

SPECIAL EDITION

May 2010

Volume 1, No. 9

Co-chairs Peggy Ueda and Patrick Gabridge

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	
	PTO - Ben Norton	School Committee - Glenn Cunha	

News

2010 Liaison Appreciation at BATV Studios

Our 2009-2010 culminating event will take place at the fabulous new Brookline Access TV Studio on Wed., June 9, 7-8:30 p.m. All are welcome! BATV is located on the top floor of the BHS Unified Arts Building, 46 Tappan St. In addition to recognizing the service of our SEPAC liaisons, we will hold elections for officers for 2010-2011, brainstorm plans for next year, and have plenty of time for refreshments and networking. A mini-theatre will be available for showing a film (suggestions welcome!) and the media rooms are also at our disposal. Don't miss this important meeting! See also Upcoming Events, below, for additional details.

Nominations open for 2010-11 and -12 SEPAC co-chairs

We still have room on the ballot for more nominees for co-chair. Please send your nominations to brooklinesepac@gmail.com. Don't hesitate to nominate yourself! What's involved in being a co-chair? Please see the appendix at end of newsletter.

Openings for volunteers

Openings remain for volunteers to handle publicity, newsletter production and website management. Come help out and keep our organization strong! A description of responsibilities is included in the appendix.

Sepac Yahoo Group up and running

Looking for a tutor? An advocate? Wondering about a particular BHS program for your child? Want a "reality-check" on an experience you've had? Join the Brookline SEPAC yahoo group to network with other parents, ask questions, obtain information, and share your own experiences to help others. Sign up on our website, www.brooklinesepac.org. Look for the link in the right-hand column.

Upcoming Events

SEPAC Driscoll Parents Meeting – Wed., May 5, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Driscoll Library

SEPAC Driscoll School Liaisons Jill Kalen and Laney Nielson invite parents of students receiving special education services or who want to learn more about special education to a “Meet the Specialists” breakfast. Team Facilitator Tara Kelly will lead a discussion of specialty services including Learning Center, Occupational and Physical Therapy, Speech and Language, Psychology and Guidance. Some of these specialists will be on hand to discuss their roles and answer questions. Children are welcome in the cafeteria.

Open Forum on Special Education with Superintendent Lupini – Wed., May 5, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Room 103

Dr. Lupini will provide an update on special education in Brookline and entertain questions and comments. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to bring their concerns directly to the top!

SEPAC-Special Ed. Administrators Meeting – 5/21, 8:15-9:15 a.m. 5th floor Town Hall

Our May meeting will be devoted to High School issues. Send items you wish to include on the agenda to brooklinesepac@gmail.com and come share your thoughts in person.

SEPAC leaders and SPED administrators meet monthly on the third Friday from 8:15-9:15 a.m.. All are welcome! Watch for an announcement in our next issue of *Special Edition* as to whether we will hold a June meeting. Meetings are held on the 5th floor of Town Hall or alternate site as posted.

COBAP/ QUEST Trivia Night—Friday, May 14, 7 p.m.

The Coalition of Brookline Autism Parents and Quality Unique Enrichment for Special Needs Teens hold their annual fundraiser at the VineRipe Grill, Putterham Gold Course. Last year was a lot of fun—please join us! Must be over 21 to attend.

LBLD and ADHD: Is There a Connection and How Can We Help? Wed., May 26, 7-8:30 p.m., Heath School Auditorium

Dr. Michael Neessen of Harvard Medical School and Boston Children’s Hospital Developmental Medicine Center will speak about the links between language-based learning disabilities and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. With a brief overview of how to help students who have a single diagnosis, Dr. Neessen will focus on dual diagnosis and how to help at school and at home. This presentation is geared toward both parents and educators. Participants with professional licenses are eligible for PDPs if the content aligns with one of their IPDP goals.

Liaison Appreciation, Planning Meeting and Election of Officers – Potluck dessert Wed. June 9, 7-8:30 p.m., Brookline Access TV Studios, 46 Tappan St., top floor

Come honor all our liaisons and recognize retiring liaison Liz Walpert for her years of service *and* explore the new headquarters of BATV with its state-of-the-art media facilities. We will hold election for new co-chairs and share ideas about plans for next year. We plan to run a special needs-related film in the mini-theatre and have a “web resource fair” in the media room. Please bring a dessert, fruit or beverage to share and join us for refreshments, an opportunity to socialize, and a chance to view pieces on display from the Museum of Bad Art!

In the Community

***Demystifying Dyslexia: Definition and Specific Intervention – Tues., May 18, 7-9 pm
Westwood High School, 220 Nahatan Street, Westwood,
Professional Development Room***

Dr. Pamela E. Hook, PhD, President of the Massachusetts Branch of The International Dyslexia Association and Associate Professor at the MGH Institute of Health Professions provides an in-depth presentation about dyslexia and effective interventions to help your child succeed. Research shows that approximately 15 percent of all school children have dyslexia. However, only 5 percent of school children are identified as having a learning disability. The remaining 10 percent are missed due to a lack of recognition that they are struggling or that their academic or behavior problems are connected to specific difficulties with learning. Dr. Hook will allow time for a question/answer session following the presentation. RSVP requested by May 17th to pams31@verizon.net or 781-326-0547. The presentation is sponsored by the Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council and is free and open to the public.

Special Education Surrogate Parent Program needs volunteers – training session 5/18

SEPAC parents have gained special knowledge about advocating for their children who need individualized educational services. Who can share that expertise to help children who don't have parental advocates? The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Surrogate Parent Program seeks volunteers to represent children age 3-18 (and technically to age 22) in DCS custody at their IEP meetings. Program volunteers have included parents of children with special needs, attorneys, a Special Education director and other "good Samaritans". Time commitment is about 10-20 hours over a year. Interested individuals are invited to attend a free orientation training to learn about the roles of a Special Education Surrogate Parent, the special education process, resources in the community and how to make a difference in the life of a child. The training session takes place Tuesday, May 18, 4:30-8:30 pm at the Boston Central Library, 700 Boylston St. Register by calling 508-792-7679 or e-mail sespp@earthlink.net.

Legal Corner

Need an advocate?

Check out the Federation for Children with Special Needs Parent's Guide to Selecting a Special Education Advocate at www.fcsn.org/pti/advocacy/advocacy_brochure.pdf. Parents may contact the FCSN at 617-236-7210 to locate an advocate in their area. FCSN also provides training (fee charged) for parents to become advocates. See www.fcsn.org.

The Special Needs Advocacy Network (SPAN) provides a directory of special education advocates by town/city. See www.spanmass.org.

Mass Advocates for Children is a non-profit legal aid and child advocacy organization that engages in statewide special education advocacy. MAC provides information to parents, advocates and educators regarding special education rights, provides parents with technical assistance, referral and advocacy services and works to retain, improve and enforce state law related to educational opportunities for children with disabilities. Learn more at www.massadvocates.org.

Need a lawyer?

The Massachusetts Bar Association maintains a Lawyer Referral Service. Go to <http://www.massbar.org/for-the-public/need-a-lawyer> or call (866) 627-7577.

Lawyers.com is a paid attorney advertisement page that provides attorney contacts by specialty. Special ed lawyers are listed at <http://www.lawyers.com/Special-Education/Massachusetts/Boston/law-firms.html>.

The Disability Law Center is a private, non-profit organization that provides protection and advocacy for the rights of Massachusetts residents with disabilities. DLC-Ma provides information, referral, technical assistance and representation for people with disabilities, including legal services to eligible people and groups whose cases meet DLC's priorities.

The Concord SpedPac website includes a list of advocates and special ed lawyers in the greater Boston area. See www.concordspedpac.org/.

Don't forget the SEPAC Yahoo Group

Parents can use this opportunity to share information and references for advocates and lawyers.

Looking for more information about Special Education law?

Be sure to take a look at www.wrightslaw.com and consider subscribing to its free online newsletter, *Special Ed Advocate*, for timely and informative articles.

Special Section: Summer Tutoring

The following list is provided as a service to our readers and does not in any way indicate an endorsement or recommendation of any tutor by Brookline SEPAC. We encourage parents to make their own assessment including requesting references. Tutors who missed inclusion this month are welcome to send in subjects, qualifications, availability and contact information for publication in our June newsletter. Parents are encouraged to invite tutors whom they found helpful to submit their information as well. Please write to brooklinesepac@gmail.com.

K-8 subjects

Karen Bergthold, K-8 Wilson tutor. Wilson Reading System and writing skills. 18 years experience as Special Ed. teacher. Available June to September.
kmrucci@comcast.net

Cheryl, tutor/homework helper. Emphasis on K-8 reading, writing, & math. Harvard Graduate School of Education, over 15 years experience. MA & NJ certified. 617-277-1204

Maxene Lorraway, reading specialist K-8. Early intervention reading program; reading/writing support; study skills. Reading recovery certified, M.Ed., former school V.P., many years experience, Heath School parent. Available now. 781-956-2805 (cell), maxenelorraway@comcast.net.

Jillian Kalen Reading; middle school and high school math. Has been Special Education teacher in Cambridge, Brookline and Boston; extensive tutoring experience and experience with children with learning disabilities and social/emotional/behavior challenges. Wilson- and Project Read-certified for phonics-based reading instruction. Available for summer. Jkalen00@gmail.com or 617-232-0948

Elissa Yanover Orton-Gillingham tutor K-8. Reading Therapist Certification (MGH), MA Education (U. of London), Certified level O-G training (Carroll School). Available now. (617) 738-8298, elissayanover@aol.com.

K-8 and middle school

Debbie Gardner, teacher and tutor. Math, reading, writing, organizational and study skills, how to master homework and test-taking, and Hebrew. Licensed Massachusetts teacher for 10 years, experience working with students with learning disabilities. Available now, summer, school year. Dspectorgardner@aol.com or 617-469-9939.

Middle and/or high school subjects

Bruce Ditata, the "Math Mechanic". Middle school math (especially grades 5-7). 30 years experience as middle school special education teacher as well as private tutoring experience. Available now. 508-287-9395

Jillian Kalen Middle and high school math – see listing above.

Alan Lazar Lazar Tutorial Services for middle school, high school and college students. Language arts (reading comprehension, grammar and composition), history, social studies, sciences, French and Spanish, math including calculus and statistics, college application preparation, college/business/law school admission test preparation. PhD in Social Sciences, Harvard U., B.A. Columbia College. alan.lazar@verizon.net or 617-325-2704

Marco F. Odiaga History Dept. Faculty, Concord Academy. History – U.S., European, Centra./South American, Native American. Essay writing, history standardized test preparation. 20 years high school teaching. Available June 14 though summer. Marco.Odiaga@conccordacademy.org or 508-237-1462.

Studies

Genes, Reading, and Dyslexia

The Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University, in collaboration with the Yale Child Health Research Center, is conducting a study to identify a genetic factor found only in individuals who currently have or who will develop reading problems. Identification of this factor would allow these children to receive help with their reading problems at a very early stage. Current research about genes and reading problems fails to include children from diverse backgrounds. In order to develop a screening tool that is able to help children from many different backgrounds, the Center will focus its study mainly on those of African American and Hispanic/Latino heritage. Healthy children of African-American or Latino-American descent, 10-15 years of age, who have experienced reading difficulties and/or have a diagnosis of dyslexia are eligible to participate. The Tufts Investigator is Maryanne Wolf, Ed.D. Contact Stephanie Gottwald at steph.gottwald@tufts.edu or 617-627-4874.

Are ADHD and reading difficulties related?

The Gaab Lab at Children's Hospital Boston is investigating the suggested link between ADHD and dyslexia. For more information, visit the Gaab Lab website at www.childrenshospital.org/research/gaabl原因 or contact GaabLab.email@gmail.com (857-218-4629). ** Dr. Gaab will be present to explain her study at Dr. Neessen's presentation on this subject at our SEPAC speaker event on May 26.**

Networking

Sources sought to support purchase of audiological processing headset

A SEPAC parent seeks information about financial support for purchasing this expensive piece of equipment for her son who has Sensory Integration Disorder. Anyone with information please write brooklinesepac@gmail.com.

Friendship Circle

Friendship Circle is a Jewish organization that provides programming for children with special needs. FC partners with teenagers and college students for weekly visits with children as well as special monthly events. In addition, the organization provides a special bi-monthly program for teenagers and young adults at Harvard University. For more information visit www.friendshipcircleboston.org, email info@friendshipcircleboston.org, or call 617.378.5765

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. 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

Periodic meetings of parents and guardians of children with a suspected or confirmed ADD/ADHD diagnosis. For more information contact Valerie at 857-272-2164 or valerie_ball_98@yahoo.com

Please scroll to next page.

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APPENDIX

BROOKLINE SEPAC

Leadership and other volunteer positions

Co-Chairs (1-3, ideally 2)- each serves 2 years, overlapping each other

- Represent SEPAC in all capacities (parents, admin, school committee, etc)
- Oversee general operations, assure liaisons in all schools, call & conduct mtgs
- Keep informed, and inform membership, of developments in special ed on a school, town, state and federal level
- Maintain the gmail account, help parents seeking information and advice
- Assure compliance with by-laws
- Provide news and other content for newsletter
- Appoint volunteers for programming and communications

Programming Volunteer(s)

Develops proposed series of presentations and other events
Schedules meetings and events, makes arrangements for speakers, reserves rooms, assures equipment, etc.

- **Refreshments coordinator** – assures refreshments and recycling

Publicity Volunteer(s)

Provides publicity (via SEPAC newsletter, TAB, school newsletters, posters) for SEPAC meetings and events

Interfaces with Programming Volunteer, Newsletter Editor and Website Manager

Newsletter Editor

Edits and formats content provided by Co-Chairs and Programming and Communications Volunteers

Develops special content such as guest columns, spotlights, legal corner, summer camp information, networking, research studies, etc.

Website Manager

Assures website is accurate and up-to-date

Updates website calendar and posts newsletters and materials from presentations



Brookline SEPAC

visit us at brooklinesepac.org

contact us at brooklinesepac@gmail.com

Brookline SEPAC is a Brookline 2010 Climate Action Partner

