



Communiqué

Council for Educational Diagnostic Services

A Division of the Council for Exceptional Children

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President's Message:

David W. Walker

As I thought about what to write in this president's address, I kept thinking about the line from Charles Dickens' novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, and it was the worst of times"—as it relates to the economy and funding for special education.

From the "worst" perspective, in recent weeks I have read stories about how school districts are cutting their budgets and how educational personnel, including educational diagnosticians, are taking voluntary pay reductions in various part of our country because of reduced state revenues. When I read these stories, I worry about what, if any, negative effects school budget reductions will have on the services provided to children and youth with disabilities and the stress these economic conditions place on the educational personnel who provide such services. I also know that when educational budgets get cut, one of the first budget items to be reduced or totally eliminated is money for professional development. At its business meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in October of last year, your CEDS Executive Board had the foresight to begin discussions regarding ways CEDS can provide digital forms of professional development to its members. For example, you have probably already noticed that the CEDS newsletter is now available in digital form over the Internet. In the next couple of months, you will also receive an electronic survey from CEDS asking you to rate your preferences regarding ways CEDS can use the Internet to address your professional development needs. I also encourage you, when responding to this survey, to provide additional ideas.

From the "best" perspective with regard to the issue of the economy and funding for special education, U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Chairman David Obey (D-WI) introduced the \$825 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This bill includes unprecedented increases for IDEA Grants to States (Part B) and for the Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program

(Part C). Specifically, passage of the Act would increase funding for IDEA Part B by \$13 billion over 2 years, which would more than double the current federal investment of \$10.9 billion. The Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Program would receive \$600 million over 2 years, more than doubling the current federal investment of \$435 million. In addition, the Act includes a 2-year, \$79 billion State Fiscal Stabilization Fund that would require states to use at least 61% to support elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education. While the priority is to restore state elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education funding to 2008 levels, the Fund also allows subgrants to local education agencies that may focus on achieving equity in teacher distribution, improving data collection and use of longitudinal data systems, and enhancing the quality of assessments specifically for students with disabilities and English language learners. As president of CEDS, I encourage you to contact your congressional representatives and senators to express your support for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act by using CEC's Legislative Action Center (<http://capwiz.com/cek/home>).



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Predicting the Future of Special Education

Stephen Walker, *CEDS Governmental Relations Committee Chair and Children's Action Network Coordinator*

Since the start of the economic downturn, most everyone is trying harder than ever to predict the future and to determine how rapidly changing events will affect each of us. In the field of special education, and especially in educational diagnosis, the decisions of the 111th U.S. Congress and the new Obama administration will also have an impact on the future of our professional lives. To be sure, change will occur regardless of whether we participate, communicate, and advocate. As professionals, however, if we really care about our field and the individuals we serve, this may be one of the best years in a very long time to get involved. One of the best ways to influence policy making at the national level is to stay informed on new legislation and litigation that affects people with disabilities through CEC's Policy and Advocacy webpage (<http://www.cec.sped.org>) and especially by using the Legislative Action Center, where, in a matter of just a few minutes, you can communicate with your representatives in Washington on matters before Congress. Congressional representatives listen to the voices of their constituents, and staff members carefully count the number of letters and e-mails the office receives on issues before the Congress. Even if you cannot predict the future, your involvement ensures that you will help shape it.

Last year, several positive events occurred, including the reauthorization of the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments. This was positive legislation supported by CEC that will help move the country farther toward the full participation of all U.S. citizens. This next year, the possibilities for influencing the future will be even better because, finally, we will see progress on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind). This law will be before the Congress, and all of us will need to communicate with our Congressional representatives as this legislation begins to move forward. As the CEDS Children's Action Network Coordinator, I will monitor legislation as it moves through the Congress and communicate with you through this newsletter on important changes that will be made to this law, but it will be up to each of you to become personally involved and to contact your Congressional representatives regarding your views and preferences on the reauthorization.

In addition, we will likely hear more about fully funding IDEA this next year and hopefully will have an opportunity to once again voice support. As bills are filed and move through the legislative process, CEC will post support letter templates in the Legislative Action Center on its website. I hope you will visit that site and send a letter of support to your Congressional representative. The original version of IDEA was passed in 1975. At that time, Congress promised to fund 40% of the extra costs involved in educating children with disabilities. The percentage of support has never exceeded about 17% over the past 33 years. It is up to us to remind our leaders of the need to live up to a commitment that was made more than three decades ago. The children we serve deserve nothing less. We may not be able to predict the future, but by working together we can surely have an effect on it!

**Leann DiAndreth-Elkins,
Editor**

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Assessment for Effective Intervention:

The official quarterly research journal of CEDS is *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, provided through CEDS membership. The primary purpose of the journal is to publish empirically sound manuscripts that have implications for practitioners. Submissions are encouraged; guidelines are available at <http://aei.sagepub.com>

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Stories From the Field

Connie Nielson

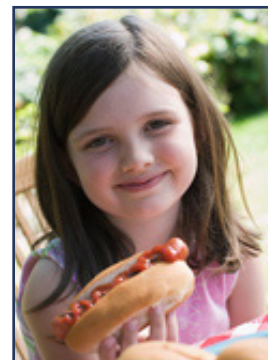
Membership Chair

As I was preparing to attend the CEC conference in Seattle, I thought it might be a good idea to introduce you to a CEDS member from Washington—somebody who would be going to the conference and whom we could all look for at the CEDS social on Thursday. I did get in touch with a couple of people who will be attending but was unable to obtain information from them in time to write a member profile for this newsletter. So I would like to propose for the newsletter a new feature called “Stories From the Field.”

I am going to inaugurate this feature with a story that I told in class this week during my lecture on cognition. It is related to the Binet4 (*Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, Fourth Edition*). For those of you who know the test, it is an item from the Picture Absurdities subtest in which a girl is eating soup with a knife. Of course, the correct response is that the girl should be using a spoon or something along those lines. In the picture, however, the soup looks a lot like cream of chicken. In this story, the girl that I was testing looked very puzzled and said, “That girl is eating mustard.” Now, this is not a wrong

answer but surely was not a correct answer either. I decided to probe the response and repeated, “What’s silly about that?” After a long pause, and obvious deliberation noted on her face, the proverbial light bulb went off, and she exclaimed, “I know! That there girl needs a hot dog!”

I think maybe assessment people could be great poker players, as it was all I could do to keep a straight face. Thank goodness, while working through the next couple of items this girl cracked up when she saw the grown man drinking from a baby bottle, thus giving us both a reason to share a good laugh.



I know there are tons of good—or at least interesting and unique—answers to test questions that you have been given by students. If you have a good one, please forward it to me (cnielson@nkcsd.k12.mo.us). I will, of course, give you credit for the story and let you know if and when it will be featured in the newsletter. Let me know if you have any questions. Somebody get me some sauerkraut!

Professional Standards

Pat Frawley, Chair

At a recent meeting of the Professional Standards and Practice, Knowledge and Skills subcommittee, an announcement was made that our Advanced Common Core Standards had received final approval and will be published in the next edition of the Redbook.

CEC’s Strategic Plan, which was approved in July of 2006, was introduced and reviewed at the meeting. The plan has the following goals:

- **Goal I** addresses teaching and learning conditions by seeking to improve conditions and support the highest quality of services for individuals with disabilities.
- **Goal II** addresses evidence-based practices by fostering and communicating the use of these practices in general and in general education and early intervention.
- **Goal III** seeks to foster mutual understanding and international partnerships that support professionals and improve the lives of individuals with exceptionalities.
- **Goal IV** centers on promoting growth and diversity in membership to build a more engaged community.
- **Goal V** relates to advancing government policies that affect teaching and learning.
- **Goal VI** focuses on continuous improvement of organizational performance.

NCED Announcement

Ellen M. Frye, *NCED Board Chair*

The National Certification of Educational Diagnosticians (NCED) Board of Directors will have three vacancies as of July 1, 2009. Each vacant term is a 3-year term. Anyone interested in being a member of the NCED Board should send a copy of his or her vita/résumé and two letters of recommendation to Ellen Frye, NCED Board Chair, by May 15, 2009. Letters of recommendation should be sent *directly* to Ms. Frye.

Educational diagnostic professionals who work in public and private schools as practicing assessment personnel, in private practice, as university/college professors, and in other public or private agencies are welcome to apply. The NCED Board seeks applicants who represent all parts of the United States and the range of abilities and skills of educational diagnostic personnel. *All NCED Board members must have the NCED credential.*

Send vitas/résumés, letters of recommendations, or questions to:

Ellen M. Frye, EdD
NCED Board Chairman
P.O. Box 12208
Lubbock, TX 79452
Email: ncedbchair@aol.com



We Need Your Vote!

Carol A. Layton, *Past President*

Beginning February 1, 2009, CEDS will be using an electronic format to vote for the treasurer and secretary positions. Your ballot will be sent to you by email. Please respond and vote! Only members who have kept their email updated with CEC headquarters will receive a ballot. Please tell your colleagues to register with CEC and provide a current email address. The membership of CEDS is needed to participate in voting. We have excellent candidates, and they need your support. In February, look for your CEDS ballot in your email!

NCED EXAM WILL BE ADMINISTERED:

April 1, 2009, in Seattle

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: March 5

October 28, 2009 in Philadelphia

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: September 15

For more information:

<http://www.ncedb.org/>

All CEDS Members and Potential Members Are Invited to Attend:

CEDS Social

Sheraton Seattle Hotel

CEC Convention and Expo in Seattle

Thursday, April 2, 2009 6:00 p.m.

Start Planning Now!

CEDS 2009 Annual Conference



Oct. 29th–31st, 2009

**Crown Plaza–
Center City**

**Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania**



Save the Date!

CEC's 2009 Convention and Expo

April 1st–4th, 2009

**Sheraton Seattle
Hotel**

Seattle, Washington



For more information: <http://www.cec.sped.org>