



Time for change: A new day for SEPAC awards

As many of you know, SEPAC is 30 years old. And, for better and for worse, in those 30 years we've established some well-entrenched traditions. Over the past year, SEPAC has had multiple meetings to examine some of our practices in light of changing times, to take inventory of what traditions do and don't still work.

One of our more popular traditions is the annual SEPAC Awards. This was initially established to recognize and promote innovative and exciting work around inclusion. Last year, it was brought to our attention that our award vetting process had some glitches, and others expressed concern that the awards, though popular, may have lost luster with time: that they may not be the best means to promote innovation or inclusion, and that maybe, a different approach would generate more incentive and more enthusiasm.

So SEPAC's executive committee and its inclusion committee have been meeting to examine the awards process more closely and make some revisions. They have traveled to conferences and conferred with other school districts in Washington and other states. There have been some exciting ideas generated. Unfortunately, however, we have been unable to revamp our new system in time for this year's award process. Subsequently, SEPAC will be unable to offer awards in the 2010-2011 school year. It is with regret that I write this: this is something that SEPAC has traditionally done, maybe for 25 or more years.

Change is difficult. We apologize, sincerely, for any inconvenience. The good news is that, before the end of year, we will be able to announce exciting revisions to our awards processes, a process we hope to start up with the beginning of the coming school year. We still want to recognize innovative and dedicated staff and community members who do great things; but we will also offer, we hope, opportunity for our community to work collaboratively to bring positive change, inclusion, and awareness to our Northshore community.

Please stay tuned, and in the meantime, keep those SEPAC nominations in mind for next year. And please, please, encourage those who are doing a good job in education and inclusion. You don't need an award to do so. Thank you.

The SEPAC Executive Committee