This week, we wish you a happy Valentine's day, give a recap of CEC 2020, and issue a call to action following the FY 2021 budget proposal.

We Heart You, Special Educators!

Whether you're busy planning your classroom celebrations or avoiding the day altogether, when it comes to our members, we've got nothing but love. Thank you for choosing us to stand by your side and support you through your professional journey. We would be nowhere without you. Happy Valentine's Day from CEC!

Highlights from CEC 2020

Last week, more than 4,000 special educators from around the world gathered in Portland, OR, for the CEC 2020 Convention & Expo. As we reflect on the power of
community and the magic that happens when we come together to learn, grow, and create change, here are just a few of the highlights from this year's event:

**Opening General Session with Sady Paulson and Mark Coppin**

- CEC 2020 kicked off on February 5 with keynote speakers and Apple Distinguished Educators Sady Paulson and Mark Coppin. From the video Sady produced for Apple using assistive technology to the power of equity, their inspiring session set the stage for the next 3 days.

**Positive Behavior Support with Dr. Randy Sprick**

- Day two began with Second General Session speaker Dr. Randy Sprick, Director of Safe & Civil Schools. A renowned author and behavior expert, Dr. Sprick shared tips and resources special educators can use to manage behavior and create a positive environment for all learners.

**2020 Yes I Can Awards Ceremony**

- The Yes I Can Awards Ceremony is always an exciting time at CEC, and this year was no exception. On February 7, nine of our 2020 Yes I Can recipients joined us onstage to answer questions, share their stories, and speak to their accomplishments. The Yes I Can program recognizes 12 students with exceptionalities in six categories: academics, arts, school & community activities, self-advocacy, technology, and transition.

Check out #CEC2020!

**CALL TO ACTION: A Message from the President**

*On Monday, the Trump Administration released its Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 budget proposal outlining federal funding priorities.*
Here’s a message from CEC President Jennifer Lesh:

The Council for Exceptional Children strongly opposes these cuts to the budget, as they eliminate money from priorities that CEC has long promoted. The proposal undermines our public education system in many ways, including a $6.4 billion cut to the Department of Education; a $4.8 billion reduction in K-12 spending; flat funding for IDEA with obvious diminished spending power year over year; and a proposed $5 billion tax credit that can be used for tuition for private schools, which CEC has long opposed. Furthermore, it harms educators and the educator pipeline through the elimination of critical programs such as Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

Here at CEC, our senior policy advisors and division policy representatives are on the front lines working together on behalf of students, teachers and administrators. As we analyze the latest developments and activate to support CEC’s priorities, you can learn more by visiting our Policy Insider blog and join us by sending a letter to your congressional delegation through the Legislative Action Center. Together, we can make our voices heard!

Take action!

Policy Highlights

President Trump Releases Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2021

On Monday, the Trump Administration released its proposal for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 spending, which undermines our public education system in many ways. Read more.

Administration Puts Public Education Directly in the Crosshairs

CEC has long opposed the use of public funds for private schools, viewing voucher programs as contrary to the best interest of students and their families, the public-school system, local communities and taxpayers. Read more.
Alaska CEC 2020 Statewide Special Education Conference
Anchorage, AK | February 15-19

Montana CEC Conference
Missoula, MT | February 19-21

NC CEC 33rd Annual General Conference
Greensboro, NC | February 26-28

Principals Say They Need Help to Support Students With Disabilities:
Most secondary school principals—especially those in schools that serve primarily black and Latino students—think their schools can do a better job of serving students with disabilities, a new nationally representative survey of school leaders finds.

Report: Diversifying teacher workforce, linking preservice to later performance among 'high-priority issues': According to a recent report, student populations are growing increasingly diverse, and students of color would benefit from learning from a teacher of their own race.

'O one-stop shop' for school safety: Trump administration unveils new website: A new Federal School Safety Clearinghouse website, which was created in light of recent school shootings, is up and running in a joint effort between the

**National Dropout Prevention Center unveils guide for improving alternative schools and programs:** The resource addresses topics such as culture and climate, instruction and whether students have opportunities similar to their peers in regular schools.

**Thousands of delayed special education complaints in NYC spark class action lawsuit:** A federal class-action lawsuit accuses New York City's education department and its state counterpart of "deliberate or reckless indifference" in failing to resolve a backlog of thousands of complaints concerning special education services.

**Survey: Superintendents still overwhelmingly white, male:** The percentage of female school superintendents rose from 24.1% to 26.68% from 2010 to 2020, but the share of superintendents of color rose only from 6% to 8.6% during that time, a recent survey shows.

**6 Districts Invested in Principals and Saw Dramatic Gains. Dozens More Will Try to Do the Same:** A pilot program funded by The Wallace Foundation that directed millions of dollars to a "principal pipeline" to strengthen school leaders has led to gains in math and reading scores in six large, urban school districts. Plans now are underway to expand the program to 90 school systems in 31 states.