

Acton-Boxborough SEPAC 2018-2019 Updates

Spring 2019 Presentation to the ABRSC

absepac.org

abrsdsepac@gmail.com



@absepac

Our Mission

**To ensure understanding, respect, support,
and the appropriate education of all children in our community.**

The Special Education Parent Advisory Council's
duties under state law include:

“advising the district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities and meeting regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of the school district’s special education programs.”

The SEPAC's Role





Outreach & Support

- Attended back to school nights
- Connected with local support and social groups
- Participated in monthly joint PTO/PTF/PTSO roundtable hosted by ABRSC
- Distributed news across social media, email lists
- Fielded dozens of parent information and support requests
- Held monthly daytime parenting support group and coffee/tea hours
- Maintained parent-to-parent listserv and Facebook page

Partnerships



- Partnered with Concord/Concord-Carlisle, Maynard, and Sudbury SEPACs and our school districts to host *Basic Rights in Special Education* workshop
- Partnered with Concord/Concord-Carlisle SEPAC to sponsor *MCAS: Access & Achievement for Students with Disabilities* presentation
- Regional and statewide SEPAC leadership networking; recommendations to MassPAC regarding SEPAC guidance document
- Invited to attend *Dyslexia and Literacy: Language Connections to Reading* conference with district team
- Attended MA Department of Public Health, Department of Early Education & Care, and DESE Family Engagement Framework Coalition stakeholder feedback session with Director of Special Education

Resources & Education

- Shared details about local trainings and events, including transition resource fair sponsored by ABRSD, CASE, and surrounding districts
- Increased focus on sharing webinars, including those in languages other than English
- Attended workshops and conferences to bring back information, including:
 - *Family Voices Leadership Conference: Families as Partners Shaping Systems Change*
 - *Building Inclusive Communities in Early Childhood*
 - *FCSN Visions of Community*
 - *Asperger/Autism Network (AANE) Connections Conference*
 - *Dyslexia and Literacy: Language Connections to Reading*
 - *DDS & The Arc of Massachusetts - Social Inclusion & Friendship*
 - *International Trauma Conference*

Resources & Education

- Developed resource card following staff request
- Updated parent/guardian education links and resources on absepac.org
- Compiled list of common acronyms and published to Facebook page
- Revised handbook to be published July 2019

Acton-Boxborough Special Education
Parent Advisory Council (AB SEPAC)

Resource Card

Special Education
Acton-Boxborough SEPAC
absepac.org
abrsdsepac@gmail.com

Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN)
fcsn.org

Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC)
massadvocates.org

MA Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education
Problem Resolution System Office
doe.mass.edu/prs

Wrightslaw
wrightslaw.org

Disability-Specific
Asperger/Autism Network (AANE)
aane.org

Autism Insurance Resource Center (AIRC)
massairc.org

continued ...

Recommendation for All-Day Kindergarten

In March, the SEPAC voted to recommend ABRSD move to universal ADK



Why?

- This makes the full-day general education classroom the Least Restrictive Environment
- Will increase opportunities for meaningful inclusion
- No more “half-day / half-day” default option
- If a child with a disability requires a shorter day, that can be done through the IEP

Other Accomplishments

- Solicited and provided feedback to new Superintendent for consideration as part of Entry Plan Findings
- Participated in building project visioning sessions
- Facilitated advocacy effort to ensure Early Childhood Program classrooms remained in the building project
- Continued to raise awareness about access and inclusion in the community (e.g., town playground designs)
- Conducted parent/guardian survey



2019 Parent/Guardian Survey Overview

- The survey focused on
 - IEP team experiences
 - General education staff understanding of special education needs
 - Social emotional supports
 - Extended School Year experiences
 - Access to special education documents via PowerSchool
 - Overall satisfaction with services
- Responses reflect 36% of Students with Disabilities in ABRSD as of DESE October 1, 2018 headcount
- Report to be published on absepac.org and findings shared in Fall 2019 presentation to ABRSC

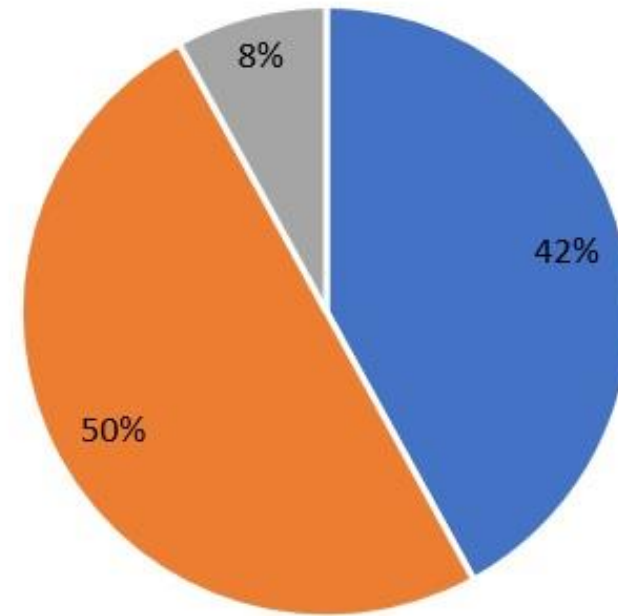


Electronic Access to Documents



Q5: Have you successfully accessed your child's special education documents in the PowerSchool portal?

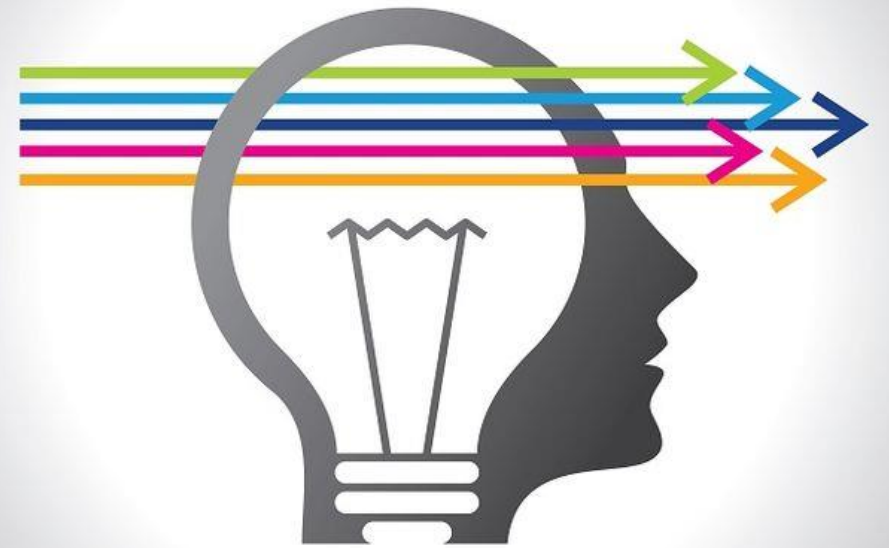
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■ Yes ■ No--I haven't tried/I don't know how ■ No--I tried but was unsuccessful

Recommendations

- Verify during the annual IEP meeting that parents/guardians have accessed their child's special education documents in the portal
- Demonstrate how at that time if they require support
- Continue to email notifications when new materials are added to the portal
- Consider presenting the login information in a different way (video)
- Ongoing follow up with parents/guardians about access and usability



Meeting Schedule 2019-2020

September 4

October 2

October 28 - Screening of "Intelligent Lives"

November 20

December 18

January 8

February 12

March 18

April 15

May 20

June 10 - Annual Meeting & Officer Elections

intelligent *lives*
a film by dan habib



Locations TBD

Acknowledgments

Our thanks to Director of Special Education Pam Smith,
Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Dawn Bentley,
and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

2019-2020 Officers

Co-Chairs Amanda Bailey & Carrie Weaver
Secretary Melissa Brown

Past PAC Chair Bill Guthlein
Standing Committee Chair for Parent Support Blossom Davies

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