

**COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Leadership Development Committee
2021 Annual Report**

Mikki Garcia, Chair
January 2022

1.0 Committee Purpose(s)

Identify, cultivate, recruit, and orient, a well-qualified and diverse pipeline of volunteer leaders for board and committee positions that are responsive to the current and future needs of CEC.

2.0 Committee Members and Terms of Office (The operating cycle is Sept. 1 – Aug. 31)

September 2020-August 2021

Mikki Garcia, Ed.D. Chair	2022
Sheila B. Bailey, Ph.D.	2021
Amy Braddock, M.A.	2023
Robin D. Brewer, Ph.D.	2022
William K. Bogdan, Ed.D.	2021
Kelly J. Grillo, Ph.D.	June 2021
Gloria Niles, Ph.D.	2022
Laura Nugent, Ed.D.	December 2021- 2023
Anne Sloboda, Ph.D.*	November 2021
Jonté (JT) Taylor, Ph.D.	2023
Zachary Walker, Ph.D.	2021
Jennifer Lesh, Ph.D.	2021
(Immediate Past President, ex officio)	

Kelly Grillo and Anne Sloboda resigned from the committee for personal reasons. Robin Brewer's term on the committee was extended by one year, by board approval, to fill Kelly Grillo's term.

September 2021-August 2022

Mikki Garcia, Ed.D. Chair	2022
Amy Braddock, M.A.	2023
Robin D. Brewer, Ph.D.	2022
Wendy Gonzales, Ph.D.	2024
Kimberly Moffett, Ph.D.	2024
Gloria Niles, Ph.D.	2022
Laura Nugent, Ed.D.	December 2021- 2023
Wendy Otheim, Ed.S.	2024
Jonté (JT) Taylor, Ph.D.	2023
Dennis Cavitt (IPP, ex officio)	2022

Laura Nugent was appointed by the Board to fill the midterm vacancy created by Anne Sloboda's resignation.

3.0 Objectives (Annual) and Work Plans

- Develop and widely disseminate a revised application for the Board of Directors which, to the greatest extent possible, reflects the need for board applicants who have knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) relevant to CEC's strategic plan and the mission of the board.
- Update the rating rubric to reflect the revised board application.
- Conduct an anonymous needs assessment of the board of directors conducted by a third party in order to determine the KSAs needed by board applicants.
- Slate up to six candidates for election by the membership to fill positions on the board for terms beginning January 2022.
- Develop a framework for a leadership development curriculum, then begin developing curriculum and assessment components.
- Determine the cycle for the Leadership Development Programs, including recruiting, application period, training period, etc.
- Develop specific knowledge, skills and abilities that will guide the selection of future board member candidates.

4.0 Summary of Achievements Related to Objectives and Work Plans

LDC Application s for 2021 Terms

Some revisions were made to the application questions and the rubric was revised accordingly. In lieu of letters of recommendation, the committee developed a reference form so that there was more consistent input on applicants. These were then scored along with the application questions. Committee members engaged in an exercise to ensure inter-rater reliability when using the scoring rubric to evaluate candidates.

The LDC created a robust communication plan to solicit applications, particularly from diverse candidates, to fill up to three positions on the LDC. A total of seven completed applications were received.

The LDC used a two-step slating process. The first step is review and scoring of the applications based on the rubric. The committee had a meeting on March 29, 2021 to develop a slate of candidates to advance to the second step. A blind compilation of scores was provided. Six candidates were unanimously slated to advance.

Step two were web-based "interviews," which are more like a conversation. All conversations are facilitated by the same two committee members using questions to start a dialogue. A limited number of follow up prompts are allowed to extract further information. Candidates are provided with the questions 24-hours in advance. These were conducted April 5-12 and were recorded, allowing committee members unable to participate in person to view them to better assess the soft skills and dispositions that come through in a one-on-one conversation. The interviews were scored using a rubric.

The committee held its slating meeting on April 26. Committee members engaged in an open discussion about ensuring diversity as related to CEC's definition, and what each candidate could bring to the committee relative to what those members going off brought, not simply basing the final decision on the highest application score, interview score, or combined score.

Feedback letters about their applications and how to improve were provided to the non-slatted applicants. These letters are based on reviewer observations in the rating rubrics. An example follows:

Your past involvement in CEC shows your passion, experience, and your commitment to the field and our organization. However, when questions requested a description of how your experience would help you on the LDC or would apply to the LDC, we did not see a strong link between your responses and the mission of the LDC.

General tips from the feedback letter template on completing applications will be added to all board/committee applications.

The following Application Tips were added to the application (and the board application as well):

- Be sure to read the charge of the committee prior to completing the application.
- Incorporate how you can support the committee by directly linking your experiences to the committee.
- When you have completed your responses, re-read the question and your answer to make sure your response addresses all parts of the question.
- Have someone else read your responses to make sure the answers cover all components of the questions.
- Have someone else review your video to make sure the response addresses the prompt and follows the guidelines.

In addition to having the KSAs necessary to be successful on the LDC, the slatted candidates had the following characteristics:

Birth Year / Age Group:

1980s = 2

1960s = 2

Ethnicity:

Black or African American = 1

LatinX, Hispanic ChicanX or Puerto Rican = 1

White or European American = 2

Gender:

Female = 4

Male = 0 (the only male applicant withdrew from consideration after the initial slating for personal reasons)

Primary Professional Role:

Higher Ed = 3

Administrator = 1

Exceptionality = 0

Geographic Distribution:

Tennessee

Michigan

Illinois

South Dakota

The Board appointed the following individuals to serve on the Leadership Development Committee for a three-year term (Sept. 1, 2021 – Aug. 31, 2024):

Angie Jasper*
Kim Moffett
Wendy Gonzales
Wendy Otheim

* Angie Jasper was appointed President Elect in July 2021; therefore, she had to resign from the LDC. The committee decided not to replace her until Anne Sloboda had to resign.

An orientation session for the four new LDC members was held on June 29th. They also participated in the three-day annual retreat in July.

Board Member-at-Large Applications for 2022 Terms

The application questions were revised based on input from board members, and the rating rubric was revised accordingly. In past post-election surveys, voting members indicated that the question “What inspired you to apply to the board?” is what most influenced their vote. Therefore, this question was changed for use as the video response question, with the goal of members feeling a better connection to the candidates.

The LDC created a robust communication plan to solicit applications, particularly from diverse candidates, to include eblasts, webpage with application information, homepage rotator, announcements in *Special Education Today* and via social media. Eighteen completed applications were received by the deadline of 12:00 p.m., May 3, 2021.

The same two-step review process used for LDC applications was used for board applications.

The first slating meeting was held on May 24, 2021. Nine candidates were advanced to the “interview” phase. Interviews were held between June 14th and June 17th. Again, each “interview” was facilitated by the same two committee members, and they were recorded for committee members unable to participate live.

Feedback letters about their applications and how to improve were provided to the two non-slated applicants who requested them.

Final slating was scheduled for July 19th but moved to June 28th because there were no applicants applying for a second term on the board and President Elect (appointment for which takes place at the board’s July meeting). The committee felt decreasing the time between completion of the interviews and final slating would enhance the slating discussion.

Prior to the meeting, scores from each member’s completed rubric were compiled and the blind results shared. The LDC unanimously agreed on the final slate of six vetted candidates for three positions on the board.

The comments from the “Evidence for Scoring” portion of the rubric were summarized to provide formative feedback to applicants not slated.

In addition to having the KSAs necessary to be successful on the Board, the candidates bring the following characteristics:

Birth Year / Age Group:

1980s = 2

1970s = 1

1960s = 3

Ethnicity:

Black or African American = 1

Multi-Racial (White or European American & American Indian, Alaska Native or First Nations) = 1

White or European American = 4

Gender:

Female = 5

Male = 1

Primary Professional Role:

Administrator = 2

Higher Ed = 2

Teacher = 2

Exceptionality = 1

Geographic Distribution:

Alaska

Louisiana

Michigan

Ohio

South Carolina

Vermont

President Elect Application

The application and interview questions for President Elect were based on input from the board. Interview questions were updated by the officers and Executive Director.

All eligible candidates were notified and provided with a preview application, a copy of the most recent strategic plan update, and 2020 year-end financials. They were informed that there would be no budget-related questions. The financials were only provided as an FYI for candidates not currently on the board.

Two completed applications were received by the application deadline of 12:00 pm Eastern, June 15th. Interviews were conducted by the Immediate Past President via Zoom on July 14th in executive session with the board. Interview questions were sent to both applicants one week prior to the interviews.

The board voted to appoint Andrea D. "Angie" Jasper, Ph.D., to the position of President Elect for 2022. She served on the board from 2016 through 2018.

CEC L.I.V.E (2021 Convention)

Several members of the committee participated in a Slow Twitter Chat to engage attendees in conversations about leadership. Participants responded to the following questions:

- Describe what gets you excited about CEC, our work, our mission, and any details you'd like to share with other leaders.
- As a leader (or developing leader) of CEC, how do you ensure our organization remains grounded in our core value of Inclusiveness: Demonstrated by a commitment to diversity, caring, and respect for the dignity and worth of all individuals?
- What Divisions/Subdivisions, State/Provincial units, local/student chapter are you professionally engaged with and how do you leverage your networks personally and professionally?
- What sessions, exhibit, or informal meet ups have most supported you feeling engaged during CEC LIVE? Are you interested in staying connected & growing your leadership within the organization? Why?
- Q5: During COVID-19 you've heard CEC leadership say we are in this together. What personal strengths and attributes do you bring to our organization now and moving forward?

Leadership Institute

The chairs of the LDC and LDPS, Mikki Garcia and Bill Bogdan respectively, were generously invited by Executive Director Chad Rummel to attend the 2021 Leadership Institute. They engaged in the following activities:

- At the end of a session on volunteer management, they had the opportunity to provide and update on the work of the LDC and LDPS. Specifically, this focused on the findings from the recent LDPS focus groups related to the Leadership Development Program.
- Along with some of CEC staff, they had an "exhibit booth" to answer any attendee questions about volunteering or CEC governance.
- Along with board members, they hosted a networking dinner out for attendees.
- They took advantage of the opportunity to meet with the Executive Director, President, President Elect, and Immediate Past President to discuss the work of the LDC and LDPS and how it aligns with other work within CEC.

Mikki Garcia briefly attend the Board meeting to discuss highlights from the quarterly report and answer any questions about two motions, referenced below, submitted to the board by the LDC.

The Board approved the following motions, which would require revising CEC Bylaws. A 60-day comment period was provided. The board ratified approval of the motions at its November 2021 meeting.

Allow the Executive Director to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of all appointed bodies, including those making nominations or conducting elections, or designate a member of the staff to serve as an ex-officio non-voting designee.

Revise the minimum membership criteria to serve on the Leadership Development Committee from being a member for the past three years, with a minimum total of five years membership, to a minimum total of three years membership.

Annual Retreat

The LDC held its fourth annual retreat virtually July 29-31, 2021. The committee has found this annual retreat to be a good opportunity to assess its past activities and identify opportunities to advance the committee's work. Again, a survey was conducted to identify top priorities for the meeting.

Executive Director Chad Rummel joined the committee for part of the meeting. He shared his perspective on the alignment of the LDC's work and plans with CEC's current programs and future initiatives. This information and his unique perspectives were extremely beneficial, especially as related to the work of the Leadership Development Program Subcommittee (LDPS) and the development of an online volunteer portal.

During the remainder of the plenary session, the committee:

- discussed the current bylaws requirements for the LDC chair, in preparation for the current chair's term to end August 31, 2022;
- received an update on the work of the LDPS (LDPS members were also invited to attend portions of the meeting); and
- reviewed and discussed the original LDC charter in preparation for the LDC's required 5-year recharter, due to the Board in November 2022.

As in the past, committee members were surveyed to determine the most critical topics for the meeting. The results were very similar to last year and the committee was split up into groups to address each of them:

- Developing Volunteer Leadership/Leadership Development Program
- Candidate Search & Selection Process
- Promotion Activities/Strategies, Communications, Outreach

Each group was charged with developing recommendations; setting goals, objectives, and timelines; and prioritizing tasks for the coming operating year (Sept. 1 – Aug. 31 and beyond, if needed). This information has been synthesized and incorporated to the 2021-2022 Work Plan.

Two workgroups (Search & Selection and Communications) began working on the recommendations that came out of the retreat.

The LDC, overall, feels that the application and selection process for the Board of Directors and LDC has been well honed over the past few years, especially with the implementation last year of an "interview" component, and only needs minimal revising each year. The LDPS continues to address developing volunteer leadership and a leadership development program.

A major focus for the coming year will be enhancing communication about the work of the LDC, volunteer opportunities, and looking at how to repackaging opportunities to better fit the needs of the volunteers.

At the retreat, the LDC also began a discussion about the committee's recharter application, due to the Board in November 2022. Much has impacted the original vision of the work of the LDC since its inception in June 2018, and the committee wants to ensure that the process of developing the recharter application is thoughtful and not rushed.

Volunteer Square

A “Volunteer Square” has been established on the CEC website (<https://exceptionalchildren.org/get-involved/become-volunteer>). This is a place where members can express their interest in getting more involved at the unit, division and international level and tell us a little about themselves – a sort of resume database. Units and Divisions can query the list for individuals and reach out to them when they need volunteers. This should help them build their pool of volunteers and, hopefully in the long run, enhance unit/division stability.

LDC Chair/Vice-Chair Succession Model

The LDC developed, and the board approved, a process for a vice-chair(s) to become chair/co-chairs through a succession model, allowing for the flexibility annually to select from either option below.

1. A Chair/Vice-Chair model where the chair would be a third-year committee member and the vice-chair a second-year committee member who would be learning the role.
2. A model for co-chairs from within the committee. Specifically, two members in their third year of service would serve as co-chairs for one year. The LDC has three members in each “class,” so two would have to volunteer. The co-chairs would serve as vice co-chairs during their second year, being groomed/prepared for the co-chair position.

Revised Board of Directors Application Process

The committee is currently discussing revising the application process for the board to a multi-step process to be implemented this year.

Leadership Development Program Subcommittee (LDPS)

Subcommittee Members:

Bill Bogdan, Chair
Mikki Garcia, LDC Chair
Anna Adl
Maureen Burness
Marilyn Friend
Jennifer Lesh
Gloria Niles
Sharon Rodriguez, Staff Liaison

Board Appointed: Work began January 2021

Charges:

- Develop, promote, and facilitate a Council-wide leadership development plan and program.
- Create a model for identifying the primary CEC leadership positions, critical competencies at each level (CEC KSAs), and the supports to be provided that will bring success to CEC leaders and those aspiring to leadership in the Council at any level within the organization.

Leadership Development Program

Leadership CEC

A leadership development program for CEC members who have been selected for participation by a CEC unit, division, or CEC leader. An experience-based program, designed to support new and emerging unit/division leaders in gaining a deeper understanding of the CEC organization; CEC governance; and unit/division and other leadership functions and competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities). *Leadership CEC* will also expand participants' CEC networks and their potential leadership contributions to the Council.

Program Overview

- *Leadership CEC* focuses on providing leadership content, hands-on experiences, networking, and coaching facilitated by the Leadership Development Committee.
- Learning opportunities are designed to enable participants to gain a better understanding of CEC governance; understand key CEC leadership roles and functions; participate in coaching and mentoring support; and participate in cross-unit/division/committee networking opportunities.

Program Components

Professional Development

- **Synchronous/Asynchronous Professional Development**
 - 4 facilitated synchronous or asynchronous one-hour professional development sessions.
 - Program topics determined by *Leadership CEC* participants' needs (survey), CEC specific topics, coordinated with Leadership Institute focus.
- **Networking Gatherings**
 - 4 network gatherings will focus on CEC leadership, resources, and opportunities to meet current CEC leaders.
 - 4 networking gatherings to provide and build each participant's opportunity to connect, learn, and share with one another.
 - **Legacy Coaching/Mentoring Program**
 - Offer mentoring/coaching during Inaugural Cohort (pilot) with LDPS/LDC members serving as mentors/coaches.
 - In addition to individual support, pairs/triads offered as an option for mentor/coaching model.
- **Program Launch**
 - Unit/Division nominations deadline: **March 30, 2022.**
 - First cohort network gathering to be scheduled **May 2022.**
 - Program "**official**" launch tentatively planning to coincide with CEC Leadership Institute (in-person and virtual option).

Moving the Work Forward

The appointment of the Leadership Development Program Subcommittee, a committee of the LDC, was never intended to isolate the critically important work of leadership development from the work of the LDC. It was important to focus the foundational work of leadership development through a team solely focused on this particular work, and, when appropriate, transfer program planning, development, implementation, and evaluation back to the LDC. A first step in this transition, as recommended by the LDPS, supports Phase 2 of *Leadership CEC* program development. Four work groups, comprised of members of both the LDC and the LDPS, have been appointed to build *Leadership CEC* components.

5.0 Important Observations

- The changed landscape of our society has had an impact of the number of applications received. This year, fewer applications than normal were received.
- The LDPS is deeply engaged in its work. Monthly meetings revealed that more meeting time is necessary to get the work completed. Consequently, the subcommittee meets every three weeks.
- The LDC and LDPS have both recognized that their goal is not to develop a leadership curriculum but to facilitate growth for individuals who aspire leadership positions in the organization by access to existing resources.

6.0 Challenges Encountered and Solutions Identified

Challenge: The committee felt that the LDC candidate interviews did not provided the insights into the more personal dispositions that they were intended to.

Solution: A less structured “conversation,” based on pre-determined questions provided to the candidates in advance. This was implemented with the 2021 Board of Directors application process and provided better results.

Challenge: Aligning the work of the LDC to the work of CEC and prioritizing next steps to increase volunteer engagement.

Solution: The Board of Directors approved a motion allowing the Executive Director to serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of all appointed bodies or designate a member of the staff to serve as an ex-officio non-voting designee. As with all matters, the ED is expected to recuse himself with matters that may present a conflict of interest.

Challenge: Developing a volunteer portal that presents opportunities to individuals to become involved/engaged with CEC.

Solution: CEC staff created the portal.

Challenge: Lack of a process for identifying a chair or co-chairs for the LDC.

Solution: The LDC developed, and the board approved, a process for a vice-chair(s) to become chair/co-chairs through a succession model, allowing for the flexibility annually to select from either option below.

1. A Chair/Vice-Chair model where the chair would be a third-year committee member and the vice-chair a second-year committee member who would be learning the role.
2. A model for co-chairs from within the committee. Specifically, two members in their third year of service would serve as co-chairs for one year. The LDC has three members in each “class,” so two would have to volunteer. The co-chairs would serve as vice co-chairs during their second year, being groomed/prepared for the co-chair position.

Challenge: Length of time between board slating and election.

Solution: The timelines for the Board of Directors Call for Applications and slating have been revised. The application deadline is later in June; initial slating will take place in late July after the board meeting so any candidates running for both President Elect (PE) and another term on

the board will only have to complete a board interview if not elected PE; final slating will take place in August.

Challenge: Providing feedback to applicants not slated.

Solution: As noted above, committee members provide comments, both positive and constructive, in the rating rubric. These have been summarized to provide formative feedback to applicants.

7.0 Comments, Questions for the Board of Directors

None

8.0 Recommendations for Action by the Board of Directors

None