

membership
relationships leadership
POLICY practice
preparation teaching and learning resources
COLLABORATION
community
inform
evidence-based
ALLIANCES

CEC | STRATEGIC PLAN | 2012-2014

advocacy

diversity GRASSROOTS
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



Council for
Exceptional
Children

CEC Values:

- Dignity and worth of all individuals
- Diversity and inclusiveness
- Advocacy and social justice
- Professional excellence, integrity, and accountability
- Full participation in society
- Effective individualized education
- Family engagement
- Collaboration and community
- Responsibility to members

Mission

The Council for Exceptional Children is an international community of professionals who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. CEC's mission is to improve, through excellence and advocacy, the education and quality of life for children and youth with exceptionalities and to enhance engagement of their families.

CEC— Strategic Direction

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of children and youth with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets standards for high-quality professional preparation and practice, provides professional development, advocates for children and youth with exceptionalities and the engagement of their families, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective teaching and learning.

As part of CEC's strategic planning for 2012-2014, the Board of Directors reviewed and revised the Council's core values, mission, and vision statements that reflect our current direction and future aspirations. In collaboration with staff, and with guidance from the Representative Assembly, the Board then developed the 2012–2014 Strategic Plan.

The goals, issue statements, and objectives of the new Strategic Plan complement each other and comprise a concise framework for the Council's future essential work. Collectively, the goals and objectives reflect the priorities and the range of interests in the organization, the diversity of children and youth with exceptionalities and their families, and the current and emerging needs of the field.

As you read through this brochure, please take note that several terms in this document are used intentionally, and they have specific meaning within CEC. These include the following:

- **Children and youth** refer to infants, toddlers, children, youth, and young adults ages birth through the completion of secondary or post-secondary education.
- **Exceptionalities** refer to disabilities and gifts/talents.
- **Special education** refers to educational services provided to children and youth with exceptionalities; it includes specially designed instruction, supplementary aids and services, related services, and early intervention.
- **Special education professional** refers to appropriately credentialed individuals who provide services to children and youth with exceptionalities and their families.

As we work toward improving the future for children and youth with exceptionalities, CEC looks forward to collaboratively working with its units, divisions, and other stakeholders to support and strengthen the field of special education and advance the education of children and youth with exceptionalities, as well as the engagement of their families.

Vision

The Council for Exceptional Children is a premier education organization, internationally renowned for its expertise and leadership, working collaboratively with strategic partners to ensure that children and youth with exceptionalities are valued and full participating members of society. As a diverse and vibrant professional community, CEC is a trusted voice in shaping education practice and policy.

*Approved April 25, 2011, by
the Council for Exceptional
Children Board of Directors*

Quality Teaching and Learning

Goal:

Promote and support high-quality effective education for children and youth with exceptionalities.

Issue Statement:

Special education professionals and others who serve the needs of children and youth with exceptionalities and their families face challenging and rapidly changing conditions. These include state, provincial, and national reforms; advances in technology; complex and growing job demands; increasingly involved systems of accountability; and changing demographics in schools, all of which affect the education of children and youth with exceptionalities and the roles and responsibilities of those who educate them. CEC must respond to these challenges by ensuring that the personnel who provide special education to children and youth with exceptionalities are held to the highest standards of practice in their fields and have access to effective evidence-based practices that enable them to proficiently carry out their professional and ethical responsibilities. Further, CEC must promote collaborative practices based on mutual respect and recognition of the value of each individual's contribution.

Objectives:

1. To provide special education and other professionals who engage in the education of children and youth with exceptionalities with access to state-of-the-art knowledge and evidence-based practices through high-quality initial and advanced preparation and career-long professional development.
2. To support collaboration among educators, other service providers, and families to effectively educate children and youth with exceptionalities.

Advocacy

Goal:

Influence governmental policies in order to advance the teaching and learning of children and youth with exceptionalities, the support for their families, and the preparation and practice of professionals who work on their behalf.

Issue Statement:

Numerous policy opportunities and challenges are confronting special and gifted education. CEC must stand ready to collaborate with policymakers to develop policies that will positively affect CEC stakeholders. CEC's advocacy priorities emerge from one essential conviction: All children and youth, wherever they live in the world, deserve access to a challenging, motivating, and rigorous education. A quality education requires superior leadership, full financial support, effective instruction and programs, high-quality professionals, suitable facilities, and family and community involvement. Vigorous sustained advocacy is required to ensure that all children and youth with exceptionalities are successful in school, programs are funded at optimal levels, shortages of well-prepared special education professionals are eliminated, and research and innovation enhance programs and practice. Children and youth with exceptionalities and the professionals who serve them must be appropriately included in reform and other legislative initiatives.

Objectives:

1. To support advocacy that advances state/provincial, U.S., Canadian, and international policies regarding the education of children and youth with exceptionalities and the professionals who serve them.
2. To formulate a biannual public policy agenda (U.S.) and achieve its aims.

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Collaborative Partnerships

Goal:

Advance collaboration and strategic partnerships between CEC and key U.S., Canadian, and international organizations.

Issue statement:

Increasingly, organizations are becoming aware of the need to diversify their resource base as well as the importance of expanding partnerships to achieve mutually important goals. CEC's mission is bold and embraces U.S., Canadian, and international concerns about improving the quality of education and early intervention services provided to children and youth with exceptionalities. The mission requires the collective efforts of teachers, administrators, other practitioners, policymakers, families, and other important stakeholders and audiences. Thus, CEC must build partnerships and alliances with diverse public and private organizations, agencies, and businesses in order to increase its impact, extend its leadership, and maximize its resources. This goal is intended to create dynamic and integrated relationships that are sustainable and that encourage reciprocal learning, the development of shared values and mutual respect, and attainment of goals.

Objectives:

1. To strengthen existing strategic partnerships between CEC and U.S., Canadian, and international organizations whose missions and commitments are congruent with CEC's mission.
2. To develop new strategic partnerships between CEC and U.S., Canadian, and international entities whose missions and commitments are congruent with CEC's mission.

Organizational Vitality

Goal:

Enhance CEC's reputation and influence through leadership, organizational performance, and fiduciary effectiveness.

Issue Statement:

In an era in which professional associations compete with each other for finite member resources and extensive free information and materials are available on the Internet, remaining vital and relevant as an organization requires offering value to members and potential members. To achieve this goal, CEC must be responsive to the current and emerging needs of all its constituents. It must engage in ongoing dialogue with them, seeking feedback related to its products and services and acting on the information obtained. Further, its activities, products, and services must reflect optimal organizational performance and careful attention to its fiduciary duty. In order to build a diverse and vibrant community of leaders, CEC must recruit and retain members, beginning with those preparing for careers in the field, and strengthen the unity of and relationship with its state/provincial units and divisions.

Objectives:

1. To provide high quality products, programs, and services that respond to current and emerging needs of special education professionals.
2. To grow and diversify CEC's membership, develop its leadership, and enhance its value to members and other professionals.
3. To support and strengthen CEC's state/provincial units, divisions, and student group and facilitate collaboration among them.
4. To achieve fiscal goals, implement cost-effective operations, and utilize existing and emerging technologies to support the needs of special education professionals.

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