

Business Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, May 19, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. Virtual Meeting Over Zoom

To attend: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88265343433>

To call in: +1 646 876 9923

Meeting ID: 882 6534 3433

I. Call to Order

II. Approval of Minutes

Review and approval of September 16, 2020, and October 14, 2020, meeting minutes

III. Organization/Business Issues

- A. Updates from Interim Special Education Director
- B. Untangling Extended School Year Summer Services, COVID Compensatory Services, and Gen Ed Summer Programs
- C. Feedback to School Committee by June 4 on District Strategy 2021-2026
- D. Proposed Revisions to School Committee Policy File: IL Evaluation of the Instructional Program
- E. Feedback & Questions Regarding Full Return to In-Person Learning
- F. Brainstorm SEPAC Priorities for 2021-2022 School Year
- G. Officer Descriptions for SEPAC Annual Meeting & Elections

IV. New Business – Other topics on people's minds

V. Open Issues


- A. MCAS performance vulnerable for students with disabilities
- B. Mandatory special education training/professional development for regular and special education staff – hiring dual-certified staff
- C. Increasing opportunities for meaningful inclusion across domains
- D. Enhanced Extended School Year, before-, and after-school programming
- E. Increased use of technology in IEP development, revision, & communication
- F. Following up on communication issues noted as barriers to overall satisfaction and subgroup trends for Out of District, Early Childhood, and Specific Learning Disabilities identified via 2015 and 2017 parent/guardian surveys
- G. Need for consistent K-12 executive functioning curriculum

VI. Adjournment

All AB SEPAC meetings are open to the public. We encourage caregivers of children with disabilities and others interested in special education to attend. See absepac.org for information regarding upcoming events.

VII. Annual Meeting & Officer Elections

June 9, 2021, at 7:30 p.m. Virtual Meeting Over Zoom



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

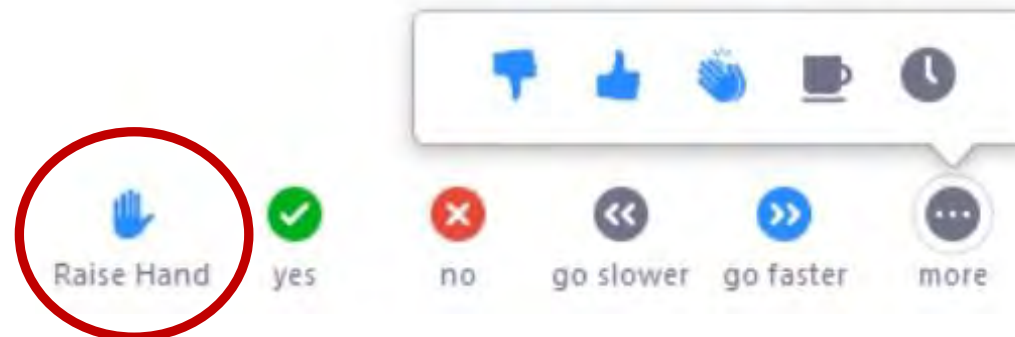
Business Meeting

May 19, 2021

I. Call to Order

Virtual Meeting Participation

- SEPAC meetings are public and subject to Open Meeting Law
- Participation may not take place via the chat box
- Votes will be conducted by roll call
- To be recognized by the Chairs, please use the raise hand function in the Participants window



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.”

II. Approval of Minutes

- ~~• Review and approval of September 16, 2020, and October 13, 2020, meeting minutes~~
- We will **vote to approve the minutes as written or amended** if necessary
- Voting will be by roll call
- If you are not a voting member (parent/guardian of a child with a disability residing or attending school in Acton or Boxborough), please ABSTAIN

III. Organization/Business Issues

- A. Updates from Interim Special Education Director
- B. Untangling Extended School Year Summer Services, COVID Compensatory Services, & Gen Ed Summer Programs
- C. Feedback to School Committee by June 4 on District Strategy 2021-2026*
- D. Proposed Revisions to School Committee Policy File: IL Evaluation of the Instructional Program
- E. Feedback & Questions Regarding Full Return to In-Person Learning
- F. Brainstorm SEPAC Priorities for 2021-2022 School Year
- G. Officer Descriptions for SEPAC Annual Meeting & Elections

NOTE: THIS MEETING IS BEING RECORDED

A. Updates from Interim Special Education Director

Acton-Boxborough SEPAC
abrsdsepac@gmail.com



B. Untangling ESY, CCS, & Gen Ed Summer Programs

- Extended School Year summer services look *forward* to potential regression over the summer toward current IEP goals and objectives or issues with recoupment of skills upon returning to school in the fall
- COVID Compensatory Services look *backward* to lost services due to the pandemic and new needs arising from the pandemic
- Community Ed summer enrichment is open to all students; this must be accessible to students with disabilities
- “Summer Explorations” 8/9-8/13 for students K-6 recommended by their school as needing social time or help reintegrating to in-person
- Traditional summer school programs at JH & HS

Extended School Year Information

- Extended School Year eligibility determination is not the same as that for COVID Compensatory Services
- ESY eligibility must be discussed annually by the IEP team
- *"An extended year program may be identified if the student **has demonstrated or is likely to demonstrate** substantial regression in his or her learning skills and/or difficulty in relearning such skills if an extended program is not provided" [603 CMR 28.05(4)(d)1]*
- Risk of regression is a factor, not just documented regression

Terms to Know

recoup - "to get back to the level the child had achieved before a break in service"

regress - "lose progress, forget, revert to previous behavior"

Compensatory Services Information

Family Fact Sheet: COVID-19 Compensatory Services and Recovery Support for Students with IEPs During the COVID-19 Pandemic

On August 17, 2020, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) published guidance for schools and districts to help them work with families to together help students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) recover as much as possible from the school disruptions that occurred because of COVID-19. The guidance is called *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Special Education Technical Assistance Advisory 2021-1: COVID-19 Compensatory Services and Recovery Support for Students with IEPs*. You can find the guidance here:

www.doe.mass.edu/sped/advisories/2021-1-covid-comp-services.docx.

This Fact Sheet summarizes the main points in DESE's guidance for families. DESE encourages families to keep in touch with your child's educators and administrators, and to talk about what the new guidance means for you and your child. If you belong to your local [Special Education Parent Advisory Council](#) (SEPAC), you can also collaborate with your school and district to plan and put in place policies and practices that will help *all* students with IEPs, in addition to your own child.

- MA DESE has published guidance and a Family Fact Sheet
- Ask your coordinator or call the Federation for Children with Special Needs or Mass Advocates for Children

Terms to Know

General Education Recovery Support: may be made available to students with and without disabilities who need it to address educational and social-emotional needs and reorient them to learning (e.g., District Curriculum Accommodation Plan—DCAP)

COVID-19 Compensatory Services (CCS): for students with IEPs to remedy skill or knowledge loss or lack of effective progress due to delayed, interrupted, suspended, or inaccessible IEP services

New IEP Services: to address new areas of disability-related need for students with IEPs

C. Feedback to School Committee by June 4 on District Strategy 2021-2026*

- Can be found in packet for 5/20/21 ABRSC meeting at abschools.org
- The Superintendent will give his report on the status of the current year's goals at the 5/20/21 ABRSC meeting
- This is part of the summative evaluation process
- Public input on the Superintendent's performance is due by June 4

Engaged Learning Objective

Strategic Objective	Strategic Initiative
Engaged Learning Improve cognitive, behavioral and emotional engagement in learning by increasing the variety and relevance of learning experiences.	1.1 Involve school and community stakeholders to develop a unified vision of the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to prepare students for life after high school.
	1.2 Implement instructional programs, courses, and curricula aligned with the District’s PK-12 unified vision in order to increase and expand the variety and relevance of learning experiences.
	1.3 Implement instructional, assessment, grading, and course leveling practices aligned with the District’s unified vision in order to promote increased cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement for students.
	1.4 Identify and utilize best practices, including digital tools, from remote learning to improve student engagement.
	1.5 Expand learning opportunities for all students in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

Inclusive Practices Objective

<p>Inclusive Practices</p> <p>Ensure that all students, staff, and families feel welcomed and included by strengthening school culture and climate and intentionally implementing culturally-responsive instructional practices and materials.</p>	2.1 Strengthen school culture and climate by strengthening relationships between and among students and adults within the schools, with an emphasis on students from historically underrepresented groups.
	2.2 Ensure that all staff engage in ongoing professional learning to implement culturally responsive and inclusive practices.
	2.3 Ensure that educators in all schools and classrooms employ curricula, instructional practices and materials that are responsive to the diversity of our students and families.
	2.4 Expand the diversity of our leadership and educator workforce to better reflect the students we serve.
	2.5 Engage stakeholders to better understand how students and families from underrepresented groups experience our schools and District and to help provide guidance for improving inclusive practices.

Equitable Opportunities & Outcomes Objective

<p>Equitable Opportunities and Outcomes</p> <p>Ensure that every student has access to equitable opportunities and outcomes, regardless of gender, socioeconomic status, race, disability, gender identity or other differentiating characteristics.</p>	3.1 Develop and implement an aligned, districtwide PK-12 multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) for students in literacy, mathematics, social-emotional and behavioral learning.
	3.2 Ensure effective evidence-based screening, instruction, and assessment in literacy, mathematics, social-emotional and behavioral learning in all general education classrooms PK-12.
	3.3 Ensure equitable access to early education by implementing tuition-free all day kindergarten.
	3.4 Identify and implement practices that result in more equitable representation of students in advanced coursework.
	3.5 Review and revise disciplinary processes to employ restorative justice and responsive classroom approaches where appropriate, and ensure all students, including students from various subgroups, are treated fairly and equitably.

Social-Emotional Learning Objective

<p>Social-emotional Learning (SEL)</p> <p>Improve social-emotional development through an aligned continuum of skills, instruction, and support for students PK-12.</p>	4.1 Identify and communicate core social-emotional competencies that students will develop from Pre-K-12 as part of the district unified vision of the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to prepare students for life after high school. (1.1)
	4.2 Embed and integrate instruction across general education classrooms PK-12 that is aligned with the core SEL competencies and which allows teachers to more proactively address social, emotional, and behavioral needs at the universal level.
	4.3 Create and implement a unified vision of social, emotional and behavioral services and programming at the district level that includes a continuum of services to follow across grades and levels.

... Why Does This Matter?

- Knowing what has been done in the past and recognizing ongoing efforts is important when advocating
- Tying an ask to an existing goal or objective can help gain traction



D. Proposed Revisions to SC Policy File: IL Evaluation of the Instructional Program

- Proposed revisions and old policy can be found in 5/20/21 ABRSC meeting packet at abschools.org for School Committee first read
- Old policy deemed unnecessary per district legal counsel
- SEPAC's role under MGL is *“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.**”*

EVALUATION OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

DRAFT LANGUAGE

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee endorses the tenet that the strategic drive for school improvement is greatly enhanced when communities develop accountability provisions of their own to complement and augment state and federal policies.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee believes that holding equity as a guiding tenet will inform the imperative to prepare all students for success. An essential focus should be on variability in performance that informs the next round of improvement cycles. Evaluation of instructional programs will therefore be guided by the following beliefs and actions:

- While the MCAS is one measure of our instructional program, the District has committed to only using MCAS results *“in concert with a diverse set of measures to capture how well our students are doing at a given time”* (2015 ABRSD Administrative Statement on Standardized Testing).
- To support the District vision and mission, the Superintendent and leadership team will develop a set of metrics aligned to any adopted strategies that evaluate the District’s instructional program. Selected metrics will focus on student growth, including the growth of student subgroups, over time. Whenever possible, metrics will focus on outcomes, not processes.
- At least annually, the District will report out on the results of these strategies and metrics and make them public on the District website.

E. Feedback & Questions Regarding Full Return to In-Person Learning

- What has worked?
- What hasn't?
- Questions regarding junior and high school returns?
- Thinking ahead to the fall ... what lessons can be applied?



F. Brainstorm SEPAC Priorities for 2021-2022 School Year

Some considerations:

- New special ed director, building-level administrators, and School Committee members
- Ongoing emphasis on intersectionality and representing needs of students across disability types, races, etc.
- Community outreach is at a critical point—do people know the SEPAC is here and what the organization does?
- Pandemic impact on students with disabilities

2020-2021 Priorities

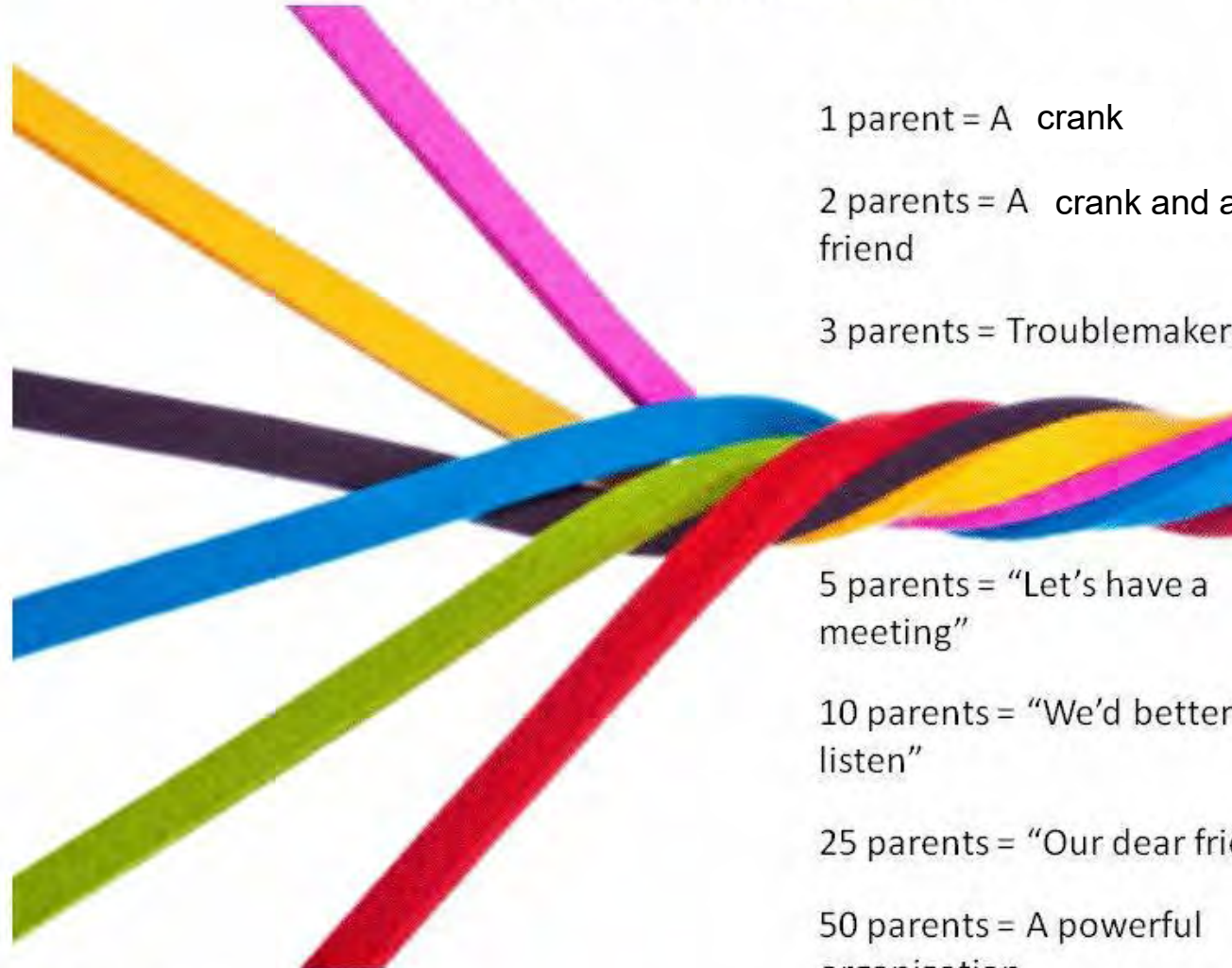
- Address and remove barriers to SEPAC participation and SEPAC leadership for BIPOC parents/guardians of children with disabilities **ONGOING**
- Participate in the search process for new special education director **MET**
- Monitor state guidance and families' experiences regarding reopening schools **ONGOING**
- Community education on Basic Rights and other topics TBD **MET**
- Conduct parent/guardian survey **PENDING**

G. Officer Descriptions for SEPAC Annual Meeting & Elections

- The AB SEPAC can have up to three Co-Chairs and two Secretaries
- Executive board also consists of Past PAC Chair and one Standing Committee Chair; non-voting members include representatives from School Committee and special ed administration
- Descriptions found in by-laws at absepac.org
- Critical needs:
 - outreach
 - parent/guardian support
 - workshop coordination
- Other volunteer opportunities available

www.SpecialEducationAdvisor.com

There is strength and power in numbers



* Adapted from the Parent Leadership Association

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IV. New Business

Other topics on
people's minds

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More Information

DESE Info to Special Education Directors
doe.mass.edu/covid19/sped.html

Mass Advocates for Children (MAC)
massadvocates.org/covid19

Special Needs Advocacy Network (SPaN)
spanmass.org/covid-19.html

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

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- We will **vote to adjourn the meeting**
- Voting will be by roll call
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Annual Meeting & Officer Elections June 9, 2021
Meeting Recordings Available @ absepac.org

Thanks & Contact Information

Our thanks to Interim Special Education Director Debbie Dixon
and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee for their
ongoing collaboration

absepac.org

 @absepac

abrsdsepac@gmail.com