



Berlin/Boylston Public Schools
Special Education Parent Advisory Council

August 29, 2016

Dear School Committee Members,

SEPAC has had a very busy and successful school year for 2015-2016. We would like to share our activities in a summarized version with you.

Officers:

Boylston Co-President:	Rochelle Peret (2 yr. term expires 2016)
Berlin Co-President:	Jessica Meltzer (2 yr. term expires 2017)
Vice-President:	Karen Groccia (1 yr. term expires 2016)
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Kerry Lavallee (2 yr. term expires 2017)

All-School Involvement:

SEPAC members continue to serve on various groups in the districts and attend School Committee Meetings. We have representatives involved in BES PTO, Tahanto PTO, as well as School Councils at BES, BMS and Tahanto. This year we have seen more involvement from Berlin parents and are encouraged to have more involved.

SEPAC sent representatives to present information at Open Houses at the elementary schools, Kindergarten Orientations, and Preschool Info Night. Officers introduced themselves and informed parents about SEPAC's role in the district. We thank the school administrators for their continued support in inviting SEPAC to speak to parents and raise awareness of the group.

Community Involvement:

We teamed up with the West Boylston SEPAC, again co-hosting a presentation this Spring.

SEPAC Programs:

SEPAC once again hosted National Inclusive Schools Week in December. BES and BMS participated in a project showing each student's "special gifts" while at Tahanto, student groups led the theme of inclusion into various events around the Middle and High School. The events received wonderful feedback from the student body.

We had several guest speakers throughout the year come and speak regarding various educational topics. Our guest speakers this year included:

1. November 2015: "Getting Organized for your IEP" by Jennifer Bolduc
2. January 2016: The Annual "Parent's Rights and Responsibilities" by Karen Molnar, PPS Director
3. March 2016: "Achieving Dreams" by the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSP) co-hosted by West Boylston SEPAC.

Our membership has stayed steady this year with 98 members.

Excellent Educator Awards have become an annual event for SEPAC. We were so pleased to honor 22 teachers and staff (with some receiving multiples for a total of 25 nominations) who have significantly impacted the education of our children. Educators received a certificate and the letter from the parent(s) who nominated them. All employees' names were published in a press release to local newspapers and honored in the presence of their class or colleagues at a staff meeting. A copy of the award was also given to the administration to place into their permanent records.

In Fall 2015, SEPAC conducted a Lyman Pie fundraiser in Fall to increase our scholarship fund. We were so pleased to be able to award a \$500 scholarship in June to graduating senior Mary Kate O'Day.

We also had our first "Ask the Experts" event in April with great staff turn out. We hope to hold this again during the Fall of 2017.

Rochelle attended the MassPac "Officers Training" in June 2016. We learned that we're in a good place with our SEPAC; we have parent involvement, we have a good working relationship with administration, ahead of the curve for many other Massachusetts SEPACs.

The SEPAC website is up-to-date at www.sepac-berlin-boylston.org. Our minutes, end of year reports, and upcoming events are listed there. There is also a section of special education on-line resources and membership information.

SEPAC was successful in achieving many of our goals for the past school year, and continue to strive to increase our presence and awareness in the districts. We will continue to:

- Maintain strong communication with Director of Pupil Personnel Services and the School Committees.
- Attend district school meetings and give input to programs and policies.
- Work with all three principals to increase their awareness of our mission and activities, as well as promote our group to teachers and staff.
- Maintain the SEPAC website, updating and enhancing its content.
- Provide an ongoing resource to parents on the special education process and laws.
- Continue to bring quality speakers to parents and the community.

Our goals for the 2016-2017 School Year include:

1. Continue to maintain a strong presence during National Inclusive Schools Week.
2. Invite staff and administrators to our events and presentations that are related to their field.
3. Continue Excellent Educator Awards and Senior Scholarship recipients.
4. Hold a smaller fundraiser to raise funds to support our scholarship goals.
5. Work towards establishing a Parent-to-Parent Support Group in the district.
6. Promote attending our meetings using "Skype" to increase awareness of SEPAC.
7. Update and add to our Membership List.
8. Devise, distribute and analyze a parent survey of our members to ascertain their needs and concerns.

SEPAC's board would like to sincerely thank the Berlin-Boylston School Committee and the school administration for their continued support of our activities. It is gratifying as a parent to know that your voice is listened to and your opinion is appreciated.

Sincerely,



Jessica Meltzer
Co-President, Berlin



Rochelle Peret
Co-President, Boylston



Karen Groccia
Vice President



Kerry Lavallee
Treasurer