



SEPAC

Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

NJ Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h) states that:

Each district Board of Education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities.

April 26th SEPAC Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Somya Bhatnagar, Janice Corrado, Csilla Csipak, Kristin Fox, Megan Lipset, Nick Markarian, Robin McKeon, Lisa McNey, Jean O'Connell, Stephanie Orr, Lindsay Pannucci, Monica Petraglia, Larry Rascio, Allyson Read, Bridget Schiraldo, Sean Siet, Lauren Small, Lisa Vitale-Stanzione, Jen White

SEPAC Trend Report

Based on PEC Parent Feedback Forms 1/20/23 - 4/21/2023

- Security Officers during ESY
 - This concern was raised by a Ridge parent. The district will provide an officer every day at Ridge during ESY 2023.
- RTI/Evaluation Process
 - Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) is an interdisciplinary team of professionals within the school environment who come together throughout the school year to formulate coordinated services and team delivery systems to address the full range of student learning, behavior, social, and health problems in the general education program as well as for students determined to be in need of special education programs and services. According to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8.1,8.2 the goal of the committee is to see measurable student improvement in the identified targeted areas.
 - The district is planning a virtual presentation for September/October to give parents an overview of the general education/special education/counseling supports available for students. This will include specific information about the I&RS/RTI process.
- Expanding PEC to be more inclusive

- Parents at many schools have reached out to PEC representatives to inquire about resources listed in the PEC website this year
- PEC leadership has agreed that parents of students struggling with behavioral or mental health concerns would be welcome in the PEC community. PEC leaders will work with building principals and PTO leaders at each school to discuss outreach.
- Detailed information about PEC will be provided at each school during Back to School Night
- Parent attendance at PEC webinars
 - Recent PEC-sponsored parent workshops on Psychological De-Escalation Training Techniques and Executive Functions/ADHD attracted a large number of parents of general education students as a result of being shared through school Friday Folders
 - PEC will continue to survey parents to identify topics of broad interest to all families

SEPAC Task Force Progress Report for 2022-2023

Each Task Force will provide updates on their initiatives

- Communication and Collaboration
 - PEC Parent Feedback Forms created, shared, and collected at all six schools
 - SEPAC and PEC leadership conducted training for school representatives on new Feedback Form process
 - PEC Website, Feedback Form, Parent Education trainings and PEC events now included in Special Services Friday Folder
 - PEC Mentor Program is growing and expanding — 39 new mentors this year from WAMS and Ridge
 - Press coverage in Bernards Patch highlighted PEC Exceptional Mentor Amy Richman
- Parent Education
 - PEC Website expanded to provide Exceptional Resources section offering parents links to education-related, family-support, and disability/learning resources

- Based on responses to parent survey, PEC offered in-person and virtual workshops on topics including programs for post-Transition students, managing behaviors, executive functioning, and ADHD
- SEPAC Academy page on BernardsPEC.com offers recordings of PEC-sponsored training workshops
- Community Outreach/Transition
 - Workshops held in January and March 2023 educated parents about adult programs, support coordinators, and special needs funding for post-Transition students
 - Number of Work-Based Learning job sites increased from 10 to 27 in 2022-23
 - Work-Based Learning Program students and businesses were featured in a social media campaign in March 2023
 - Database to track post-Transition placements to be created in 2023
 - BTSD selected to be part of Bogg Center Community Based Instruction Showcase in Trenton in June 2023. Transition coordinators and staff will receive intensive, collaborative training through the Foundations of CBI Training Series, will develop a CBI action plan, and will receive ongoing intensive technical assistance to support programming and implementation.
- Curriculum and Inclusion
 - Kristin Fox and Jean O'Connell working on special education teacher representation in curriculum writing process
 - Revived Pathways sensitivity training sessions for 3rd and 6th grade students in Spring 2023
 - Inclusion/Awareness lessons were created and presented at elementary and middle schools during Disability Awareness Month in March and Autism Awareness Month in April 2023
 - Summer project will survey existing curriculum/media center books and resources on disability; topics for further development to be identified

Proposed SEPAC Task Forces for 2023-2024

- Communication
 - Standardize communication from SEPAC/PEC
 - Identify areas where process clarification is necessary
 - Finalize/post district Guide to the Special Education Process on PEC and Special Services websites
 - Communicate special education laws and regulations to parents
- Inclusion and Accessibility
 - Sensitivity training provided by district in grades 3 and 6; develop plan to expand to additional grade levels over time
 - Identify classes that can safely and appropriately include self-contained students; provide guidelines/professional development for teachers as needed
 - Identify/establish extracurricular activities that will include special education students; IEP and dismissal procedures provided to staff
 - Monitor concerns regarding physical accessibility of school and district buildings through PEC Parent Feedback Form; share with administration
- Parent Education
 - Continue to solicit topics of interest for special education and general education parents
 - Work with district administrators to develop and present webinar on Multi Tiered Systems of Support, Response to Intervention, and Evaluation Procedures
 - Provide roundtable gatherings to respond to parent questions and concerns
- Community Outreach and Public Relations
 - Develop outreach efforts to other New Jersey SEPAGs regarding special education legislative efforts, funding opportunities, etc.
 - Continue to work with and promote local businesses participating in Work-Based Learning Program
 - Share events, activities, and successes via social media outlets and local press (Bernardsville News, Bernards Patch, Bernards TAP Into, etc.)

Additional Topics

- Request for SEPAC Representation at Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council 2023-2024
 - This is being considered
- Improve collaboration with district staff on areas of parent concern
 - SEPAC members to work closely with administration to develop I&RS/RTI/Available Services webinar for September/October
 - Continued discussion and collaboration on disability awareness and sensitivity training curriculum
- Grants to assist with funding of special education resources
 - SEPAC members to work with Jean O'Connell to identify potential sources of funding to enhance existing special education programs
- Summer Training for SEPAC and PEC Representatives mornings of July 24, 25, 26
 - SEPAC and PEC leaders developing information and applications for parents who may be interested in serving these organizations in 2023-2024