

2018 Michigan CEC Candidate Information

Open Positions 2018-19 Board of Directors:

- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Children's Action Network (CAN) Coordinator
- 2 Members-at-Large

Vice President (Vote for 1)

Andrea Jasper

Associate Professor of Special Education, Central Michigan University

Biography: Andrea Jasper is the Department Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Counseling and Special Education at Central Michigan University. She has been a member of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) since 2008 and has served in a variety of leadership positions within the organization including: Chair of the Diversity Caucus of the Teacher Education Division (TED), Treasurer of the Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL), Reviewer on the Editorial Board for the TEACHING Exceptional Children journal, and in 2016 she was elected to serve on the CEC Board of Directors as a Member-at-Large for Diverse, Ethnic, and Multicultural Groups. Dr. Jasper is passionate about the field of special education. Her strong record of teaching at the university and PK-12 levels, as well as her growing record of scholarship, demonstrate this commitment.

Education

- Ph.D., Special Education, Purdue University, 2011
- M.S.Ed., Special Education, Purdue University, 2007
- State of Indiana Teacher's License, Mild and Intense Intervention, All grade Major (K-12)
- B.A., African American Studies, Purdue University, 2004

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: Dr. Jasper was elected to serve as a Member-at-Large on the MCEC Executive Board in 2017. She finds this position personally and professionally rewarding. However, she desires to increase her level of involvement with the organization. She wants to contribute her knowledge, skills, and ability to further MCEC's mission. By working with the MCEC Executive Board, Dr. Jasper believes they can strengthen the field of special education and develop stronger ties between institutions of higher education and schools. Indeed, Dr. Jasper has had various experiences working with, and advocating for, individuals with exceptional needs and through these experiences has developed a variety of skills such as: flexibility, ability to problem-solve, a willingness to learn and help others, innovation in terms of developing new strategies and ideas, dedication, follow-through, and persistence. She considers herself a very genuine and kind-hearted person, and believes her ability to relate to others is a very valuable strength. Dr. Jasper believes that all of these skills will be instrumental in helping her meet the requirements of the Vice President position.

Treasurer (Vote for 1)

Andrew Claes

Special Education Director, Delta-Schoolcraft ISD

Biography: Andy Claes is currently the Director of Special Education at Delta-Schoolcraft Intermediate School District (DSISD) in Escanaba, Michigan where he advocates for the unique needs of all children. For more than 20 years, Andy has been engaged in the legal, financial, programmatic, evaluative, and instructional issues related to special education. Andy believes that

Special Education is the driving force behind higher student achievement, improved instructional practice, better quality programming, enhanced behavioral outcomes and the improvement of school systems. Passionate about learning, and the potential of all children, Andy works with other educational professionals across the state to ensure that every child succeeds to their highest potential.

Andy is a school psychologist by training, having obtained his undergraduate degree at Central Michigan University and his graduate degree at Northern Arizona University. He worked as an At-Risk Counselor for the Kingman School District and as a Case Manager for the Mohave Mental Health Agency before working as a school psychologist in Kingman and at the DSISD. He attained his Supervisor and Director endorsements through Northern Michigan University.

Andy has been an ISD director for the past eight years, advocating for the needs of students through his engagement with the Michigan Association of Administrators for Special Education, Michigan Council for Exceptional Children, the Council of Administrators for Special Education, and with congressmen in Washington, and in Lansing. Andy is the husband to Catherine Claes, a teacher and reading specialist currently working as an Implementation Specialist for Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative. They have two children, Abigail and Addam. Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: Michigan CEC provides a unique opportunity to engage with teachers, students and parents by coordinating a number of professional development opportunities, student resources, legislative updates, and teacher tools. I am proud to be a member of an organization of such integrity, professionalism and service to children. I enjoy the camaraderie, support and learning that Michigan CEC offers. I would humbly offer my services to advance the goals of MCEC, to strengthen the field of education and improve outcomes for students with exceptionalities.

Children's Action Network (CAN) Coordinator (Vote for 1)

Mark King

Director of Compliance and Technical Assistance, OAISD

Biography: Mark King has been employed by the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District for the past 15 years. Prior to his arrival in Ottawa County he was employed in Muskegon County as a teacher and administrator for nearly 20 years. Mark holds a Master of Arts in Education specializing in the area of Learning Disabilities from Grand Valley State University. He also earned all of his administrative credentials from GVSU. His undergraduate work was completed at Ball State University. Mark has spent the majority of his career working with severely emotionally impaired students either as a teacher or program supervisor. He has also been a middle school assistant principal and a high school principal. In 2008 he became the planner/monitor at OAISD. Mark has been a member of MAASE for over 20 years and has been active in various MAASE committees. He served as the President of the organization in 2008-2009. Mark loves the outdoors and especially cycling. He has been married to his wife, Cheryl, for 39 years. He is a proud father and grandfather.

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: I desire to become a member of the MCEC Board of Directors because I feel I still have much to give to special needs children, parents and the professionals who serve them. I am a strong leader who advocates for students and professionals. I am not hesitant to take the lead and to work with a team to accomplish any task. At the same time I make an excellent worker bee who loves to be part of a team and can be a role player. As a visionary I look to the horizon along with facts and current data to chart out a course to achieve. I understand that although there is a course that there may be a few detours along the way. Regardless, I don't lose focus of the ultimate goal and work tirelessly to that end. I am hard working, focused, possess a sense of humor, dedicated and passionate about the field of special education. This is demonstrated by my thirty-eight years in the field where I have been a

classroom teacher, a building principal, a local special education supervisor and an intermediate special education administrator.

Amanda McNamara

Teacher, ASD center-based classroom, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools

Biography:

- Special Education Teacher with 6 years of teaching experience, specializing in Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- 10 years working with children with disabilities in several different capacities, i.e. camp counselor, aba tech, 1:1, volunteer and organizer of special events.

Highlights:

- Member of ASD curriculum committee
- Member of Community partners committee
- Member of PBIS committee Autism Alliance Of Michigan- volunteer
- Autism Society of Michigan- volunteer
- Facilitated school-wide Autism Awareness Assembly
- Certification in ASD teacher consultant
- Trained in evidence based practice- Applied Behavior Analysis

Education:

- Eastern Michigan University- BS in Speech and Language Pathology with a minor in Psychology
- Wayne State University- MAT with an endorsement in Autism Spectrum Disorder

Work experience: Plymouth-Canton Community Schools- ASD center based Teacher

- Garden City Public Schools- Burger Baylor- ASD center based Teacher
- Global Educational Excellence- Riverside East Academy- Resource Room Teacher
- Detroit Public School- 5th grade Teacher
- West Bloomfield School District- ASD center based Teacher

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: I want to be an advocate for students, parents and fellow teachers about policy and legislation.

Members-at-Large (Vote for 2)

Amanda Brennan

Resource Room Teacher, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools

Biography: I am currently a Member at Large on the Board of the Michigan Council of Exceptional Children. My 14-year education career began as a Paraprofessional in a program that serves severely cognitively impaired, severely multiply impaired, and students dual-diagnosed with a cognitive and emotional impairment. I have also worked as a long-term substitute teacher and behavioral one-on-one. I proudly earned my degree in Elementary Education K-5 and Emotional Impairment K-12 from Eastern Michigan University. In 2013, I fulfilled my childhood dream of becoming a classroom teacher when I joined the teaching staff at Beacon Day Treatment in Southgate. While at Beacon, I transitioned from the classroom into a math interventionist role. Two years ago, I was fortunate to be offered a Resource Room position in the same school district where my dream once started, Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, where I continue to work today. At every level of my professional journey I have been interested in learning and drawing from the experiences of the fellow teachers and amazing families I work alongside. Within the last few years, I have had the pleasure of sharing my working knowledge at a variety of professional conferences, including the Making Mathematics Meaningful conference and the Annual MCEC

conference. I am also actively serving on the Professional Development Committee, which has allowed me to collaborate with Michigan Council of Teachers of Mathematics on planning for a joint conference and to explore participation expansion by setting up Twitter Chats. If you can't find me in my classroom, I'm probably exploring some of my other passions, such as tutoring, travelling, painting or enjoying time with my family.

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: I was born to teach! Nothing compares to the excitement and sense of accomplishment I see reflected on my student's faces - and in their work - when curriculum is brought to life for them. However, my responsibility to my students does not end when the lesson does. The needs of our students extend far beyond the walls of our schools; to be an effective teacher requires us to become informed and active advocates for their needs and larger learning experience at the community and government levels. Continuing to be a board member of Michigan CEC is the perfect platform for me to expand my knowledge of current Special Education law and research. More importantly, it would allow me to continue the invaluable opportunity to learn alongside seasoned educators, fierce advocates and knowledgeable researchers in a supportive, vibrant environment.

David Krantz

Assistant Director of Special Education, Saginaw ISD

Biography: I have been a positive, proactive advocate for students with disabilities for over twenty years. My roles in education have included teacher at the Sanilac County Jail, Boysville and Teen Ranch, and Swan Valley School District in Saginaw. Seven years ago, I was approached to consider administration and accepted a position as a Supervisor of Special Education within the Saginaw ISD, where I currently serve as the Assistant Director of Special Education. I hold my Master's Degree in Classroom Teaching with endorsements in Emotional Impairments and Learning Disabilities, along with an Education Specialist Degree and Central Office Certification from Saginaw Valley State University.

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: During my years involved with CEC, CASE, and MAASE, I have always known that being more involved was an aspiration that I would pursue. I believe the people that know me best would describe me as a positive, big picture thinker who always puts the needs and goals of students first and look forward to the possibility of serving on the MCEC Board to provide my abilities to this outstanding organization.

Tammy Robinson

Special Education Supervisor for Battle Creek Public Schools, Calhoun ISD

Biography: I began my profession as a teacher in Detroit Public Schools for Teacher for America in 2002. I taught in Detroit for 2 years and because of instability of a teaching position in DPS, I moved to Kalamazoo and worked at Lakeside Treatment and Residential Program for a year. In 2005, I took a position as a special education teacher for students with disabilities at Union City High School. During that time, I enrolled at WMU to work on my Master's of Special Education and after graduation, went back to WMU to receive my Special Education Supervisor/Director endorsement. In 2012, I accepted the position of a Special Education Supervisor for the Calhoun Intermediate School District. From that time, until the present, I have been assigned to Battle Creek Public Schools. Over the past 5 years, my focus has been on improving the teaching of special education teachers to be culturally responsive, trauma informed and to improve the outcomes for our students with disabilities.

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: My passion is to ensure our students with disabilities are included and fully participate in academic, social-emotional and non academic activities at the same rate as their non disabled peers. I believe our adult practices are segregated into a special education vs. general education, which creates a barrier to our students being viewed as a general education student first, and limits their participation in all activities. My hope is that joining MCEC, will allow me to work on behalf of our students to make progress by

collaborating with others in the state to ensure our students are fully included the same as their non-disabled peers.

Kathy Slee

Special Education Supervisor/Principal, Calhoun ISD

Biography: I began my journey in the world of Special Education as a 1-on-1 para pro. From there I decided that I wanted to go to school to become a special education teacher. I completed my undergraduate program at WMU and I spend 7 years in the classroom as a teacher and eventually a teacher consultant. After completing my Special Education Administration program at GVSU I have spent the past 6 years working as a special education supervisor/principal for the Calhoun Intermediate School District.

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: I have been a member of CEC since the beginning of my time as a special educator. Recently I asked to be a part of the membership committee. I am excited to continue my work within the MCEC membership committee and am interested in furthering my involvement by becoming a member at large for the MCEC.

Carolyn Smith-Gerdes

Assistant Director of Special Education

Biography:

> Education: B.A. in Psychology, M.S in Special Education, M.Ed. in Special Education Administration

> Currently the Assistant Director of Special Education for Muskegon Area ISD

> Past position: Supervisor of Special Education - Newaygo Co. RESA

> Past position: Early Childhood Special Education Teacher

> Past position: Special Education Teacher for elementary students with significant disabilities >

Past position: Teacher of infants and toddlers with disabilities

> Affiliations: MAASE Member: served as President; currently serve on the Membership Services and Legislative Action Committees; CASE Member: currently serve on the Unit Development Committee

> Organizational Interests: meeting the needs of members; legislative advocacy

Why you would like to serve on the MCEC Board: Michigan CEC's past and present accomplishments on behalf of educators, children, youth, and families inspire me to represent our members' interests as a part of this organization's leadership and work! I am committed to working as part of the MCEC team to realize the Board's priorities. My preference as a leader is to be people-conscious, knowledgeable and very actively involved in the work being done as well as in the decision-making.

Some things that are important to me if I become part of the leadership team include:

> finding a multitude of ways to know and understand MCEC members' needs in teaching and supporting children, youth and their families and then working to meet those needs;

> teaming with MCEC Board members to find and offer innovative ways to increase educator efficacy and student achievement to our members; and

> strengthening MCEC's legislative advocacy through understanding members' needs and harnessing members' knowledge and energy to influence legislation that affects educators, students and their families.

I am excited about the opportunity to be an active contributor to the work of MCEC!