Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?

It is critically important that CEC has a strong voice to advocate for special education and support its members. As President-Elect of CEC I would help identify and support the CEC Board with growth strategies to promote an increase in general membership. Included in these efforts is working closely with the international membership, state and provincial units, and divisions, as well as allied organizations and education agencies, to demonstrate the importance of CEC membership at a time when the field is being challenged. My experiences serving on the Special Education Legislative Summit (SELS) planning committee, the CEC Program Advisory Committee, Representative Assembly, State of the Profession Work Group, and Inter-divisional Caucus, and as a CASE President, Executive Committee member, and Journal Editor are examples of my interest and enthusiasm for this type of collaborative work. An example of my interest and abilities to this end is as President of CASE with the help of the CASE Board of Directors, we created a series of short videos where members shared their top reasons for being a member of CASE. These videos introduced authentic heart-felt testimonies as to how professional membership is of benefit to careers, professional development, and advocacy. Non-traditional efforts have the effect of making organizations more inviting and welcoming to both international and national members of CEC. As President-Elect of CEC, I will continue to explore innovative and creative ways to engage as many members of CEC as possible in organizational activities. As President-Elect I will draw on the work of standing and ad hoc committees, such as the Pioneer design work group on State of the Special Education Profession, the TED framing paper work group, and the CCBD/IDC maltreatment work group, in addition to other equally important topical work such as transition, disproportionality, leadership, and twice exceptional, as guidance for increasing professional development options (e.g., online courses, workshops, regional conferences) for CEC members through the divisions, international, state, and provincial units, and professional organizations and associations. Additionally, I believe that I can bring the same skills I used as President of CASE and employ as a CEC BOD to the position of President-Elect to address the importance of strong legislative advocacy guided by the work of the CEC IDEA Reauthorization Workgroup and the Representative Assembly. The future IDEA Reauthorization is crucial to maintaining FAPE and LRE and is of great importance to my interest for becoming President-Elect. Although IDEA reauthorization is not in the foreseeable future, continued engagement of stakeholders in the process of identifying key areas of concern are critical to meeting the needs of CEC members, students with exceptionalities, families and communities that CEC serves. Serving as a CEC leader by providing leadership to and serving alongside devoted CEC members offers me opportunity to be a part of work that makes a difference for children with exceptionalities and their families.
What is the most important knowledge, skill or attribute you would bring to the Board of Directors and why do you think it would be valuable?

Understanding how to lead is critical to the success of any organization. My leadership expertise, strategic thinking/planning skills (up-dated CASE strategic plan w/BOD), creative thinking, collaboration, effective communication, strong problem solving and decision-making skills, and the ability to identify and articulate opportunities for growth have helped me be an effective member of the boards that I have served in a variety of capacities. Drawing on my prior leadership experiences as a board member, executive officer, and division president, I have a very clear vision about how to contribute to the successes of organizations.

Name one challenge you see facing CEC today and two strategies for addressing it.

Challenge: Continuing the development of multiple pathways to support outreach efforts that are responsive to the needs of the entire CEC membership. Strategy 1: Continue to engage multiple stakeholders (e.g., practitioners, researchers, policy makers, professional association and education agency partners, vendors, consultants) in discussions using multiple forms of communication (e.g., technology, F2F, etc.) and guided by data to increase CEC’s visibility as the “go to” organization for resources and opportunities. Strategy 2: Continue to collaborate with professional organizations, education agencies, and Congress that result in efforts that are responsive to the needs of the entire CEC organization. This includes working on policy and legislation that first and foremost benefits students with exceptionalities. Through activities such as the Legislative Leadership Summit sponsored with CASE, CEC can engage multiple stakeholders in continued review of ESSA and its alignment with IDEA in order to improve graduation rates, retention and achievement, performance on state assessments, and college and career readiness for students with exceptionalities.

Describe your leadership style and how, as President, you would keep the board operating at a strategic level.

While I am relational in my leadership style, I am also goal oriented. I subscribe to the principles of shared governance, where there are unambiguously stated common goals that provide a vision and mission that are a top priority of the entire organization and are in alignment up and down the organization. I value creative, collaborative, and data-based decisions negotiated constructively from multiple perspectives. It has been my experience that where there is good will, the commitment to communicate task-relevant information, and contributions to the health and well-being of an organization, in this instance CEC, much can be accomplished. It would be an honor to serve as President-Elect of CEC.

Leadership:

CEC Leadership Positions:

- CEC Board of Directors, Member-at-Large; 2017-present
- Member, “State of the Special Education Profession” Work Group Design Team, Pioneers Division, 2016-present
- President, Council of Administrators of Special Education, National; 2014-2016
- President-Elect, Council of Administrators of Special Education, National; 2012-2014
Journal Editor, Journal of Special Education Leadership (CASE); National, 1998-2012; 2015-present
Member of the CEC Representative Assembly; 2012-2014
Member, CEC Interdivisional Caucus, National; 2012-2016
Member, CEC Convention Program Advisory Committee, National; 2006-2009, 2012-2016
Member, CEC Knowledge and Skills Sub-Committee, National; 2005-present

Other Relevant Non-CEC Professional and Volunteer Leadership Activities:

- Project Director of four (4) Office of Special Education Personnel Preparation Leadership Grants totaling $3.4 million, employing a total of 55 people; Compensated, 1999-present.
- Co-Project Director of two (2) Office of Special Education Personnel Preparation Leadership Grant totaling $3 million, employing a total of 15 people; Compensated, 2008-2016.
- Co-Project Director of one (1) Office of Special Education Personnel Preparation Combined Priority for Personnel Preparation Grants totaling $1.25 million, employing 46 people; Compensated, 2013-present.
- Department Chair, College of Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Compensated; 2010-2016
- Board Member, Higher Education Council for Special Education, National, Volunteer; 2012-2014
- Chair, Awards Planning Committee for Division A – Administration, American Educational Research Association, National, Volunteer; 1994-96
- President, Eastern Illinois Speech Hearing Language Association, Regional, Volunteer; 1980-81

Professional Information and Education:

Primary Professional Position:

Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Secondary Professional Position (if applicable):

Grant Project Director, University of Massachusetts Amherst

List up to five major career achievements and/or experiences that you believe support your qualifications for the position you are seeking.

- Membership on CEC Board of Directors
- Elected President of the Council of Administrators of Special Education
- Appointed editor of the Journal of Special Education Leadership
- Awarded 7 U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Personnel Preparation Grants to train advanced graduate and doctoral scholars in the fields of special education leadership and communication disorders and Co-authored the Handbook of Leadership and Administration for Special Education
- Served as Chair of an Academic Department at research University

Education:

Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana, Educational Administration Focus: Special Education Administration; 1984
M.S., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Speech Pathology and Audiology, 1976
B.S., University of Illinois at Urbana, Speech and Hearing Science 1975
CEC Membership Information:

Years of CEC Membership: 34

Division Membership(s): Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)