

BROOKLINE SEPAC
SPECIAL EDITION

Oct. 2009

Volume 1, No. 2

Co-chairs Peggy Ueda and Ben Norton

Liaisons

BEEP - Kimberly Percival	Driscoll - Jillian Kalen,	Lawrence - Patrick Gabridge	Runkle - Jemelle O'Neill
Baker - Hillary Pizer	Laney Nielson	Lincoln - Polly Welch	BHS - Lisa Guisbond,
Devotion - Pam Katz, Dawn Edell	Heath - Pam Palmucci	Pierce - Linda Strother	Karen Szeto
Out of district – Nancy Parker, Mary Ann McDonough, Liz Walpert			
School Committee – Glenn Cunha			

News

Brookline SEPAC joins Brookline 2010

Brookline 2010 is an awareness-raising initiative of Climate Change Action Brookline and the Selectmen's Climate Action Committee that seeks to engage residents, businesses and organizations to commit to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas production. It is named for the kick-off year for reducing the Town's carbon footprint by 25% in 85% of households by the year 2012 and hopes to make Brookline a model to other communities.

What can Brookline SEPAC do? For starters,

- Your co-chairs ride bikes as their preferred mode of transportation to SEPAC meetings and other events. We encourage everyone who can do so to walk, bike or take public transportation whenever possible. We try to hold our events at locations where this possibility is maximized.
- We are launching the "Bring your own cup" campaign, asking attendees at SEPAC events where refreshments are served to bring their own cups. We will charge a small amount for the use of disposable cups.
- We will avoid refreshments that require the use of disposable dishes or utensils.
- We will continue to announce and post notices encouraging attendees to use our recycling containers for recyclable materials at our events.
- We will continue to limit paper communications. To this end we will not plan routinely to send home flyers with students but rely upon our SEPAC e-distribution, school newsletters, the TAB, and flyers posted in the schools to publicize our events.
- Please write us with other ideas about how SEPAC can help our environment.

New SEPAC liaisons at Pierce and Devotion

We are happy to announce that Linda Strother has volunteered to serve as our liaison for the Pierce School and Dawn Edell will share the job with Pam Katz at Devotion. Welcome and thank you Linda and Dawn!

Coming soon: new Brookline SEPAC website

An angel parent who is a computer professional has volunteered to set up our website on a new hosting service so that we will be able to keep it up to date. We are looking forward to having a website we can be confident to refer people to again!

Upcoming Events

SEPAC Welcome Breakfast at the Lynch Center - Friday Oct. 9, 8-9 a.m.

The Welcome Breakfast for BEEP has been scheduled at the Lynch Center for Friday, October 9, 8-9 a.m. This is an opportunity for parents of children receiving special education services to meet each other and BEEP SEPAC liaison Kimberly Percival, SEPAC co-chairs, our new Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Denise Rochlin and Director of Special Education Lisa Lamont Harris.

Baker School Welcome Breakfast rescheduled –

Because of a conflict, the Baker School breakfast was not held as planned on Oct. 1 and has been rescheduled to October 28, 8 a.m., in the school cafeteria. Baker parents are invited to come share refreshments, get acquainted with each other and meet your SEPAC co-chair and our new Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Denise Rochlin and Director of Special Education Lisa Lamont Harris.

ADD/ADHD Support Group – Tues., Oct. 13, 6 p.m. Devotion School Library

The meeting is open to all who are parents or guardians of children with a suspected ADD/ADHD diagnosis or those with a confirmed diagnosis. For more information contact Valerie at valerie_ball_98@yahoo.com or 857-272-2164.

Learning Math: Cognition, Language, and the Acquisition of Math Competency, presented by Chris Woodin, Landmark School – Wed., October 14, 6-8 p.m., Hunneman Hall, Brookline Public Library.

How do specific cognitive deficits affect a student's ability to learn math with traditional instructional methods?

What kinds of techniques may be used to teach fundamental operations of arithmetic to students with various strengths and weaknesses?

The speaker provides a lively and engaging presentation of methods to insure learning of math facts and operations, including multi-modal, multi-sensory instruction. He will demonstrate techniques using gross motor, kinesthetic activities and visual processing to teach multiplication and division as well as fractions.

This presentation is geared toward both parents and teachers and is eligible for teacher professional development credit.

Light refreshments will be served. Brookline SEPAC is a Brookline 2010 Climate Action Partner: please bring your own cup!

CoBAP Wine & Cheese Social – Sunday Oct. 25, 7:30 p.m.

Do you live in Brookline and have a child on the autism spectrum? The Coalition for Brookline ASD Parents (COBAP) is holding its first meeting of the 2009-2010 school year at the home of Pam & Steve Katz, 29 Columbia Street, Apt #2 (near Levine's Chapel on Harvard St) 617-264-4418. This is a wine and cheese social for people to get acquainted and set goals for the upcoming year. For more about CoBAP see below under the **Networking** section.

BHS Parents' Fall Social Gathering and Meeting – to be scheduled, watch for announcements.

SEPAC-SPED October meeting devoted to high school issues – Mon. Oct. 30, 8-9 a.m.
Our monthly meeting with Asst. Supt. Rochlin and SPED Director Lisa Lamont Harris will take place on Friday, October 30, 8-9 a.m., in the 5th floor conference room at Town Hall. This meeting will be devoted to SPED parent concerns at the High School. All are welcome to attend.

SEPAC-SPED Monthly Meetings

Starting in November we will be meeting on the third Friday of the month 8-9:30 a.m. in Town Hall. Meetings are open to all. If you have an issue you wish to address, please come, or you may submit it to BrooklineSEPAC@gmail.com. We like to submit an agenda in advance to the administrators. Following October the next two meetings are November 20 and December 18.

Brookline High School SPED Back-to-School Night – Tues., Nov. 10, 7-8:30

Special Ed administrators and BHS staff will give an overview of sped-related programming and answer questions. If you wish you may email questions in advance to our SEPAC BHS liaison at lisa.guisbond@verizon.net. Location will be announced later.

Meet the Administrators – Wed., December 9, 6-7:30 p.m, Town Hall Room 103

Hear directly from the new administrative leaders of special education in Brookline, ask questions and offer comment. Learn about “Landmark at Lawrence”.

Guest column

Coming soon in this spot -

Starting with our November issue, we will feature remarks from various people involved with special education. Next month we look forward to introducing in our pages new Assistant Superintendent for Student Services Denise Rochlin and new Director of Special Education Lisa Lamont Harris.

In the Community

Carroll School Speaker Series

The Carroll School, specializing in teaching children with language-based learning disabilities, offers a free speaker series that is open to the public. All events take place at the Carroll School campus in Lincoln. For more information on a particular presentation and for directions, visit <http://www.carrollschool.org/resources/speakerseries.html>.

Upcoming schedule is as follows:

Internet Safety: Keeping Students Safe Online

Thursday, October 8, 2009 at 8:30 am or 7:00 pm (2 sessions);

Building the Eight Pillars of Capable Young Minds (about executive skills)

Wednesday, October 21, 2009 at 7:00 pm

What Every Carroll Parent Should Know About Transition

Friday, November 6, 2009 at 8:45 am

Understanding Orton-Gillingham and The Language Focus Area

Friday, December 4, 2009 at 8:45 am

Legal Corner

Two legal cases in the past year shed light on issues of unilateral private placement and transition services.

In *Forest Grove School District v. T.A.*, the U.S. Supreme Court addressed whether parents who unilaterally enrolled their child in a private school are entitled to tuition reimbursement if the child never received special education from the district.

Wrightslaw.com summarizes this case as follows: “Despite a long history of ADHD, severe depression, substance abuse problems, and failing grades, Forest Grove School District determined that T. A. was not eligible for special education services under IDEA, nor for protections under Section 504.

As T. A.'s behavior and education continued to spiral out of control, the school offered no help. Finally, his parents placed him in a private school for children with behavioral and emotional problems....”

Reasoning that parents would be without relief when the school district “unreasonably denies” special services while due process of appeal takes its course, the Supreme Court found, in its own words, “... that IDEA authorizes reimbursement for the cost of private special education services when a school district fails to provide a FAPE and the private-school placement is appropriate, regardless of whether the child previously received special education or related services through the public school.” [For a full discussion, see http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/art/forestgrove.ta.analysis.htm#](http://www.wrightslaw.com/law/art/forestgrove.ta.analysis.htm#).

In *Dracut Public Schools* the Massachusetts Board of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) discussed the rights and obligations under IDEA with respect to transition planning and services. The School District graduated a student with Asperger’s Syndrome without addressing his need for direct, out-of-school experiences to acquire the pragmatic skills he would need to negotiate his post-secondary world, ignoring, moreover, compelling independent evaluations that recommended changes in his IEP to accommodate his need for such experiences. The district was ordered to provide two additional years of transitional services, with ongoing eligibility for special education, in compensation for their failure to provide such services during high school. This case instructs that the transition planning form should not be completed in a perfunctory way but needs to identify and develop specific experiences--including non-academic experiences--for the student to develop the skills needed to achieve the expressed post-secondary vision and make effective use of his or her education. For fuller discussion, see <http://www.spanmass.org/id109.html>.

Please scroll down to next page.

Studies

From the Children's Hospital website:

“A new clinical research volunteer registry

CHB-Connect is a new way to connect individuals—including parents, children and members of the community who may be interested in participating in clinical research studies—with researchers the hospital.

Individuals who register will be able to select specific medical areas of interest or register as a healthy participant. At the same time, researchers with IRB-approved protocols at Children's Hospital Boston can access the registry's database and contact individuals in the registry to find out if they're interested in participating in specific studies. Registering is fast and secure. Register as a volunteer: childrenshospital.org/connect.”

Networking

Coalition of Brookline Autism Parents (COBAP)

COBAP is a group of Brookline parents who meet bi-monthly to discuss issues related to helping their children diagnosed with PDD-NOS, Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Membership is open to any person who is the parent or guardian of a child who lives in Brookline and has an autism spectrum disorder, or who lives elsewhere but attends school in Brookline and has an autism spectrum disorder.

To join COBAP or for more information, please contact Beth Kaufman at bkpubservices@yahoo.com or Pam Palmucci at ppalmucci@rcn.com. We welcome Brookline ASD parents join our Yahoo group by visiting www.yahogroups.com, enter "COBAP" in the box that says "Find a Group".

Brookline QUEST (Quality Unique Enrichment for Special Needs Teens)

Brookline QUEST supports traditional and innovative recreational, leisure and cultural activities for Brookline teens with special needs. Visit their website at www.brooklinequest.org to learn about their extensive schedule of activities.

ADD/ADHD Support Group

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Brookline SEPAC

visit us at brooklinesepac.org

contact us at brooklinesepac@gmail.com

join our e-distribution at <http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/psb/templates/lyris.aspx>

