Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday, we were made aware that the USBE’s Board Members voted in June to remove the CEC Standards from licensure competencies due to the term ‘diverse students’ being included. This action is troubling for many reasons. First, most (if not all) Utah universities use the CEC standards for teacher preparation and accreditation. Second, the Board referred to the 2012 CEC standards and did not consider current CEC standards. Third, since creating multiple pathways for teachers to become licensed in our state, the USBE created the state competencies based on the CEC standards in order to license teachers.

While the removal of CEC standards does not disallow universities from using CEC standards, it prevents new programs from adopting them and may have some trickle-down effects (e.g. universities offering courses for APPEL SPED).

You can see the [recorded board meeting here](https://youtu.be/OZLn1FKBugU?si=qjLJQeX45qPDHU4p).  Please note, the link will take you to the point in the meeting where the discussion occurs. The CEC standard discussion begins around 10 minutes into the video and the Board voted unanimously to remove CEC standards.  Here are the highlights:

**Concerns Raised**: (This was in the Law and Licensing Meeting 6/06/2024 Pt. 2)

* CEC website is full of D.E.I. (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion), however no evidence was provided to support this claim.  A quick search shows 102 references on the CEC Website, 63 references on USBE website, and more than 500 references on the US Dept. of Education website.
* DEI Statements and Initiatives, ~~we~~ would be in violation of the state law that was just passed. ([**HB261**](https://le.utah.gov/~2024/bills/static/HB0261.html)) (Prohibited Discriminatory Practice). Hypothetically, there could be an argument thatthe CEC standards could violate HB261 (see discussion around min 3:12)
* Alignment with CEC International Standards encourage Ideology and Race Based agendas.

**Actions Taken by the USBE Board:**(Taken on 6/07/2024 Unfinished Business Pt.2-last 10 minutes of the meeting)

* Removed the CEC Standards (2012) from the Competencies
* Removed “Diverse Students” in connection with race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation.

There was not a USBE board meeting in July, so the vote has not been made into rule but will be at their next meeting on August 1st.  We are asking that CEC members act now against this decision to ensure teacher candidates and current educators continue to meet evidence-based and nationally recognized standards from the premiere organization in special education. Here are some things you can do:

1. Share this information with your colleagues.  Forward this email. We will be posting on our socials and would appreciateyou sharing to your networks.
2. Send an email to the [Board](https://www.schools.utah.gov/board) requesting to speak at the August 1st meeting.
3. Reach out to your board member and share your experience with CEC (e.g. how it has influenced your career, impacts to your political advocacy, etc.).  Not sure who your representative is?  [Click here](https://schools.utah.gov/board/utah/members).  Not sure what district you are in?  [Click here](https://schools.utah.gov/board/utah/districtsmap).  Please note:  To ensure you are not breeching any rules at your workplace, make sure to use your personal email address, and refer to your job generally (e.g. “I am a special educator at a Title 1 school in Salt Lake City”, “I work with students with behavior disorders in St. George”). A template has been provided below to make the process easier.

We appreciate your support of CEC to ensure our field protects all students!

Suggested template:

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Dear Board Member Name [(find board member names and emails here](https://schools.utah.gov/board/utah/members))

I am a resident in your district and strongly urge you to reconsider the removal of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) standards in Utah educator licensing competencies. As an educator in Utah's schools and an advocate for children and their families I feel qualified to state that  removal of the CEC standards is not in Utah's children’s best interest and will contribute to lower outcomes for children and teachers. I strongly urge you to revisit the vote taken on June 6, 2024 regarding CEC Standards.

Some areas to consider include:

* The June Board vote was based on the 2012 CEC standards and not the current [2020 CEC standards](https://exceptionalchildren.org/standards/initial-practice-based-professional-preparation-standards-special-educators).
* The national CEC convention is scheduled to be held in [Salt Lake City in 2026](https://cecconvention.org/2026). The last time the CEC convention was held in Utah approximately 12,000 educators from around the world attended.
* Utah’s Institutes of Higher Education rely on the CEC Standards for accreditation for their teacher education programs.
* The CEC standards are evidence based and best practices to ensure a free and appropriate public education for students with disabilities

Again, please reconsider CEC standards and teacher licensure.  

Your Name, Your City