

Sepac School Committee Year in Review Presentation 2009-2010

MC: Slide 1 Accomplishments:

Bullet 1: District Wide Liaisons:

1. The SEPAC board and membership recruited school liaisons to represent every school in Needham.
2. These parents represent schools their children are at to the SEPAC parent base. They bring concerns, issues and compliments to the board and the administrators attention.
3. Many liaisons attended our monthly meetings with Special Ed Administrators

MC: Bullet 2: Increased Parent Participation

4. Parents served on Search Committee for new Middle School Director.
5. SEPAC parents participated in the largest parent turnout ever for a special Ed director candidate at the MS Special Ed director candidate night.
6. In addition to the SEPAC parents there, many SEPAC parents who could not make it took time to communicate their thoughts to the school system.
7. The SEPAC made every effort to disseminate information to the Special Ed parents from administrators.
8. SEPAC parents participated in other areas such as: DA which we will talk about in more depth later, social skills committee and helped write our SEPAC social skills survey (results sent to SC and available on our web site), and collaborated with Chris Brumbach on the Needham Public Schools Special Education survey questions.
9. We also held monthly speaker series meetings on various topics and monthly parent coffees. The speaker meetings this year had attendances from 230-50 attendees average.

MC: Bullet 3: Expanded Disability Awareness

1. SEPAC parents were involved with Piloting a new Disability Awareness Program at Broadmeadow for Grade 3 on Physical Disabilities. This will continue to expand by adding 1st and 2nd grade next year at Broadmeadow.
2. Grants were written and approved to enrich these DA programs with books and a performance.
3. Mitchell will plan and implement DA program during 2010-11 school year

MC: Bullet 4: Collaborated on Summer Program Development:

1. Collaborated with Sped Admin to expand Social Detectives Curriculum to meet needs of older students with a new program called Summer Success.

TS: Bullet 5: Parent Social Skills Survey:

2. Sepac parent survey received 26% response rate which supported and defined current and future goals.
3. The main finding is that the in-house general classroom social skills programs that the schools have in place are often unknown to parents. Many respondents did not know if their children were exposed to 2nd step or Responsive Classroom. 73% of SEPAC parents who responded did not know about the 2nd step anti-bullying program. These results corroborated the NPS SEL teacher survey results which showed that this program is not being carried out in many classrooms. The gaps match for these 2 surveys.

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4. The 2 main parent concerns are unstructured times and how to improve programming: these concerns include recess for the younger students, lunch, bullying and generalization of social skills for special students.

SEPAC Goals:

TS Bullet 6: Increase Middle School/High School Parent Involvement

1. We are responding to administrator input with our goal of increasing Middle School/High School Parent Involvement within SEPAC through topics for monthly speaker series, outreach, networking and increased MS HS parent attendance at our SEPAC board/admin mtgs. We invite our SC reps to stop into one of those mtgs. sometime.

TS Bullet 7: Extend SEPAC Participation in the Community.

2. Increase Sepac participation within the community by serving on DA committees, establishing regular presence at SC, starting a presence at PTC president mtgs. And each school's PTC mtgs.

TS Bullet 8: Continue Expansion of Disability Awareness

1. Expand DA town-wide by working with the new Newman principal to expand DA to Newman and by investigating successful DA programs for MS and HS students.

DS Bullet 9: Implement focused Social Skills program:

As a result of the SEPAC social skills survey results we would like to achieve the following:

1. Work with school to implement comprehensive social skills program for special needs kids. Our kids with social and cognitive deficits need to directly be taught social skills as they do not pick them up incidentally and may not generalize them. They also need to be taught EF skills. Both these need to be done in an age-appropriate manner.
2. Work with administration to review recess recommendations
3. Support additional training for teacher's aides and recess staff to help students navigate "unstructured" times i.e. lunch, recess, etc.
4. Have specialists and teachers visit recess and lunch once weekly to check in on students and see their "real world" social skills. At the next teacher contract NPS could consider changing the portion of the contract that exempts teachers from attending student lunch periods.
5. Add social skills curriculum to ELC summer programming.
6. Analysis of social skills programming as part of ARRA Special Education Program Review..

DS Bullet 10: Participate in development of system wide Anti-bullying program.

7. Work with administration to create active anti-bullying process for sped kids

DS Bullet 11: Consideration of Special Needs Students in Space Planning:

8. Consider special needs in space planning (house ELC 1 and 2 in same building).
9. One of these buildings is not even wheelchair accessible!

DS: Thank yous:

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1. Thanks to Administration for including parents in the development of the NPS survey, focus groups.
2. Thank you to Connie Barr for serving as Sepac-SC liaison this year
3. Thank you to Mary Lammi for her leadership towards a district-wide DA program