



SEPAC NEWS

Special Education Parent/Professional Advisory Council

Winter 2010 Edition

3330 Monte Villa Parkway, Bothell, WA 98021
www.sepacnsd.org

425.408.6008

Message from the SEPAC Chair

Hi, I'm Andrea Kadlec, Chair of the Special Education Parent and Professional Advisory Council (SEPAC), for the 2009-2010 school year. As our year is underway, I'd like to say hello and let you know a few things we have in the works.

We are an advocacy organization for students with disabilities in our District, comprised of both District professionals and parents. We meet monthly during the school year. Our Board meetings are open to the public, and your input at these meetings is welcomed and valued.

Each year, SEPAC offers stipends for professional development to parents and staff interested in special education. This can be for conferences and other events. We have offered money to promote community-based inclusion activities. We offer start-up classroom funds for special education teachers new to the district or to the profession. We also offer summer scholarships

and community access funds for classrooms. Information about any of these stipends or scholarships can be obtained upon inquiry.

SEPAC is renowned for its professional presentations, offered once monthly, typically on the fourth Wednesday, in the Board Room of the Northshore Administration Building from 7-9 pm. Child care is available and clock hours are often available for Northshore staff. We have another great lineup of presentations this year (see back page).

SEPAC annually nominates and recognizes outstanding teachers, parents and district personnel for leadership and service in special education. We also provide a resource library with disability related literature and videos.

SEPAC operates on revenue raised annually during its craft fair. This

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Directors' Letter

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! We trust that you had a good fall and that you and your children are settling into a familiar routine.

In spite of the budget cuts, it seems our 2009/2010 year started smoothly. Students and teachers are happy and quickly back on track. For the first time in many years, we were able to fill all of our open positions in the areas of School Psychologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, and Occupational and Physical Therapists. This is a great relief for us as it allows us to better meet students' needs.

Some of you may have heard about federal stimulus money coming to special education. This is true, however as with any federal money, there are multiple guidelines with many strings attached. Also, we have to remember that this is "short-term" money, which will go away in two years. So we can't invest in staff and then send them away after two years. Consequently, much of the money is going to staff training. We are very excited that all of the NSD certificated staff are going to receive training around special education issues.

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SEPAC

(Special Education Parent/Professional Advisory Council) is a group of parents, professionals and administrators who work together for the benefit of children who have special needs in the Northshore School District.

To learn more, please send an email: nsdsepac@yahoo.com or visit our website: www.sepacnsd.org.

Parents and Professionals Page

Attendees find SEPAC Board Meetings Beneficial

Ever wonder what might be the benefit of taking time out from your monthly obligations to attend SEPAC board meetings? Some responses to that question are listed below.

"At every board meeting I get some piece of information that benefits my child directly."

"I hear from the Directors of Special Education what is happening around this district and I have the opportunity to ask them questions."

"It gives me the opportunity to have a voice and be connected to district policy decision-making on behalf of special education students."

"I get to know what is happening in the district and meet other parents."

"I want to be a better advocate for my child. I get a chance to talk to Carrie and Ed with concerns/problems/thanks. It's a great opportunity to get the pulse of what's happening in the special education department."

"Attending meetings has been a great source of information about what is going on in the district. I find out behind-the-scenes information that I don't hear anywhere else. Many of the presentations have given me specific information to be a better parent."

Renewal of NSD Bond and Levy

At our November 9, 2009 SEPAC meeting parents of SEPAC voted to support the 2010 Northshore SD Bond and Levies. These are renewals of existing Bond and Levies which expire in 2010. A significant portion of the levies supports Special Education. They are as follows:

- Renewal of the \$149.2 million Capital Projects Bond which maintains and renovates aging schools and provides key infrastructure support such as roofs, heating systems and Internet capability.
- Renewal of the Education Operation Support Levy which provides 20% of the district's budget for daily operations and educational programs.
- Renewal of the Technology Levy.

Failure of the 2010 NSD Levies and Bond could result in the loss of approximately \$37 to \$40 million to the district's operating budget which obviously would lead to cuts in programs and services and affect ALL students in the district. You can make a difference. Please return your mail in vote by February 9, 2010. In order for the Capital Projects Bond to pass it requires 60% plus one vote (a super-majority) and requires that at least 40% of those who voted in November also vote in February. The levies require a 50% plus one vote to pass.

SEPAC Leadership

Parents:

Chair - Andrea Kadlec

Vice Chair - Angela Jordan

Past Chair - Kathryn Williams

Treasurer - Debbi Gray

Secretary - Nancy Burrows

Professionals:

Elementary Grades - Carrie Matthews

Director of Elementary

Special Education

425-408-7736

Secondary Grades - Ed Koehl

Director of Secondary

Special Education

425-408-7735



Directors' Letter *(continued...)*

As you move through this year, we hope it is one of joy and growth for both you and your children. If you experience concerns, please first take them up with your child's teacher. If this doesn't resolve the issue, then consider contacting the principal. If an agreeable resolution is not reached, then please feel free to call us.

We wish you a wonderful 2010!

Sincerely,
Carrie and Ed

Carrie Matthews, Director of
Elementary Special Education
425-408-7736

Ed Koehl, Director of
Secondary Special Education
425-408-7735

*Mission Statement
of the Northshore SEPAC:
to enhance the lives of children and youth with
disabilities in our community by addressing systemic
issues and future goals of special
education.*

SEPAC Events, Etc.

Holiday Craft Fair

The SEPAC 29th Woodinville Holiday Craft Fair, held on November 6th, 2009, was a huge success. The annual fair draws seventy to eighty crafters from the entire region and hundreds of local customers each year. Dozens of volunteers and the Craft Fair Committee transform Woodmoor Elementary into a Holiday Bazaar filled with beautiful handmade items. Money is raised by

the sale of the booth fees, and is the only fund raiser SEPAC holds during the year. Typically \$4,000-\$5,000 is raised, including a raffle held at the end of the fair. The money generated by the Holiday Craft Fair funds many valuable causes, which have positive impacts on students with special needs and their families in the Northshore School District. The money pays for the monthly presentation speaker fees as well as the child care service and refreshments

provided at the presentations. It also helps fund Community Access trips for special education classes; summer scholarships for students who need additional academic support during the summer months; parent and professional attendance at conferences and workshops on a variety of special needs topics; and school grants and classroom set-up assistance for new special education teachers.

The Nitty Gritty of SEPAC

Does SEPAC have anything to offer you? If you are the parent or guardian of a student with any special needs then the answer is definitely "yes" and here's why.

How many other places in the community can you talk with other parents who are going through almost exactly the same things as you are or have already "been there, done that" before you? Whatever your experiences, you are not the first and probably will not be the last.

Where else in the community can you openly discuss your child's differences or their education? Not only with people who understand, but with people who can make a difference?

And where else can you make a difference in the special education services provided in the Northshore School District?

At SEPAC we certainly talk a lot but we also do a lot. Every fall SEPAC hosts the Woodinville Holiday Craft Fair at Woodmoor Elementary. It's a very fun day and we'd love for you to be a part of it. In the spring SEPAC recognizes teachers and staff

who have made a difference in our children's lives when we give the SEPAC Outstanding Service Awards. Want to help? It's a very "feel good" moment to present those awards.

Want to learn new things? Come to our monthly presentations or join the presentation committee to influence which topics SEPAC presents to parents and district professionals.

How about inclusion? Are you happy with how well your student is integrated in his/her school? Does the school culture embrace their differences? What is working and what is not working in the district? We have an Inclusion Committee that meets to discuss such issues.

SEPAC also tries to keep its finger on the pulse of what is going on in the legislature and topics surrounding advocacy. Is that something you are interested in learning or sharing your knowledge about?

Please become a part of SEPAC. We are all in this together for a long time and need each other along the journey.

Kathryn Williams, SEPAC Past Chair

Message from SEPAC Chair *(continued...)*

money is used to bring in speakers, provide stipends for education and conferences, manage our awards program, and provide resources for Northshore district staff and families of students in special education. While we have already completed this year's craft fair, our committee is busy at work organizing next year's Fair which will be held on November 7, 2010. This is another way you could bring your talents to our table and have fun.

Our inclusion, legislative and advocacy subcommittees also keep us up to speed on what is happening in our district and in our state when it comes to special education, best practices, and resource information for our families.

SEPAC has been a staple of information and advocacy for students in special education, district staff and families of our school district for over 20 years. Please join us. Your voice and talents make a difference in all we do. Please feel free to contact me at any time with any questions.

Andrea Kadlec, SEPAC Chair
nsdsepac@yahoo.com

SEPAC

Meetings

Meetings are held on Monday evenings from 6:30-8:30 pm at the NSD Administrative Center. All parents, teachers, principals and special education administrators are welcome to attend.

January 11, 2010
February 8, 2010
March 8, 2010
April 12, 2010
May 10, 2010

On June 14, 2010 join us for our annual potluck and planning

For more information send an email: nsdsepac@yahoo.com or check the website: www.sepacnsd.org

Presentations

January 27, 2010
Life/Estate Planning

February 24, 2010
"Including Samuel"
Presentation/Discussion

March 24, 2010
Person Centered
Planning

April 28, 2010
Response to
Intervention (RTI):
What does it look
like in NSD?

May 26, 2010
Visual Strategies for
Home and School

Presentations are held Wednesday evenings from 7-9 pm at the NSD Administrative Center. Bring a friend!

Childcare for District families is available.
Call 206-579-2321 to reserve a spot.

SEPAC NEWS

Administrative Center
Northshore Special Education Dept.
3330 Monte Villa Parkway
Bothell, WA 98021-8972

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