

Arlington Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Serving Arlington families and friends of children with special needs

Who are we...

Arlington SEPAC is a state mandated parent volunteer group that acts as an advisor to and provides resources for parents of children with disabilities in the Arlington schools. The State of Massachusetts requires all communities to have a Special Education Parent Advisory Council (PAC) in place to serve families of children with special needs from preschool through high school.

What we do...

- We provide support and networking opportunities for parents and guardians of children with special needs living in Arlington.
- We offer workshops and guest speakers to help parents become better informed about special education issues.
- We meet regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of special education programs in Arlington.
- We provide outreach so the wider community better understands the issues facing school systems, and families working with children identified as having special needs.

Membership

- You are a member the minute your child has an identified need within Arlington Public School's special education department or Early Intervention.
- You are a member if you are a parent or a guardian of a student with an IEP or a 504.
- You can be a member if you care about the students served by Arlington schools and would like to make a difference.

Help Us Help You

Please contact us so that we may provide you with support and let you know about our informative seminars, workshops, and meetings. Membership in SEPAC is free and open to anyone involved with or interested in Arlington Special Education.

Who Are You?

- Have you noticed or have you been concerned that your child isn't keeping up academically, socially or behaviorally with other children his/her age?
- Do you wonder if your child should be evaluated for extra help?
- Does your child have an Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan in place; or has the process started?

Learning your child has a physical limitation, or learning disability, or is severely impaired can be hard enough – then comes the paperwork, and a new language of terms and titles to learn, and explanations to other family members and friends. Not to mention the task of being your child's best advocate to make sure s/he receives the services necessary for her/his continued progress. We can help you better understand the process - start to finish. SEPAC works with families, guardians, and/or friends of children with special needs, and with administrators and teachers responsible for initiating policies and programs...a community that values and supports excellent education for all students

You've got questions, we've got ideas...

Together we can find the answers you are looking for!

For more information and/or to get involved, please contact us...

via the web:

www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac

via email:

arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com

You can also join a parents-only moderated list-serve: arlingtonsped-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

ARLINGTON SEPAC 2008-2009 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS/PRESENTATIONS

**Meet and Greet Special Education Director, Mark Ryder and Superintendent, Kathleen Bodie.
Thurs Oct. 16, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Hardy School Media Room, 52 Lake Street.**

Join us for our first event of the year! A great opportunity to put names with faces. Learn about Arlington's new Special Education Director and his aspirations. From Kathleen Bodie, our interim superintendent, we will hear about this year's plans for teacher professional development as it relates specifically to special education in the classroom.

Parents' Potluck (Desserts!)

Thurs. Nov. 13, 7-8:30 p.m. Dallin Science Room, 185 Florence Ave.

Arlington Special Education Programs and Services at the Secondary Level.

Mon. Dec. 8, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Ottoson Media Center, 63 Acton Street

Executive Functions - What Do They Have to Do with Anything?

Thurs. Jan. 8, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Pierce School Gymnasium, 85 Park Ave. Ext.

Presenter: Dot Lucci, M.Ed., C.A.G.S., Director of Consultation; MGH /Youthcare. Executive Functions are behaviors such as: planning, organizing, inhibiting impulsive responding and others. They are the glue that holds our knowledge together and helps us behave in ways that match the situation at hand. This workshop will discuss what executive functions are, how they manifest in our children and ways we can address some of the issues that emerge when children have challenges in the Executive Function arena. Jointly sponsored by the Arlington SEPAC and Parent Forums.

So, You Think Your Child Needs an Aide?

Thurs. Jan 15, 6:30-9:00 p.m. Brackett School Music Room, 66 Eastern Ave.

Inclusion specialist and behaviorist Cynthia Levine discusses the use of aides, both as 1:1 and as general assistants, in the classroom. The presentation will include how to determine best uses and training for aides to meet your child's needs.

IEP workshop

Thurs. Feb. 12, 6:30 - 9:00p.m. Pierce School Media Room, 85 Park Ave. Ext.

Parent Networking/Feedback Session

Thurs. March 12, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Brackett School Music Room, 66 Eastern Ave.

Spotlight/Social Skills and Pragmatics

Thurs. April 2 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. Bishop Gymnasium, 25 Columbia Road

The Spotlight Program including its use of "Dramatics" is an exciting new approach to teaching social pragmatics. Brian Gordon, prior to being Director at the Spotlight Program of the North Shore Arc, worked as Director of "School to Work," a community-based social pragmatics/life skills program at the Arc of East Middlesex. Kim Zahlaway LCS, Spotlight Clinical Director work with children, adolescents, young adults, adults, couples and families with various social, emotional, developmental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities

Arlington SEPAC Annual Meeting and Dinner Fundraiser.

Thurs. May 7 6:30 p.m. (location to be announced)

For more information about the events listed above, check the website at

www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac

Please RSVP via email if you are planning to attend a meeting at arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com