



# Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children

Newsletter

Vol. 15, No. 2

January 2004

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE INFO  
ON PAGE 3



MAIL-IN  
BALLOT  
INSIDE

POSTMARK DEADLINE:  
FEBRUARY 21, 2004

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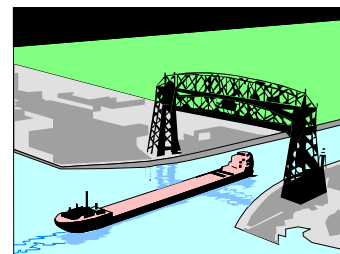
Election Ballot enclosed

## SPECIAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Differentiated Instruction:  
Supporting All Learners  
Though the Curriculum Maze

February 25-27, 2004

Duluth Entertainment  
Convention Center  
Duluth, MN



SPONSORED BY: MINNESOTA COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN  
AND MINNESOTA COUNCIL FOR CHILDREN WITH  
BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

Annual Conference Features  
Inspiring Speakers, Workshops,  
Networking, & More!

by **Melissa Schaller**

Mark your calendars for February 25-27 and plan a trip to Duluth and the shores of the BIG LAKE, Lake Superior, for this year's Special Education Conference! This year's theme focuses on Differentiated Instruction and it's sure to be interesting.

On Wednesday a preconference workshop with Kathie Nunley will be offered. "Layered Curriculum: Teaching to All Students in Your Classroom" will be an opportunity to learn valuable techniques to teach all students in your classroom no matter what their level.

Based on current brain research, *Layered Curriculum* is one of the easiest ways to implement student-centered instruction. It allows teachers to juggle learning styles, multiple intelligences, cultures, and mixed abilities in one room without sacrificing standards. Attendees will learn what current brain imaging research has found, how to translate this research into teaching practice, how to individualize instruction for mixed ability classrooms, how to increase student retention, how to encourage higher levels of critical thinking and how to increase learner accountability.

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# Letter from the President

by Claudine Knoblauch

## “HOT TOPICS” WHICH ONE TO CHOOSE?

As I sat down to write some presidential points I struggled with selection of a topic. There are so many “hot topics” I could not decide which one to focus on. There is so much to learn about each topic I doubt that I could provide justice to one in a brief article. So I decided to simply bring a few to the surface and hope that you will find something new, or of interest.

## IDEA, WHERE IS IT?

As of January 2004, IDEA has yet to be reauthorized. The House version (H.R. 1350) and the Senate version (S.B.1248) have been completed. The next steps are for a conference committee to hammer out a compromise, bring it all together for full Congressional vote, then on to the President. There are several websites that you can use to stay up-to-date on the process. Here are just a few:

- CEC’s website at [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org),
- IDEA Practices website at [www.ideapractices.org](http://www.ideapractices.org),
- National Association of Elementary School Principals at <http://capwiz.com/naesp/home>,
- National Association for the Education of Young Children at [www.naeyc.org/children\\_champions/IDEA.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/children_champions/IDEA.pdf),
- National Association of School Psychologists at [www.nasponline.org/advocacy/IDEAinformation.html](http://www.nasponline.org/advocacy/IDEAinformation.html),
- National Education Association at [www.nea.org/specialed](http://www.nea.org/specialed).

Many of these sites also have links, so pour yourself a cup of coffee and take some time to explore them.

## NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOUR STUDENTS?

One thing is relatively certain, NCLB may be modified, BUT it is not going away. So what does that mean for you, the special educator?

- Learn as much as you can about the law and the implementation process.
- Work with your building principals and district staff to determine what needs to be considered as you develop IEPs.
- Complete a self-inventory of your content knowledge and your skills at teaching core subjects: reading, writing, and math. Participate in staff development activities to increase your understanding of and teaching skills in the core areas.
- If you do not have a copy of the State’s Alternative Assessments (AA), which include criteria for determining use of the AA’s, ask your Director of Special Education to provide them to you. If the IEP team, using the guidelines and criteria, determines that the student needs an Alternative Assessment then that is the right thing and you must do it. The IEP team does not have the authority to determine that the student’s progress not be measured in a formal manner, only that an alternative measure should be used.
- Take the time to contact your Federal and State representatives. They know these issues are of grave importance and they want to hear from you. Provide them with real teaching or administrative stories, possible solutions, and modifications. For contact links go to [www.mncec.org](http://www.mncec.org).

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## 2003–04 MN CEC Board of Directors

<b>President:</b>	Claudine Knoblauch
<b>President Elect:</b>	Melissa Schaller
<b>Secretary:</b>	Gail Craig
<b>Treasurer:</b>	LaVonne See
<b>CANCoordinator:</b>	Jan Manchester
<b>Membership</b>	Mary McGrath
<b>Representative Assembly:</b>	Steven Kaatz Carol Long
<b>Student Advisor:</b>	Char Ryan
<b>Publications:</b>	Carol Long
<b>Newsletter Layout:</b>	Lynne Olson

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Kathy Arnoldi  
 Vivian Bahls  
 Brad Benson  
 Jeanne Danneker  
 Krista Fisher  
 Bryce Fornes-Bates  
 Marilyn Hukriede  
 Larry Iwen  
 Steven Kaatz  
 Paula Krippner  
 Gary Lewis  
 Mary Ellen Wade

### Divison Representatives:

Manuel Barrera, CCB  
 Judy Swett, DEC  
 Gary Lewis, CASE/MASE

### Student Advisors:

Mary Voss/ Manuel Berrera,  
 UM-Duluth  
 Steven Kaatz, Bethel  
 David Rogers, St. Cloud State  
 Linda Svobodny, MN State  
 Moorhead

We'll see you  
 at the  
 Special  
 Education  
 Conference in  
 February!

# MNCEC Board of Directors Elections



*Editor's Note: It's that time of year again! Time for MNCEC Board of Directors Elections. Below you will find biographical information for each of the nominees for this year's elections for President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Director. Review your choices, mark your ballot on the enclosed self-addressed stamped postcard and mail by February 21. Thank you!*

## President:

**Vote for one**

### Larry Iwen

I've been teaching special education for 17 years and have worked with students who have just about every disability category and ranging in age from preprimary through young adults. I am licensed in DCD and LD, grades K-12, have a master's degree in education, and last year earned National Board Certification as an Early Childhood through Young Adult Exceptional Needs Specialist. Currently, I'm an LD teacher with the St. Paul Public Schools, work at Arlington Senior High School in St. Paul, and serve as my building's department chair. I became a member of the CEC Board of Directors in the fall of 2002.

As a director-at-large for MNCEC I have attended conferences at the state level and last year went to nationals in Seattle. I have been involved with several committees on the board, most recently the 2004 MNCEC/CCBD conference planning committee.

As president elect I feel it is important to support and continue the efforts of CEC's involvement in legislation as it relates to the reauthorization of IDEA. I also feel it is important that CEC develop policy and practices for the support of new teachers in the field of special education to help with the problem of special education teacher burnout (many new teachers leave the field within the first five years). At the state/local level, it is my intent to become more involved in the review and structuring of school-based standards, specifically for high school students that receive special education services. I would also like to become more involved in the open forum discussions between agencies working with special education that was initiated

last year. Finally, I would also like to initiate and develop a line of support (mentoring?) for other special education teachers at the state and local levels that may be interested in seeking National Board Certification.



## Secretary:

**Vote for one**

### Mark Krug

I have been a member of Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children and Minnesota Council for Children with Behavior Disorders since moving to Minnesota in 1988. I am a past president of MNCCBD as well as having served various board and support roles. I was also a member of CEC when I taught in Texas and was a past Governor for Student CEC when I was in Iowa.

I currently am with Northeast Metro 916 at the Alternate Learning and Creative Alternatives Programs, federal setting IV programs for students with significant maladaptive and acting out behaviors. I provide Due Process support for staff as well as serve as the liaison for parents and district personnel making referrals to the two programs.

I see MNCEC as **the** advocate for students with disabilities and the professionals that serve them. MNCEC is a front lines organization and can speak directly to the needs of students while balancing the concerns of the professional. We are asked to do more with fewer resources than ever before. It is incumbent upon us to campaign effectively in order to preserve the gains our students have made in the last 28 years.



## Treasurer:

**Vote for one**

### Lavonne See

I have been the treasurer for MN CEC the past 6 years. I work as a special education coordinator for the Northland Special Education Cooperative located in Virginia, MN. The Cooperative serves 10 school districts in northeastern Minnesota.

*continued on page 4*

MN CEC-DEC sponsors  
"No Babies\*  
Left Behind"

(\* Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers)

**March 4&5, 2004  
Mall of America Grand Hotel**

The opportunity to come and learn about current practices in ECSE from around the state. "NoChild Left Behind" is the Federal legislation requiring educational accountability for ALL children. Come and join us to learn more about what this legislation means for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with special needs.

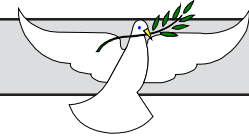
Dessert and coffee on Thursday evening with Barbara Wolfe speaking on "Let's Go FISHing." Featured speakers on Friday include Joan Blaska speaking on "Practical Strategies for Promoting Literacy throughout the Early Childhood Curriculum," and Anne Gearity speaking on "Young Children with Emerging Mental Health Concerns."

Registration deadline for early bird rate is Feb. 1 For information contact Jane Roundtree at 763-506-1475 or [Jane.Roundtree@anoka.k12.mn.us](mailto:Jane.Roundtree@anoka.k12.mn.us) and Jill Haak at 320-257-7350 or [jhaak@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us](mailto:jhaak@bentonstearns.k12.mn.us)

# MNCEC Board of Directors Election Candidates

*Continued from page 3*

**Director**    **Vote for 3**



## **Roberta Kaufman**

I have a BA in journalism, with minors in sociology and political science. My master's degree is in learning disabilities from the University of South Dakota, Vermillion. I have a doctorate in curriculum instruction from USD with an emphasis in special education.

I taught K-12 special education in South Dakota for four years where I worked with students with autism, hearing impairment, behavior disorders, learning disabilities and severe cognitive delays. In addition, I have served as executive director of the Center for Excellence Across Disciplines at Huron University, Huron, SD and then Dean of the College of Education at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN.

Currently, I am a teacher on special assignment with the Saint Paul Public Schools. In this capacity, I am developing a first year special education teacher coaching project. Additionally, I am completing an internship for my special education director's license.

## **Nancy Recibe**

Currently, I am a special education coordinator for the Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan School District, assisting students, staff and families in elementary, secondary and transitional programs. I have been working in special education since 1978 as a teacher of specific learning disabilities or emotional/behavior disorders and as special education supervisor. As an instructor, I have worked in full inclusive environments and center base programs, with students ranging in ages from five years through 21 years.

I have belonged to and served on the boards of the following organizations over the years in my professional career: Council of Exceptional Children, Community Transition Interagency Committee - Anoka County, Community Transition Interagency Committee - Dakota County, Minnesota Transition Consortium, Minnesota Association For Career and Technical Education/Special Needs, Special Education Advisory Council for District 196.

## **Jana Rhoden**

I graduated last spring from Winona State University with a degree in Special Education with licensure in Learning Disabilities and Developmental Disabilities. I am currently teaching at a very diverse high school in the Twin Cities. I've spent the last 4 years as a PCA (Personal Care Attendant) working with youth with Developmental Disabilities. I also extremely enjoyed working at a summer camp for adults with severe disabilities. I hope to go back to school to get my degree in Emotional Behavioral Disorders.

## **Jim Smith**

Hi, I am Jim Smith and I teach at Stillwater Area High School. I received my Masters Degree from Bethel as an E/BD and SLD Special Education teacher. My Bachelor's Degree is from the University of Minnesota where I graduated in 1985. I also have experience teaching at alternative programs, at the Junior High level, and as a department chair. I enjoy teaching students with behavior and emotional issues the most and those students tend to gravitate to me. My goals are to continue to improve what I do, advocate for dignity to our profession, and help to provide resources for those that need help.

*Ballots Must Be  
Postmarked by  
Saturday,  
February 21, 2004  
to be valid!*

## **Letter from the Editor**

**Continued from page 12**

what it's like to have the time to know how I want to spend my time.

I am very grateful for this opportunity. When I go back next fall, I want to keep in mind what I do when I have the time and strive to balance those things with what I have to do.

*You have to allow a certain amount of time in which you are doing nothing in order to have things occur to you, to let your mind think.*

*-Mortimer Adler*

*This time like all times is a very good one if we but know what to do with it.*

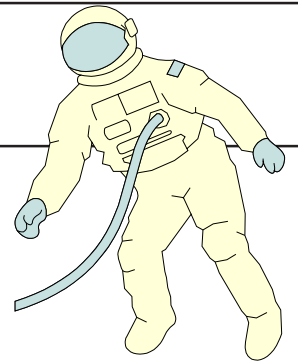
*-Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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# Membership Musings

by Mary McGrath

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## Time Travel Reflection

*Those of us who are members of CEC and have been for many years are potentials for the following scenario. You are involved. You go to state and national conferences. You receive CEC and selected division publications. You write with other members for CEC journals. You read and utilize information from books or monographs published by CEC. You have volunteered for a division event, committee or board.*

One day while sitting at your desk, instant messaging a colleague in California you begin to reminisce together. You share with one another the circumstances of your meeting at a CEC national convention five years ago and review how much you have in common even though you live in different parts of the country. Suddenly you notice peculiar sounds and pulsing green and purple light coming from your screen. Your first thought is, "What will come out of California next?" You then see buttons saying PUSH HERE FOR ROUND TRIP FLIGHT LEAVING IN 14 SECONDS. Thinking that your California colleague is getting way too creative you go along with what appears to be a great new computer program.

Much to your surprise you are enveloped in the light and experience a sense of velocity and a loud whirring noise. Before you can even process what has happened the colors lift and you find yourself in a classroom on this date only several years ago. You notice your youthful appearance, your excitement and your interaction with special education students. By now you are sure your California colleague has gone way over the top trying to gain your attention.

You cannot deny your curiosity so you closely observe yourself dismiss the students for the day, sit down at your desk and open your mail. One envelope catches your interest as you see yourself stop and reflect on the contents. You can almost read your own mind. "Should I or shouldn't I? Can I afford it? What will I gain?" The letter is your first ever request to join CEC. Before you see the outcome of your decision,

you start to laugh. "Funny Californian! What a gimmick to get me thinking about my current membership!"

Then, when you think you finally have this whole experience figured out the green and purple lights again envelope you and return you to your present day office and computer screen. By now the instant message has turned into a very one-sided conversation. Your colleague has repeatedly asked if you are still there. The time on the screen indicates that your friend has signed off twenty-three minutes ago. In shock you determine that the colleague had nothing to do with your experience and that you did actually time travel, visiting yourself at an earlier time in your career!

Whoa! Your mind floods with questions. What if I had not joined CEC? What if I had thrown that first membership envelope away? Where would my career be without my CEC colleagues, books, journals, conferences and web site? No longer are you dealing with the genre of science fiction! Your thoughts bring you to the obvious. The answer is without CEC you would be living in the horror genre instead!

*Now back to your present reality. Yes I used a little wild imagination to start you all thinking about your membership with CEC. When you think about your professional life without CEC it would likely be quite different. My life would certainly be.*

*Whew! I am glad I filled out that form so many years ago. Are you? Sometimes it is easy to take for granted something that has been there as a constant in our careers for so long. Let's continue to take advantage of our membership, get involved, read the literature and get to know other CEC members. We have a dynamic membership. Let's reach out to enrich our lives and those of colleagues everywhere - even California!*

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## Paraeducators Can Join CEC!

### Become an associate member and receive:

- TEACHING Exceptional Children, CEC's award-winning practice-based journal (6 issues per year).
- Automatic membership in local, state/provincial and international CEC.
- Access to CEC's 17 special interest divisions.
- Special rates on professional development events including CEC Annual Convention & Expo.
- Discounts of up to 35% on more than 100 CEC



professional publications, products, and services.

- Access to CEC Career Connections - the only job bank on the internet devoted exclusively to special education professionals.
- Access to Members-Only sections of the CEC Web site.
- Networking opportunities including numerous listserves.
- Savings on professional liability and term life insurance; plus financial management and savings plans.
- And much more!

Call 888-232-7733 or join online at [www.cec.org](http://www.cec.org)

# Recycle Your Old Wireless Phones!

## Sprint "Project Connect" Program Supports People with Disabilities

In April 2002 Sprint launched its "Project Connect" program which so far has raised \$600,000 for Easter Seals and the National Organization for Disability (NOD) - two organizations that serve people with disabilities.

You too can participate in this opportunity that allows you to recycle your old wireless phones in an environmentally friendly way. Drop your old phone into the Sprint Project Connect collection box at your nearest Sprint store or participating Easter Seals location. Your phone will then be either recycled or resold. At the same time, you'll help raise funds for more than 54 million Americans living with a disability AND get rid of unwanted clutter in your house.



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## Essential Websites for Minnesota Special Educators

***Bookmark these websites in your Internet browser's "Favorites" folder for convenient and quick access!***

**www.mncec.org** Website for the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children. Gives information on the mission, governance, membership, newsletter, Children's Action Network, and events with links to other related websites.

**www.arcminnesota.com** Arc Minnesota website lists programs and services to advocate and support people with developmental disabilities and their families. The site includes housing opportunities, waived services, resource center, and legislative action center.

**www.courage.org** Website for Courage Center

**www.mnase.org** The Minnesota Administrators for Special Education website lists upcoming events, legislative positions, membership information, and governance.

**www.mnccbd.org** Website for the Minnesota Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (MNCCBD). Has a calendar of events, membership information, national news, and links to other websites.

**www.pacer.org** Website of the Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER), a national center based in Minnesota. Provides information on numerous topics including transition, juvenile justice, early childhood, assistive technology, and workshops.

**education.state.mn.us** Website for the Minnesota Department of Education. Has a webpage on Special Education with information on workshops, manuals, and assistance, programs and services, disability areas, licensure and employment,

**www.ici2.umn.edu/para/default.html** Website for the Minnesota Paraprofessional Consortium. Overviews initiatives underway to support paraprofessionals in Minnesota including resources, annual conference information, current legislation, and paraprofessional competencies.

**www.mncdd.org** Minnesota's Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities website has information on resources, news, publications, and a video lending library.

## Pre-Service Perspective

Are you student teaching? To get the most out of your experience, here's some advice from past student teachers in Special Education at Winona State University:

- Definitely make a list of what you want to get out of student teaching and share it with your cooperating teacher. Make sure everything gets addressed.
- Be open to different things. Be open to new things.
- Get a lot of sleep, eat right.
- Find people you can talk to, experienced and inexperienced, and get their support.
- Come prepared, be resourceful, relate required curriculum to your own experience.
- Don't be afraid to talk to other teachers, give them your ideas and suggestions.
- Make sure you talk to your cooperating teacher about her/his expectations.
- Look at it as an opportunity to grow. If it's new do it. It will help you a lot.
- Don't sweat the small stuff. Let things roll off your back.
- Enjoy it. It's gone fast.
- Really get to know your students on a personal level.
- Keep trying. Don't give up.
- Start each day new.



# Monitoring Progress Using Curriculum-based Measurement

by **Kathy Arnoldi**

**D**etermining the effectiveness of instruction and the resultant rate of student progress, when working with students who have special learning needs, can be a challenging and complex process. Standardized assessments are often inappropriate, unreliable or too broad in the skills areas measured to be of practical use.

With the increased demand for accountability in the local, state and federal arenas, it is even more crucial for special educators to demonstrate progress toward those skills typically identified in the general education curricula.

In addition, there is an ongoing need for tools that support the development of IEP goals and objectives in core skills areas such as reading, writing and math. These tools need to be sensitive enough to measure progress over short time periods, easy to administer, interpret and useful to parents. To address these issues, teachers in the Saint Paul Public Schools' Deaf/Hard of Hearing Program, in conjunction with the University of Minnesota, are exploring a method of continuous progress monitoring, which is curriculum-based and provides a relatively easy means of determining the efficacy of instructional methods as they relate specifically to students' progress.

The initial step involved training staff in the concept and components of curriculum-based measurement (CBM). The first session included the definition of terminology and the rationale for its use. Subsequent sessions provided staff with the opportunity to examine the actual probes to be used, to become familiar with administration procedures, and to design an evaluation protocol that works for the teachers and their students. Finally, teachers were apprised of data management and interpretation procedures, as well as given information regarding the determination of adequate yearly student progress (AYP). Future sessions will address potential interventions to be implemented if the student is not making AYP.

The elementary D/HH team determined that reading and written language would be the content areas initially monitored. An assessment protocol was developed using a Maze approach (similar to a cloze procedure but with word choices provided) for monitoring reading, and a Correct Word Sequence analysis for written language. (Adaptations were made for K-1 students). Standard probes are used to evaluate the students' progress three times during each academic year: fall, winter and spring. Individual student and group data are recorded and graphed each trimester.

In addition to determining progress, the staff had a need to increase its data support related to IEP development. The curriculum-based measurement system lends well to creating goals and objectives that are appropriate, easily measurable and pertinent to the curriculum. This school year, IEP managers have been involved in developing pragmatic routines, in the areas of reading and written language, using CBM data to strengthen IEP planning. This information is also used as the basis for reviewing a student's progress toward attainment of goals and objectives.

Implementing a protocol for continuous progress monitoring, based on CBM, has had a positive impact on the effectiveness of instruction in the Como D/HH

program and the determination of students' academic achievement. The following summarizes some of the benefits as recounted by teachers involved in these efforts:

- CBM provides a manageable means of individualizing instruction for an increasingly diverse student population.
- CBM provides an efficient way to compare student progress and a common language among service providers in which to discuss achievement-related issues.
- The inclusion of CBM in IEP development enhances and expedites the process and increases accountability.
- CBM data help teachers track the impact of specific modes of instruction and/or materials on their students' learning and help document the need for interventions.
- CBM allows the students to monitor their own progress.
- CBM-generated data provide a graphic and easily comprehensible means of conveying information to parents.

*With the increased demand for accountability in the local, state and federal arenas, it is even more crucial for special educators to demonstrate progress toward those skills typically identified in the general education curricula.*

**For additional information on this important subject, please contact:**

Kathy Arnoldi  
Lead Resource: K-12 Deaf/Hard of Hearing Programs  
Saint Paul Public Schools  
kathy.arnoldi@spps.org



# Bulletin Board

## Nothing Succeeds Like Success!

Do you have students of whom you are especially proud? What works for you and your students? Celebrate achievement, growth and learning by sharing with CEC members. Send us your success stories.

Submit stories to:

Carol Long  
221 Gildemeister Hall  
Winona State University  
Winona, MN 55987 or  
clong@winona.edu

## UPCOMING CEC WEB SEMINARS

- **Involving Families in Secondary Transition**,  
January 26, 2004
- **Aligning Transition & Standards-Based Instruction**,  
February 11, 2004
- **Community-Based Instruction**, March 9, 2004

### For Information Contact

Phone: 800-224-6830 ext. 516

Email: [conteduc@cec.sped.org](mailto:conteduc@cec.sped.org)

Website: [www.cec.sped.org/pd/webseminar/inde.html](http://www.cec.sped.org/pd/webseminar/inde.html)

## Arc Statewide Rose Sale

February 23-April 2  
(new dates)

For a list of sale sites  
or to volunteer call  
1-800-582-5256  
or go to  
[www.arcminnesota.com](http://www.arcminnesota.com)

## 2004 Minnesota Special Educator's Conference Differentiated Learning

sponsored by  
MNCEC/CCBD  
February 25-27, 2004  
DECC in Duluth, MN

## CEC Annual Convention & Expo April 14-18, 2004 New Orleans, Louisiana

**Keynote Speaker:**

**Ron Clark,**

**Author of: *The Essential 55***

**Contact:** CEC, 1110 N Glebe Rd,  
Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22201-5704,  
888/232-7733, [conteduc@cec.sped.org](mailto:conteduc@cec.sped.org)

Check out reading Teaching Exceptional Children for  
Continuing Education Units at [www.journalearning.com](http://www.journalearning.com)

## MCEC Newsletter

January 2004/Vol. 15, No. 2

The MNCEC Newsletter is published three times a year and is funded through the Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children.

Members of MNCEC receive a free copy. Materials may be reproduced without permission but credit is requested. Members are encouraged to submit materials for the newsletter by sending them to:

Carol Long, 221 Gildemeister Hall,  
Winona State University, Winona, MN  
55987 or [clong@winona.edu](mailto:clong@winona.edu)

Submissions may be edited for content and size and must not reflect for-profit advertising.

## Support full funding for IDEA!

It's a guarantee not just a promise. At the present rate "If a child was one-year-old when he started in special education, he would be 67-years-old before IDEA received full funding."

—Sen. Ted Kennedy

## Special Olympics "So Get Into It" Curriculum

Check out the Special Olympics website for more information on its new "So Get Into It" service-learning curriculum. It celebrates the diverse gifts of every student - whatever her or his ability.

It offers teachers tailored curriculums for all grade levels, K-12. You can download a free copy of the curriculum at:

[www.specialolympics.org](http://www.specialolympics.org)

# Celebrating MN Paraprofessionals!



## Spring is an Exciting Time for MN Paraprofessionals

Starting with Minnesota Paraprofessional Week in January and continuing through the end of May, paraprofessionals will be recognized and provided opportunities for professional development. Hats off to these hard working individuals!

Particularly during this time, administrators are encouraged to recognize paraprofessionals in the following ways:

- encourage school staff to talk and visit with paraprofessionals and acknowledge their contributions,
- send information home to parents and students acknowledging the role of paraprofessionals,
- recognize your school's paraprofessionals with appropriate mementos of appreciation such as flowers, certificates, pins, etc.,
- construct a bulletin board at school on the various roles of the school's paraprofessionals,
- serve refreshments in the school district for parents, faculty and administration to gather and recognize the contributions of paraprofessionals,
- advertise in the school or district newsletter about Minnesota Paraprofessional Week,
- acknowledge paraprofessionals' contributions through articles and/or write an article about several paraprofessionals,
- invite local radio stations to broadcast the names of paraprofessionals, the schools in which they work and their responsibilities in the classroom,
- recognize one to two paraprofessionals each week, announcing their names and roles over the loud speaker during the daily announcements,
- announce and thank paraprofessionals within the classroom in front of the students, and/or
- organize an "Appreciation Lunch" for paraprofessionals served by teachers and administrators.



## Paraprofessional Educational Opportunities

### **MNCEC/CCBD Special Education Conference**

February 25-27, Duluth Entertainment Convention Center (see article on front page)

### **Tools and Strategies for Paraprofessional Staff Development**

Sponsored by MN Department of Education & MN Paraprofessional Consortium

For individuals providing training to paraprofessionals

March 1-2, St. Cloud Holiday Inn, [nwalkercc@aol.com](mailto:nwalkercc@aol.com)

### **12th Statewide Conference for Paraprofessionals in Education:**

#### **Tools for Making A Difference**

April 30 - May 1, Ridgewater College, Hutchinson, MN, [nwalkercc@aol.com](mailto:nwalkercc@aol.com)

### **23rd Annual Conference on the Training and Employment of Paraprofessionals:**

#### **Catching the Wave of Excellence**

Sponsored by the National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals

May 19-22, Providence Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI, [www.nrcpara.org](http://www.nrcpara.org)

## State Conference

*continued from page 1*

On Wednesday evening, pick up your name badge and registration at the DECC and stay to enjoy networking with other attendees, quality time with exhibitors, light hors d'oeuvres and entertainment!

On Thursday morning, Linda Tilton, special education teacher and author from Minnesota will present the keynote session entitled, "See the Difference! Make A Difference! Help Every Student Succeed!" Kathie Nunley will be back on Friday as the keynote presenting "A Student's Brain: For Better or For Worse".

There are nearly forty breakout sessions at this year's conference. Topics range from inclusion to positive behavior supports to working with students that are English language learners and MUCH more.

Check out the brochure and registration materials at [www.mncec.org](http://www.mncec.org). We look forward to seeing you at this exciting conference!

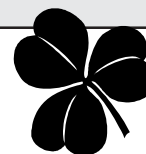
### **For further information contact:**

Nikki Walker  
Conference Connections  
763-245-0464 or  
[nikki@confconnect.com](mailto:nikki@confconnect.com)

## SCHOLARSHIP ALERT !!!

**Student Scholarships  
are available for  
the February  
Conference!**

**Contact Nikki Walker at  
the number or email  
listed above.**



## Calendar of Events



### **CCBD International Forum of Effective Practices**

February 13-14, Tampa, FL

Contact Dr. Lyndal M. Bullock / bullock@tac.coe.unt.edu

### **MN CEC/CCBD's Special Education Conference**

February 25-27, Duluth Convention Center

### **St. Cloud Student CEC Chapter**

#### **2004 Spring Conference**

Focusing on empirically supported academic strategies for students with disabilities. Contact: cec@stcloudstate.edu

### **Tools and Strategies for Professional Staff Development**

March 1-2, St. Cloud Holiday Inn

### **"No Babies Left Behind" (MNCEC - DEC Sponsored)**

March 4&5, 2004, Mall of America Grand Hotel

/(See article on page 3)

### **MN State Care and Treatment Educational Conference**

March 22 -22, Duluth Convention Center

Contact Mary Beth Schafer

651-582-8818, marybeth.schafer@state.mn.us



### **MASE/MASA Spring Conference**

April 1 &2, Radisson South, Bloomington, MN

### **2004 CEC Annual Convention and Expo**

April 14-17

Earnest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, LA

### **"Discover the Possibilities" Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health / 2004 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference**

April 19-29, 2004 Duluth / DECC, www.macmh.org

### **PACER Spring 2004 Conference**

April 23-24 / Contact Barb Ziemke

952-838-900 or 800-537-2237 / bziemke@pacer.org

### **12th Annual Minnesota Paraprofessional Conference**

April 30-May 1 / Ridgewater College, Hutchinson, MN

### **Directors' Best Practices Seminar**

May 5-7

Kavanaugh's Conference Center, Brainerd, MN

### **MASE Summer Retreat**

May 4-6 / Ruttger's, Grand Rapids, MN

### **23rd National Conference for Training & Employment of Paraprofessionals / May 20-22**

Providence Biltmore Hotel, Providence, RI

## President's Message

*Continued from page 2*

### **ARE YOU A "HIGHLY QUALIFIED" TEACHER?**

This phrase is embedded in the NCLB Act, and will be one of the most difficult issues for many states to face. In Minnesota, I believe, we have excellent teacher training programs, and creative and quality solutions will be developed.

According to NCLB, a highly qualified teacher has a minimum of an earned bachelor's degree, has demonstrated knowledge of content in the area he/she is currently assigned to teach, and has achieved full certification in the state in which he/she teaches. These standards are to be fully implemented by the 2005-2006 school year with no waivers allowed.

For me this brings up complex questions. "How do we fill the vacant special education teaching positions we currently have?" "How do special education teachers provide specialized instruction, often through instruction in content areas, and demonstrate their knowledge in the content area?" "Are we expected to be content generalists or special education specialists?"

I do not have the answers, I am however, willing to work collaboratively to seek them out. Without collective thinking, and cooperative problem solving it won't matter what a highly qualified teacher is, because there simply will not be enough of them to go around. What seems most ignored in NCLB is the actual ability to reach and teach.

I know a good teacher when I see one in action. I know by the way they teach, by the kindness and concern expressed, by the responses from their students, by the long hours and extra efforts they put in, by the lunch money they lend, the endless winter boots they put on and take off, and by the number of parents they counsel.

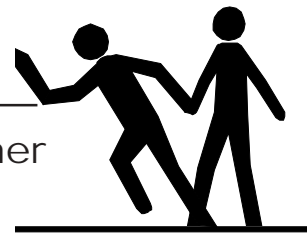
I know good teachers attend workshops and conferences and take nighttime classes to improve their knowledge and skills. Good teachers are able to organize information for their diverse group of learners; those who speak a language other than English, those who are challenged with mental health difficulties, those who struggle to express themselves or complete the simplest of math problems or reading passages.

Do you have a vision for yourself as an educator, a vision of where you hope your students will be in June, 2004? We, the educators, are the "constant elements" in the ever changing and challenging educational systems. It's not to say we can't or shouldn't change, it is in fact our job to facilitate growth, and the reaching for full, individual potential. Stay alert to the "hot topics", and stay grounded in your visions.

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# Student's Corner

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## Being a Teen Brother with an Autistic Brother

Hi. My name is Jason M. Horton. I have a brother who has something called **Autism**. Autism is a type of a learning disability that makes a person different from everyone else. If you would see my brother, James D. Horton, you would see him as a normal person, right! Well, you are wrong; he is different from you and me, in many other ways than physical appearance, because his actions towards other people are very different. Well now, let's get to the living part where I shall tell you about how I am able to live with an autistic brother.

Well, first there are some rules you have to follow.

- 1) Don't swear or do bad jesters (sp) in front of him or he will do them to you or to a person of higher authority.
- 2) Be very polite, kind, and respectful.
- 3) Let him be a part of what you are doing and share some of whatever you have.
- 4) Let him get close but not too close.
- 5) Always answer him even if you don't feel like it, do it to make him feel like you're paying attention.

- 6) Keep a good eye on what he is doing and be a really good friend.

Even though he is different make him feel like he is not and most of all remember we aren't all the same.

I have been told there is no cure. My brother will always be autistic. In many ways it will be OK but I hope that he will be able to handle the fact that a lot of people will think that he is odd. We can help him understand a lot of things and act the way he is suppose to act by doing what is called interventions. Those are ways of helping him deal with things he can't understand or to tell us that he doesn't understand. Right now, he gets really frustrated when he doesn't understand why he can't do something and he usually gets very loud. It's kind of like he is in a foreign country and doesn't speak the language and thinks if he talks louder and slower he will be understood.

*Editor's Note; Jason Horton lives in Duluth, MN and is in 8th grade at Jedlicka Middle School. Jason's brother, James, is in elementary school.*

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## Book Review

*The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children*  
by Ross W. Greene, Ph.D.

**Reviewed by Paula Krippner, District 196**

**T**his book is written primarily for parents but it is an informational tool for educators. I understand that a similar book by the same author is coming out specifically for educators. We have read this and set up a book club which has been helpful for teachers, paraprofessionals and administrators. The book offers ideas on how to work with children that exhibit explosive and inflexible behaviors. Through a number of examples of actual behaviors the strategies are implemented and described. It is written in an easily understandable format.

One of the major premises of the book is that the children do not choose to be explosive and noncompliant. More often than not the children already know that inflexibility and explosiveness are undesirable and are already motivated to be less inflexible and explosive. Simply put, the children are delayed in the process of developing the skills that are critical to being flexible and tolerant of frustration.



The book describes a process of establishing a user-friendly environment to help set the stage for more positive parent/child interactions; goes in depth in explaining a framework of using a basket strategy to prioritize which issues to work with and when; and also touches on medications. Some children may also need additional support through the use of a roadmap described as a 'mental script' to help a child through difficult situations. One of the keys to the process described is to include teaching the child to negotiate a mutually agreed upon solution. Through this the child becomes an active participant of the process. The book briefly describes expanding this process outside of the involvement of the parents and child to include other family members and school staff.

I feel the information discussed in the book really helps people implement strategies beyond consequences and motivation. It is a slow process but the effort put forth by all involved is well worth providing the children with an understanding of how to advocate for themselves in a way they can see that other people are trying to be helpful.

*The Explosive Child*, is published by Quill, an Imprint of Harper Collins Publishers, 2001, 336 pages.

**Inside: MNCEC  
Board of Directors  
Election Ballot &  
State Conference  
Information**



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**Letter  
from the Editor**

by Carol Long



**I** am on sabbatical. These words are golden! They mean I am relieved of my classes, student teachers, advising, and committee duties at Winona State University for this academic year. AND the time is flowing like water in a flooded river.

I looked “sabbatical year” up in the dictionary and found it means “a leave with pay, usually granted every seventh year, as to a college professor, for travel, research or rest.” As I planned my sabbatical, several of my senior colleagues advised, “You know it’s suppose to be a time of rest.” When I told my mother, she said, “You know it’s suppose to be a very productive time.” I asked myself, “What would I do if I had the time?” My answer was “more of what I’m doing but never get to devote my full attention to it.” So rather than taking on a completely new task, I’m spending the year in writing, service, and consultation.

It’s quite an experience to wake up in the morning and decide what I’m going to do, instead of my calendar dictating the day, to check my office voice mail and find there are no messages, and to be able to say, “Sorry, I can’t do that this year. I’m on sabbatical.” I’ve fallen into a routine of working until mid-afternoon and then going to the YMCA to swim or run. It’s a leisurely pace with

few interruptions, a luxury and a privilege I am grateful for everyday.

Before September when I told people I was going on sabbatical they asked, “Where are you going?” Well, where am I going? I’ve been to CEC Headquarters in Arlington, the CEC Teacher Education Division Conference in Biloxi. I’m going to National CEC Convention in New Orleans, CEC Headquarters again in March, and the National Paraprofessional Convention in Providence and for fun London and Chicago.

Now when I tell people I am on sabbatical they ask, “What are you doing?” Well, what am I doing?

I’m co-authoring a book than has been accepted by a publisher, I’m writing two articles to be submitted to journals, I’m working on two service projects for national CEC, editing the MNCEC newsletter, consulting with school districts, and presenting at state and national conferences. I’ve, also, found the time to help my mother create a family history complete with a family trivia game and I spent an extended Thanksgiving vacation with family in Missouri.

***”Where am I going?” and  
“What am I doing?”  
I think I’m going to a more  
scholarly level of productivity.  
I think I’m making a differ-  
ent, farther-reaching contri-  
bution to my field. I think I  
am deepening my connections  
with family and friends.***

But when I ask those questions on a more personal note-”Where am I going?” and “What am I doing?” I think I’m going to a more scholarly level of productivity. I think I’m making a different, farther-reaching contribution to my field. I think I am deepening my connections with family and friends. I think I am experiencing



MNCEC Board of Directors Elections  
Mail-in Ballot



**Ballots must be postmarked no later than February 21, 2004**

President  
**Vote for one (1)**

Larry  
Iwen

Secretary  
**Vote for one (1)**

Mark  
Krug

Treasurer  
**Vote for one (1)**

Lavonne See

Director  
**Vote for three (3)**

Roberta Kaufman

Nancy Recibe

Jana Rhoden

Jim Smith

Minnesota Council for Exceptional Children  
c/o Carol Long  
Special Education Department  
Winona State University  
Winona, MN 55987



**MNCEC Nominations Committee**  
**Mary Ellen Wade**  
**8786 W. Branch Road**  
**Duluth, MN 55803**