that are not always designed for everyone. This has fueled my passion for ensuring equity, advocating for full access, and fostering inclusive environments where accessibility is treated as a fundamental human right, not an afterthought. I am dedicated to turning this lived experience into active advocacy, ensuring that marginalized voices are not only heard but centered in all spaces I operate within.

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

**Years of CEC Membership:** 7

**Division Membership(s):**

Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)