



DIVISION ON CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSITION  
**COUNCIL FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN**  
LIVING • LEARNING • WORKING

## Policy and Advocacy Toolkit

Use this toolkit to access information about current advocacy efforts, resources to support you, and ways you can contribute toward supporting these efforts.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The information in this Advocacy Toolkit, including any attachments, is intended for practitioners, family members, and others with an interest in advocacy on issues related to secondary transition of students with disabilities.

**For the most up-to-date information, follow us:**

→ **Website:** <https://dcdt.org/>

**X:** @DCDT\_CEC

### A QUICK NOTE ABOUT RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH POLICYMAKERS

- Focus on policies.
- Keep it short and sweet.
- Good data supports your position.
- To appeal to the emotions of the policymakers, tell a personal story that connects to your point or amplify the voice or lived experiences of others.
- Whenever possible, connect the dots between the policy and impact in the geographical area or with the constituency represented by the policymaker.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- DCDT Policy & Advocacy Committee Sessions
  - Contact Committee Chair Josh Taylor ([josh.taylor@wsu.edu](mailto:josh.taylor@wsu.edu)) for more information about the committee and/or to attend sessions.
  - Occur the second Thursday of each month at 3 pm EST

- [Click here for the Zoom link.](#)
- [Visit the DCDT website](#) for the most current meeting information.
- DCDT Town Halls
  - Occur the third Thursday of each month at 3 pm EST
  - To join a town hall, email Stacie Dojonovic ([sdojonovic@ku.edu](mailto:sdojonovic@ku.edu)).
- Special Education Legislative Summit (SELS)
  - Occurs annually in July in Washington, D.C.
  - [Visit the CEC Legislative Summit website](#) for information.

## DCDT Policy Priorities

**Through our advocacy efforts, DCDT members seek to:**

- Uphold the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 principles ensuring specialized support for students with disabilities;
- Advocate for students with disabilities, their families, their teachers, and supporting faculty, staff, and other professionals;
- Empower transition educators through use of research-informed practices and predictors of post-school success;
- Emphasize the importance of embedding transition education in preservice and graduate programs through rigorous transition competencies;
- Increase access to high-quality transition preparation programs; and
- Support equity-focused research in career development and transition.

## Where to Find Current Policy Information

### Washington Updates

[Visit the DCDT Policy and Advocacy Committee website](#) to access links about current legislation and where they are in the process. (Scroll down to the bottom of the page.)

Use [this link](#) to read CEC What's Happening in Washington Webinar from CEC policy advisor, Kuna Tavalin.

Use [this link](#) to read current and previous Washington updates from TED policy advisor, Dr. Kaitlyn Brennan.

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### **Podcast**

Want to hear more about policy and advocacy? Listen to our TED and CEC Collaboration Podcast. This is a great way to learn about the critical role of advocacy in the field of special education. [Click here to listen on Spotify](#), and [click here to listen to Apple Podcasts](#).

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### **Advocacy Briefs**

Use advocacy briefs to build your knowledge or share with students who are ready to learn more about supporting our field. [Incorporating Advocacy in Higher Education; SELS; Federal Appropriations Process](#).

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### **CEC/Division of Research (DR) Town Hall**

On February 20, 2025, CEC and DR held a Town hall and offered materials for use in advocacy efforts. You can find the materials [HERE](#).

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## **Stay Up-To-Date**

### **Education Law Center (ELC) Data**

The ELC has developed [an interactive tool](#) that shows the financial impact of eliminating Title 1, IDEA, and other forms of aid.

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### **Ballotpedia**

Track what is on the [ballot at national, state, and local levels using Ballotpedia](#).

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## Disability Scoop

The Disability Scoop is a news organization that provides daily news and updates related to developmental disabilities. Find top stories [HERE](#).

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### Coordinate Public Statements

This includes links to public statements made by organizations and policymakers. Add comments with links to additional statements so we can continue to add to the list [HERE](#).

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### Communications Worth Mentioning

This includes informative news stories and Op-Eds about the impact on students with disabilities, their teachers, and research. Add comments with additional communications so we can continue to add to the list [HERE](#).

## Action and Advocacy

<b>State Special Education Legislative Summits</b>	DCDT awarded a grant to the Oklahoma Subdivision of DCDT to develop a <a href="#">State Special Education Legislative Summit Toolkit</a> to document the work they were doing in their state to educate constituents about policy work in Oklahoma. The team took their experience in attending “A Day on The Hill” at the U.S. Capitol and created a similar structure for annual events in Oklahoma. The toolkit walks you through the steps necessary to host your own event as well as how to sift through the thousands of proposed bills that might be put forth in your state so you can identify those pertaining to students with disabilities. An essential part of the toolkit includes informing constituents about how they can elevate
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	their voices, regardless of their position or role and dispelling myths about advocacy v. lobbying.
<b>CEC Legislative Action Center</b>	The Council for Exceptional Children maintains a legislative action center that makes emailing your representatives and senators a quick task! Use <a href="#">these resources</a> to send emails to elected officials urging them to protect the Department of Education and provide adequate funding for programs impacting special education, including IDEA, education research, and educator supports.
<b>The Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) Advocacy center</b>	CASE maintains a legislative action center. Use <a href="#">their resources</a> to send letters to your senators and representatives.
<b>The ARC Advocacy Center</b>	The Arc maintains a very active legislative action center focused on the rights and resources of individuals with disabilities. You can use <a href="#">their resources</a> to send letters to members of Congress about policies that support the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities, such as Medicaid.

## Action If You're Into Social Media

Topic	Information on Topic
<b>Infographics and Memes</b>	<p>Want something a bit more creative to post and share? You can use <a href="#">THESE slides</a> created using the <a href="#">Ed Law Center</a> for funding and teaching positions with the student #s estimates of <a href="#">special educator-to-student ratios</a> in the state. Or maybe you want to use <a href="#">these slides</a>, focused on the role of federal funding to support teacher preparation and high-quality professional learning opportunities.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Please make sure to MAKE A COPY first before editing and revising the slides for your needs.</p>
<b>Tag Your Representatives or Education-related Legislative Committees</b>	<p>If you've found informative content from DCDT or other advocacy organizations (the TED Podcast Stories of families of children with disabilities, for example), tag or @ your Senators, state representative, or committees that need to hear these stories.</p> <p><b>Twitter/X handles:</b></p> <p>@HHSGov  @edworkforcecmet  @senateapprops  @appropsGOP  @GOPHelp  @HELPCmtDems</p> <p><b>Or a full list of Social Media contact information:</b></p> <p><a href="#">119th Congress Social Media Handles</a></p>

## **Action- If You're Ready to Email, Make a Call, or Schedule a Visit**

### **Scripts**

Ready to take action? CEC [has developed a series of resources for advocating](#) to make a difference!

**Thank you to the DCDT Policy and Advocacy  
Committee for Developing this Advocacy Toolkit.  
Special thanks to Kim Osmani, Gianna Marshall,  
Jennifer Lillis, and Josh Taylor.**