

Ontario CEC's 69th Annual Special Education Conference



Enhancing Inclusive & Accessible Learning, Mattering, and Well-being for All

Friday, December 5 – Saturday, December 6, 2025

Toronto, Ontario

On behalf of the Ontario CEC Board of Directors, I am pleased to extend an invitation for you to join us in celebrating Ontario CEC's 69th Annual Provincial Special Education Conference, which will be held December 5 - 6, 2025 at the Marriott Downtown CF Toronto Eaton Centre!

The theme of the 2025 conference is ***Enhancing Inclusive & Accessible Learning, Mattering, and Well-being for All***; presentations will focus on evidence-based practices, instructional strategies, and technology to equitably support the well-being, learning and achievement of **all** students with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. The conference program features more than 80 lecture and poster presentations in numerous topical areas, including: accessibility; artificial intelligence; diversity, equity, and inclusion; paraprofessionals; low incidence exceptionalities; mental health and well-being for students and educators; at-risk children & youth; autism; assistive and adaptive technology; literacy and numeracy; transitions; managing challenging behaviour; learning disabilities; developmental disabilities; post-secondary initiatives, and a Ministry of Education update.

Conference highlights include:

- ◆ Opening Keynote Presentation
- ◆ Exhibitor/Sponsor Display
- ◆ Hot Topics & Featured Sessions
- ◆ Silent Auction
- ◆ Awards & Celebratory Luncheon
- ◆ Certificate of Attendance
- ◆ Poster Presentations
- ◆ Self-advocate Presentations

Value added alert! Conference registration includes the opening keynote address, breakout sessions, poster presentations, silent auction, the Exhibitor/Publisher Display, along with morning refreshments and lunch both days. Special conference rates apply for CEC members and full-time University & College students.

Please join Ontario CEC for this unique self-directed professional learning opportunity!

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<https://ontario.exceptionalchildren.org/>

Conference Overview

Thursday, December 4, 2025

- ◆ Ontario CEC Board of Directors' Meeting
- ◆ Ontario CEC Annual General Meeting

Friday, December 5, 2025

- ◆ 7:30 a.m. Registration & Light Refreshments
- ◆ 8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Opening Session & Keynote Address: **Dr. Gordon Flett, Professor Emeritus, York University**
- ◆ 9:45 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Concurrent Breakout Sessions
- ◆ 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Exhibitor/ Sponsor Display
- ◆ 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. Networking Luncheon
- ◆ 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Silent Auction

Saturday, December 6, 2025

- ◆ 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Poster Presentations & Light Refreshments
- ◆ 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon Concurrent Breakout & Featured Sessions
- ◆ 10:45 a.m. – 12:00 noon. **Adult and Yes I Can Student Award Presentations**
- ◆ 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon Exhibitor/Sponsor Display & Refreshment Stations
- ◆ 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. **Celebratory Luncheon/Closing**

Hot Topics & Featured Sessions

Note: please click here to access the full listing of breakout sessions: [Conference Sessions](#)

- ◆ Teacher-Centered AI: Building a Trustworthy, Transparent, and Teaching-Savvy Sidekick, [Dr. Laurie Faith, Charles Badlis, Madeline Szabos, Nicole Stolys, Simon Lefever, and Fatemeh Haghi, OISE/UT, and Tiffanie Zaugg, University of South Florida.](#)
- ◆ Who are the Gifted? Traits, Myths and Realities, [Barbara Lazarou, University of South Florida](#)
- ◆ Young, Black, and Autistic - The Realities and Intersectionalities of being Black and Neurodivergent in the Education System, [Thalia Wright, Student Self-Advocate, TDSB](#)
- ◆ Maintaining Dignified Discipline: Practical Strategies for Inclusive Classrooms, [Jenna Vatcher Robertson, Western Quebec School Board](#)
- ◆ Empowered Teams, Empowered Students: Leading Educational Assistants Through a Trauma-Informed Lens, [Aisling McGilly & Tracy Tomlinson, Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB](#)
- ◆ Engaging Every Mind: Teaching Strategies for Neurodiverse Learners, [Cassie Steepe, Sonderly](#)
- ◆ “Yes, I Can” - Students with Down Syndrome Accessing Postsecondary Education Pathways in Canada and the United States, [Dawn Lazerte, Halton District School Board](#)
- ◆ Educators' Actions & Learning Environments that Promote Social Inclusion & Well-being, [Carolyn McDougall & Mathias Castaldo, Holland Bloorview, and Bayan Yanmout, Toronto DSB](#)
- ◆ Our Stories: Using Literature to Discuss Disability with Children in Classrooms, [Virginia Facecchia, OISE/UT](#)
- ◆ Assistive Technology Supports Mental Health & Well-Being, [Taskey Trusty, Diano Cho, & Mira Campbell, Toronto DSB](#)
- ◆ Let’s Talk About Autism: Promoting Inclusion in Classrooms Toolkit for Elementary Educators, [Danielle Nolan, Autism Ontario](#)
- ◆ Mindsets, Models, and Math: Reimagining Success for Every Learner, [Alana McGilly & Jennifer Johnston, Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic DSB](#)
- ◆ Beyond Success with Struggling Readers: Engagement through Evidence-based Reading Intervention, [Barbara Williams, Barbara Williams Educational Consulting](#)
- ◆ Beyond the Buzzwords: Building Real Understanding of MTSS, Screening & Direct Instruction, [Sam Smith, Nelson Publishing](#)
- ◆ Utilizing AI to Support and Empower Students with Learning Disabilities in the Classroom, [Matthew Cote, York Region District School Board](#)
- ◆ Expanding Possibilities: Reimagining Career Pathways in 18–21 Transition Programs, [Adrianna Arsenault, Queen’s University, Nicole Gray & Maureen Murphy, Algonquin & Lakeshore Catholic DSB](#)
- ◆ Towards Disability Justice: Launching the York Region DSB Transition Strategy and Transition Hub, [Steph Ellis and Stephen Hopkins, York Region District School Board](#)

Conference Registration

Value alert – not yet a member of Ontario CEC and looking to save on registration fees? Now is a great time to join CEC, or renew your CEC membership, and receive a **30% discount** on every category and level of CEC membership, for 1, 2, or 3-year terms.

[Click here to join CEC](#) and use the Ontario CEC Conference code: **25ONCEC**

Please note that online conference registration is open through this link: <https://cvent.me/Xq2P3z>

Conference Registration November 30 – December 1, 2024	Attendee & Presenter Non-CEC Member Rate	Attendee & Presenter CEC Member Rate	Full-time Student Rate	Full-time Student CEC Member Rate
Conference registration includes lunch both days, morning refreshments, all sessions, special events, and exhibits	\$425.00	\$375.00	\$325.00	\$275.00

Interested in exhibiting at the conference? Corporate sponsorship opportunities?

Please contact Cindy Perras at cindy.perras@gmail.com

Conference Hotel/Room Bookings

[Marriott Downtown at CF Toronto Eaton Centre](#)

525 Bay Street
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Ideally located in the heart of downtown Toronto, the Marriott Downtown at CF Toronto Eaton Centre provides easy access to the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Ontario Museum, shopping, dining, the CN Tower, sporting venues (the Scotiabank Arena and Rogers Centre), and the Entertainment District. Getting there is easy - whether travelling by car, subway, streetcar, or train, as the hotel is just a few blocks from Union Station. For those travelling by air, the Union Pearson Express connects Toronto Pearson International Airport with Union Station, and the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport is 10 minutes from the hotel.

A block of guest rooms is available at our conference hotel, the Marriott Downtown at CF Toronto Eaton Centre, for December 3 – 7, 2025. Guest room rates, which include complimentary WiFi, are \$235.00 (single/double occupancy) and \$255.00 (triple occupancy) per night. Group rate for parking is \$35 per night. Amenities include a roof top pool and hot tub, fitness centre, lobby bar and restaurant serving contemporary Canadian cuisine. **Reservations must be booked by November 26, 2025**, through this hyperlink (also located on the conference website): [Marriott Reservations](#)