



President's Corner



Zabrina Cannady

Greetings G-CASE members! I hope that you have all had a wonderful start to the 2019-20 school year. It is hard for me to believe that this is the 26th time I have "started" a school year. It is often said that when you count your life in school years...those years really fly by! Having already counted several school years, I'm in total agreement with that saying! I encourage you to enjoy each year that you are granted the opportunity to work in the rewarding field of special education; I challenge you to seize every minute as an opportunity to support students, families, teachers, and fellow administrators. However, while you are busily going about your school year encouraging and supporting everyone around you, please don't forget to take care of yourself. In the words of Bryant McGill, *taking care of yourself is the most powerful way to begin to take care of others.*

Expanding upon your knowledge and networking with other leaders in your field is an excellent way to take care of yourself when it comes to your professional life. Our upcoming fall conference will provide you with outstanding opportunities for growth in those areas as we celebrate being *One Team and having One Dream!* While enjoying the beautiful city of Savannah, we will come together to discover innovative practices, understand why a positive mindset matters, and be reminded how kindness might change the course of a young life. G-CASE 2019 Fall Conference will feature four nationally known keynote speakers, with each one bringing a different, but vital message about the importance of teamwork. We are also thrilled to have Dr. Zephine Smith-Dixon as part of the lineup, as well as some of our favorite legal friends from Harbin, Hartley & Hawkins. In addition, we will have some relevant and insightful presentations from districts across Georgia that are gaining momentum and seeing progress through a team focused approach.

G-CASE 2019, *One Team, One Dream*, is right around the corner! If you have not yet registered, please go ahead and do so... we want you to reap the benefits of an excellent program and fabulous professional camaraderie! While we have totally enjoyed the River Boat cruises, this year our TeachTown sponsored social on Thursday evening will be on land. We will be having a G-CASE Tailgate Party in the Hyatt Harborside Ballroom, with that area of River Street blocked for us to enjoy corn-hole, spike-ball, and other tailgate activities. Inside the ballroom, we will enjoy tasty tailgate food and drinks, as well as our own Brad Bowling from Barrow County as our DJ. Start brushing up on your go-to karaoke songs! Don't forget to bring your favorite team attire... tailgate parties call for jerseys and jeans.

Once again, I thank all of you for bestowing upon me the honor of being your G-CASE President. I am focused upon continuing the great tradition of leading G-CASE as those that came before me led...with passion, perseverance, and tradition. I hope to see you all in Savannah this November. As always, I am here if you need me!

Notes from the Executive Director

It is such an exciting time to be a member of G-CASE!

Our Executive Board met for a three-day retreat in June in Helen, Georgia to plan for this year. We discussed the professional leaning opportunities we want to offer based on your response to our surveys and conference evaluations, and identified locations for Drive-In Conferences in North, Middle, and South Georgia for easier travel; brainstormed ideas for our new leadership academy that is being created for special education teachers who desire to become special education administrators (opening in the 2020-2021 school year!); finalized plans to provide mentors from the G-CASE Advisory Board to SELDA (Special Education Leadership Development Academy), with whom we partner with the GADOE; discussed G-CASE/CEC/CASE/GAEL membership incentives – increasing our focus on membership for college and university professors; up-dated the Strategic Plan for another three years (located on the G-CASE website); approved three new policies; reviewed and set important dates affecting G-CASE; planned for the summer G-CASE Business Meeting during the Summer GAEL Conference at Jekyll Island; approved the FY20 budget; and provided an annual evaluation for the Executive Director. The retreat ended with incoming President Zabrina Cannady highlighting the Fall G-CASE Conference in Savannah and the group giving a standing ovation, lots of hugs, and a commemorative gavel/plaque to President Greg McElwee for his excellent vision, guidance, and leadership to our G-CASE family. (He also led all of us on the brand-new *Georgia Mountain Coaster* ride...)



Since the retreat, we have held our G-CASE Business Meeting at Summer GAEL, recruiting several new committee members; met with our Event Planners at the Hyatt and a representative from "Visit Savannah" to make sure everything is perfect for our Fall Conference, selected and negotiated with our "overflow hotel," cultivated exhibitors and sponsors for exciting special activities during the conference, handled registration for the Parent Mentor Kickoff Conference, and introduced the power of G-CASE at SELDA in August, while providing a Leadership Activity for our first and second year directors.

Please read this newsletter cover to cover! It includes everything you need to know about everything G-CASE...and if we've left something out that you want to know more about, please contact me at sburbach@gael.org. This year is going to be another great one for G-CASE as we work together as a team to continue to improve outcomes for our students!



Sarah Burbach

The Top 10 Things G-CASE is Getting Excited About Right Now!

1. Skill-building, motivational, fun, and exciting Fall Conference in Savannah with all kinds of new activities!
2. Fall Conference Exhibitors will be given the opportunity to present at a Breakout Session dedicated just to them so that we can learn about the newest products, how they might work for us in our systems, ask questions, and hear from directors who are actually using the product/ program/service!
3. Continuing to partner with the GaDOE for SELDA (Special Education Leadership Development Academy) by using our G-CASE Advisory Board members as mentors!
4. Spending this year to develop a Special Education Teacher Leader Academy which will go live in the summer of 2020! We will be providing skills to great special education teachers who are interested in becoming great special education directors!
5. Our G-CASE membership is at 568, with new members being added daily with Fall Conference registrations!
6. Awards are coming! We will present the Lillie Moncus Outstanding Special Education Administrator of the Year, the Friend of G-CASE Award, and welcome our Ambassadors at Fall Conference! Get your nominations ready!
7. G-CASE will be well represented at several national events this year and we can't wait to share with our members all the information we've gleaned: RTM Special Education Congress in Palm Springs, CASE National Conference in Louisville, and CEC International Convention in Portland, Oregon!
8. G-CASE represents you through several important GAEL initiatives this year: 2020 Legislative Priorities, A Day at the Capital, and a new Teacher Retirement Task Force!
9. A new Emeritus Council has been established -- In an effort to retain the knowledge and skills of distinguished G-CASE Past-Presidents, as well as keeping them actively involved in the G-CASE organization at a high level!
10. Our super Fall Conference in Savannah, featuring a Silent Auction, best Tailgate Party EVER, nationally-acclaimed speakers, door prizes, great exhibits, special coupons from Visit Savannah.....Wow!

E X H I B I T O R S

Do you have a good vendor that works well with you that you'd like to see at the Fall Conference in Savannah?

Send contact information to Sarah Burbach, Executive Director, at sburbach@gael.org

You are cordially invited to...

The Georgia Council of Administrators
of Special Education
2019 Fall Conference

“One Team, One Dream”

Hyatt Regency Savannah

Savannah, Georgia

November 13-15, 2019

Click [HERE](#) to register

If you haven't booked your room for the G-CASE Fall Conference in Savannah, yet, our Overflow Hotel, with a block of rooms reserved at a special rate for G-CASE, is the Alida Hotel, a five-minute walk to the Hyatt. Book now at the link below!

[Book your group rate for Georgia Council of Administrators of Special Education Room Block November 2019](#)

Call for Proposals

One Team, One Dream

**Breakout Sessions
November 13-15, 2019**

**Hyatt Regency Savannah
2 West Bay Street, Savannah,
Georgia 31401**

Join us as we become One Team and share One Dream at the 2019 G-CASE Fall Conference! We want you to share new initiatives or even new “spins” on proven processes and programs that work in your system in order to provide highly effective, positive outcomes for our Exceptional Students. The goal of this conference will be to showcase initiatives and resources that school districts are using to improve achievement for students with disabilities and to raise the graduation rate for them by working as a team.

G-CASE is seeking strong proposals for breakout sessions that focus on effective partnerships and team building. Preference will be given to proposals highlighting new initiatives and resources that have been started and are working!

Breakout sessions are 75 minutes long and are scheduled on Thursday, November 14th .

The deadline for submitting a proposal is September 23rd, 2019.

Proposals must contain the following information:

- Title of Proposed Breakout Session
- Summary of Presentation (100 words or less)
- Major Objectives of the Proposed Breakout Session
- Presenters: (name, position, school or district, and email address for each presenter)
- Name, position, address, email and phone number of the person submitting this Proposal. This person will become the Contact Person for all communications regarding the breakout session at the conference.

Important Information:

- Presenters are asked to provide electronic copies of handouts and/or presentations by October 31, 2019, so they can be posted on our website prior to the conference, if they are to be used.
- Presenters who desire for attendees to have a hard copy of any handouts must provide them at your own expense. G-CASE does not provide hard copies of handouts. However, we are glad to email documents out to attendees so that they can print their own copy prior to the conference.
- Each presenter is expected to register for and attend the fall conference
- Up to two additional presenters who are members of G-CASE will be given a discounted registration rate of \$75 less than the regular registration rate. Reduced registration fees are processed through Sarah Burbach. Please contact her at sburbach@gael.org.
- Presenters must furnish their own laptops and projectors.
- Screens, power strips, tables, chairs and podium are provided in each breakout room.

*Please email your completed proposal to Sarah Burbach, Executive Director of G-CASE, at sburbach@gael.org no later than **September 16, 2019**.*

The selection of breakout sessions will be completed by early October and notification will be sent to the contact person who submitted the proposal.

*Thank you for being an important part of our 2019 Fall Conference!
We can't wait for you to share the impressive teamwork going on in your system!*

2019 Lillie Moncus Award Nominations

Each year G-CASE presents the Lillie Moncus Award as the highest honor for an experienced special education director in Georgia. This award is presented to an individual with seven or more years of experience as a special education director who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and service in the area of special education. This person characterizes resourcefulness, compassion and professionalism as a leader. The Lillie Moncus Special Education Director of the Year has earned the respect of teachers, students, parents and fellow administrators.

Qualifications:

The Candidate must:

- be a current Special Education Director with 7 or more years of experience as a director
- be a member of G-CASE
- demonstrate exemplary leadership and service as a special education administrator
- demonstrate care and concern for students with disabilities and their families
- contribute to the field of special education
- be actively involved in professional and community affairs
- be recognized as an outstanding leader in their local district and/or the state

Nomination Requirements:

Nominations may be made by an individual or group as long as the nomination

originates within the school system and the nomination form is endorsed by a current

active member of G-CASE. Nominations must include:

- Completed nomination form (below)
- Narrative detailing exemplary service as a Special Education Director (two page max)
- At least 2 letters of support

NOMINATION FORM:

Name of Nominee:

School System:

Position:

Work Address:

Email Address:

Work Phone:

Cell Phone:

Number of Years in Education:

Number of Years in Current Position:

Number of Years as a G-CASE Member:

Name of Person Making Nomination:

Email Address:

Work Phone:

Cell Phone:



Sarah Taylor
2018 Lillie Moncus Award Winner

Completed nomination packets should be submitted by email to:

Greg P. McElwee
gmcElwee@nwgnet.org

2019-2020 Immediate Past President Georgia Council for Special Education Administrators (G-CASE)

Deadline for Nominations: October 11, 2019



Congratulations

Jimmy Pitzer, Special Education Director of Walton County Schools and GCASE Policy and Procedures Chair, received the 2019 GAEL/G-CASE Jim Puckett Educator of the Year Award at Summer GAEL.

Greg McElwee, GNETS and Special Programs Director for NW RESA and GCASE Immediate Past President, was recognized by Jimmy Stokes for his exceptional service and achievements furthering the cause of GAEL and educational leaders at Summer GAEL.



Know a Great Special Education Teacher Who Deserves Recognition? Nominate Him/Her to be a CEC Ambassador to the G-CASE Fall Conference!

Each year G-CASE selects six **teacher leaders** to serve as Ambassadors at the G-CASE Fall Conference. These individuals assist with conference activities such as registration, breakout sessions, special activities, working with our sponsors and exhibitors, assisting keynote speakers -- being available, providing resources and answering questions as needed. In exchange, the Ambassadors receive conference registration, up to three nights lodging at Conference Headquarters, the Hyatt Regency Savannah, and all travel and meal expenses.

Ambassadors will need to be at the Hyatt in Savannah no later than 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, November 12, 2019, and are expected to stay through the end of the conference on Friday, November 15, 2019. G-CASE does not provide reimbursement for substitute teachers for the ambassadors.

Your assistance is needed to identify the teacher leader candidates for the Ambassador positions. These individuals will be recognized at the conference for their achievements and will return to your system refreshed with the newest ideas, trends, programs, and products in special education. Each candidate will complete the online form through the link below.

[2019 CEC/G-CASE Ambassador Application](#)

Deadline for applications is September 30, 2019

For more information, please contact
Dr. MaryKay Berry, CEC Liaison to G-CASE
*Director of Student Services
White County School System
136 Warrior's Path
Cleveland, GA 30528
706-865-2315
marykay.berry@white.k12.ga.us*

Autism Network Partnership

Submitted by: Donna McClain
South Central GLRS



In The Spotlight...

South Central GLRS partnered with the Emory Autism Center this year to establish a collaborative Autism Network in partnership with the school systems in the region. Each school system in the South Central GLRS network nominated one to three staff members to participate in the training. The goal of the Autism Network is to create a group of educators and specialists in the South Central GLRS network who can serve as “local experts” for training, support and problem solving focused on the education of students with autism spectrum disorders. Three major activities are scheduled in support of this mission: (1) small group trainings; (2) large group trainings; and (3) classroom observations.



Small-Group Trainings are for development of local experts on autism, and several ½ day trainings have been scheduled. These trainings are focusing on the following: (a) evidence-based practices for educating students with ASD; (b) practical strategies for implementing evidence-based practices in general education settings; (c) behavioral programming for students with ASD, and (d) strategies for supporting the social-emotional development of students with ASD. In addition, trainings are providing opportunities for case discussion and problem-solving. Participants are expected to attend trainings, redeliver information at the system, school, or classroom level, and engage in resource sharing, classroom observations with the Emory staff and discussion within the SCGLRS Autism Network.



Several large group didactic presentations have also been scheduled. Topics for these presentations emphasize practical applications and classroom strategies with a focus on higher functioning students with autism being served in the general education setting.



Classroom observations have been scheduled for each school district. The primary purpose of the observations is two-fold: (1) to model the EAC observation methodology and domains of focus; and (2) to collaboratively discuss the application of training content in the form of classroom recommendations.

Districts in the area are excited about the possibilities this training holds for our students, staff, and family members, and we are striving for improved outcomes for students with ASD.



Georgia Department of Education Update

By: Dr. Zephine Smith-Dixon, State Director
Division for Special Education Services and Supports

We are excited about the FY20 school year and can't wait to share more of the 2020 Vision with you to ensure that we keep Georgia's students first. Georgia continues to improve student outcomes, which would not be possible without seamless and collaborative opportunities for leadership between the Georgia Department of Education and local leaders in special education. We understand on a much deeper level that both general education leaders and special education leaders both impact those positive outcomes for students with disabilities and support inclusive environments at the school level.

Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs) and Georgia Learning Resources System (GLRS) play critical roles in this partnership and often support further the regional technical assistance needs. We are excited about taking the work of excellence, equity and efficacy to the next level for our teachers and ensuring that each school has an intentional and inclusive leader. Our students must be ready to live, learn and lead. Join me in wishing Georgia's students, teachers, and leaders a productive year.

G-CASE Advisory Board:

Now Even More Important than Ever!

The G-CASE Advisory Board meets at least twice annually with the Executive Board. The Advisory Board is composed of representatives selected by their peers from each GLRS District by September 15th of each year and approved by the Executive Board for a two-year term (which can be renewed). The Advisory Board members voice the concerns of their districts, share professional learning needs, and convey G-CASE-information back to their districts, as appropriate.

An important responsibility has been added to this year's Advisory Board members -- they will now also serve as mentors to the new (first and second year) directors in their GLRS areas as part of SELDA (*Special Education Leadership Development Academy*).

Members of the Advisory Board:

1. Are active members of G-CASE/CEC/CASE
2. Meet twice annually with the Executive Board, usually during Fall and Spring Conferences
3. Have voting privileges at meetings of the Advisory Board
4. Advise the Executive Board on matters such as speakers, topics, and locations for Professional Learning opportunities
5. Keep the G-CASE Executive Board cognizant of activities and issues happening in individual districts
6. Encourage all directors in their GLRS area to become members of G-CASE and CEC/CASE. Advisory Board members work with the Membership Committee Chair and the G-CASE Executive Director for strategies to increase membership growth
7. Discuss and assist in planning membership social events and encourage other G-CASE members to attend
8. Facilitate communication between G-CASE and district GLRS groups
9. Be aware of and support all initiatives in the G-CASE Strategic Plan
10. Actively serve on one G-CASE Standing Committee
11. Serve as mentors through SELDA (*Special Education Leadership Development Academy*) to the new (first and second year) directors in their GLRS areas.

Mentors will:

- Have three years' experience as a Director of Special Education, or the equivalent
- Be willing to volunteer time and knowledge to the new directors; be supportive and passionate about improving outcomes for students with disabilities
- Be available to the new director(s) at GLRS meetings and when needed. (Each GLRS district has a chosen Advisory Board representative, so the new directors attending monthly Special Education Director Meetings/ Collaborative Communities in the district will have easy access to "their" mentor – a mentor who is already a part of their GLRS area so they would share common ground and easy accessibility)
- Partner with the area GLRS Director and GaDOE District Liaison (DL) at each monthly Special Education Director/Collaborative Communities meeting to provide support/knowledge to the new director(s)
- Receive a brief training on expectations prior to the Fall G-CASE Conference in Savannah at their bi-annual Advisory Board meeting
- Not need to attend all SELDA meetings but will have a schedule of each SELDA meeting date, time, and place and will be encouraged, but not required, to attend at least one SELDA meeting, if possible

***Thank you, Advisory Board Members!
Your role is Crucial to G-CASE and to our
New Directors!***

Legislative Summit

BY: Dr. Jenny McClintic
Legislative Chair, GCASE Executive Board

CASE and CEC joined forces to “Storm the Hill.” Our collective group of trained advocates held a rally on Capitol Hill led by Representative Jared Huffman of California. He joined his voice with ours in stating that IDEA should be fully funded. Prior to our participation in the rally and holding individual meetings with Congressman and Representatives, we received in depth training on the legislative priorities centered on education appropriations, keeping public funds in public education, addressing the shortage of special education teachers, and mental health. Georgia had the largest recorded group of constituents with eight participating in this year’s legislative summit.



Funding remains a priority of our organization. Over 6.8 million students, approximately 13% of total student enrollment, in the United States receive special education and related services through IDEA. When IDEA was first approved the Federal Government pledged to pay 40% of excess cost. Unfortunately, the current federal share is estimated at 16%. We urged law makers to support and co-sponsor the IDEA

Full Funding Act during each individual meeting held. We also encouraged our Members of Congress to not allow public funds to be used to subsidize private education. We asked that they support efforts that maintain and enhance the use of public funds for public education and services as well as oppose the use of public funds for families to access private education through vouchers, tax credits, scholarships, or direct tuition payments.



Mental health and building a positive climate for learning continues to be a topic of sincere interest of our professional organization as well as our representatives. We were able to discuss several opportunities they would have to determine legislation and funding for training and implementation of evidence based mental health interventions. Increasing access to mental health services through policy and funding was on the forefront.

Forty-Eight states and the District of Columbia all report a shortage of special education teachers. We asked that Members of Congress provide Personnel Preparation Grants to support aspiring special education teachers. As professional organizations, we pledged to do our part to retain teachers if they would assist us in recruiting them in this manner. We also asked for their support and co-sponsorship of a number of bills including Higher Education Act TEACH Grant Program, STRIVE, and PREP.

The full issue briefs for these legislative priorities may be found online at specialeducationlegislativesummit.org and by clicking on the resources tab.



GEORGIA

The voice and vision of special education

Submitted by Michelle Starley, Georgia CEC President

The Georgia Council for Exceptional Children (GaCEC) is excited about the events we have planned for the current school year! We will be offering mini-grants again this year to help teachers acquire supplies for their classrooms. These supplies can range from technology to flexible seating to adaptive equipment and other items teachers may need. We will also be celebrating Exceptional Children’s Week the first week in March.

There will be a state-wide student contest to celebrate this week.

Currently, we are looking for a Membership Committee Chairperson as well as a Technology Committee Chairperson. If you know of anyone who might be interested in serving, please let us know!

We are extremely appreciative of the support we receive from G-CASE and are looking forward to a productive year!

Michelle Starley - President
Damita James - President Elect
Karin Fisher - Vice President
Larissa Beecher - Secretary
Heather Lewis - Treasurer
Leslie Allen - Past President

Important Dates

FY 20:

- September 11-13, 2019 Parent Mentor Conference Continuing Ed/Athens
(G-CASE is fiscal agent/registration, etc.)
- September 21-25, 2019 RTM Special Education Congress Palm Springs, CA
(President, ED)
- October 16-17, 2019 SELDA Macon
- October 26-29, 2019 CASE Fall Conference Louisville, KY
(President, Pres-Elect, ED)
- November 13, 2019 SELDA Hyatt, Savannah
(Legal Issues sponsored by G-CASE)
- November 13, 10 G-CASE EB and AB Meeting Hyatt, Savannah
(EB and AB Members)
- November 13-15, 2019 G-CASE Fall Conference Hyatt, Savannah
- November 14, 2019 G-CASE Gen. Business Meeting Hyatt, Savannah
(All G-CASE Members)
- December 5, 2019 SELDA Macon
- January 2020 G-CASE Drive-In Conference #2
TBD (3 locations)
- January 15, 2020 SELDA Macon
- February 5-8, 2020 CEC Annual Convention Portland, OR
(Past-President, President, CEC Rep., ED)
- February 18, 2020 A Day at the Capital Capital/Atlanta
(All G-CASE Members encouraged to attend)

- March 2, 2020 SELDA The Classic Center/Athens
- March 2, 2020 G-CASE EB and AB Meeting The Classic Center/Athens
(AB and EB Members)
- March 2-4, 2020 G-CASE Spring Legal Forum The Classic Center/Athens
- March 3, 2020 G-CASE Gen. Bus. Meeting The Classic Center/Athens
(All G-CASE Members)
- March 25, 2020 SELDA GaDOE
- June, 2020 SELDA Atlanta (w/Fed. Data Conf.)

FY 21:

- November 17-20, 2020 G-CASE Fall Conference Savannah/Hyatt
- March 8-10, 2021 G-CASE Spring Legal Forum The Classic Center/Athens

FY 22:

- November 16-19, 2021 G-CASE Fall Conference Savannah/Hyatt
- March, 2022 G-CASE Spring Legal Forum The Classic Center/Athens

FY 23:

- November 15-18, 2022 G-CASE Fall Conference Savannah/Hyatt
- March, 2023 G-CASE Spring Legal Forum The Classic Center/Athens



<http://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaGCASE>



@GCASE2



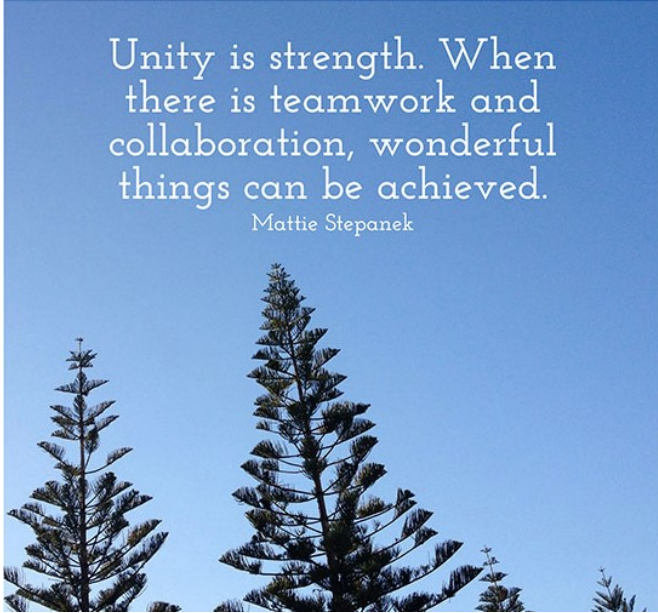
<http://gcase.schoolinsites.com>

G-CASE Advisory Board 2019-2020

- Tania Amerson, District 1
- Kim Cagle, District 2
- Katie Lowry, District 3
- Blake McGaha, District 4
- Suzanne Korngold, District 5
- Kitty Crawford, District 6
- Lenora Clarkson, District 7
- Catherine Brown, District 8
- Pat Wolf, District 9
- Terri Pettyjohn, District 10
- Loranda Holmes, District 11 & 12
- Tonya Brown, District 13
- Nicole Balkcom, District 14
- Pam McKinnon, District 15
- Kerri Miller, District 16
- Marcus Richardson, District 17
- Donna McClain, District 18

G-CASE Executive Board 2019-2020

- Dr. Zabrina Cannady, President
- Tris Gilland, President-Elect
- Dr. Cassandra Holifield, Vice President
- Greg McElwee, Past President
- Michele Sayles, Secretary
- Jan NeSmith, Treasurer
- Dr. Mary Kay Berry, CEC Representative
- Dr. Jenny Carpenter, Communications Chair
- Dr. Jenny McClintic, Legislative Chair
- Tonya Plant, Membership/Recruitment
- Rosie Gwin, Parliamentarian
- Alicia Burford, Professional Development Chair
- Kelly King, Strategic Planning Chair
- Jimmy Pitzer, Policy and Procedures Chair
- TBD, Research and Innovation Committee Chair
- Dr. Zephine Smith-Dixon, DOE Liaison
- Kachelle White & Wina Low, DOE SELDA Liaisons
- Sarah Burbach, Executive Director



.....

Jenny Carpenter, Editor

Northwest Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support
P.O. Box 2130
Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 30742
jcarpenter@nwgnets.org

.....

G-CASE serves the members of CASE who live and work in Georgia! Our major goal is to improve services to children with special needs. We strive to provide leadership and support to members by providing input into the policies and practices in Georgia which impact the quality of education and by providing support to the professionals who serve the students of Georgia.