

SEPAC SPRING 2010 SURVEY RESULTS

Total surveys started: 56

Total surveys completed: 54

1) 2010-2011 SEPAC presentations

answered question: 55

a. Bullying	33 votes	60.0%
b. Inclusion Strategies	31 votes	56.4%
c. Social thinking strategies	29 votes	52.7%
d. Smooth transitions: year to year, school to school, school to life	29 votes	52.7%
e. Standardized curriculum and special education	23 votes	41.8%
f. Plan for independence II: after school	20 votes	36.4%
g. Special Education Rights for parents & students	20 votes	36.4%
h. Sexuality & Boundaries	19 votes	34.5%
i. Dyslexia	17 votes	30.9%
j. IEP development	17 votes	30.9%
k. Office of education ombudsman &/or office of civil rights	15 votes	27.3%
l. Mental health supports	14 votes	25.5%
m. Dream big: How you can change your community	14 votes	25.5%
n. State of the district II: open forum with asst superintendents	13 votes	23.6%
o. Accessible disaster preparedness	12 votes	21.8%
p. IEP facilitators project	11 votes	20.0%

Comments:

1. how to have crucial/difficult conversations
2. Teachers and parents need info about social stories!!!
3. How to help with Executive Functioning
4. Autism and spectrum disorders ADD, ADHD what's the current thinking/strategies
5. Score Card - How does NSD stack up against other districts in WA, nationally?
6. adult transition planning from jr high - portfolios, etc
7. Autism - coping strategies. Beth Jenson has done good presentation for para-educators at NSD.

Proposed presentations to be discussed at Board Meeting on May 10, 2010

October –Bullying

November –Social Thinking Strategies

January – Inclusive Practices

February - State of the District II (standardized curric & special education)

March – Smooth Transitions

April – Dyslexia

May – Plan for independence II: Adult Services

Initial observations:

Since the executive committee met, there have been changes in the survey, so the proposed list does not exactly match the survey results. One way to address this would be to add a September presentation on special education rights. We can discuss at the board meeting.

Some presentations could convert to project-oriented committees, such as accessible disaster preparedness, that share information in an ongoing manner with SEPAC members. The IEP facilitators project, the Office of Education Ombudsman and Office of Civil Rights are groups that can share ongoing information with us, and possibly do shorter Board meeting presentations as well.

Since early detection, recognition, curriculum and accommodation support of dyslexia has been a big roundtable topic for multiple months this year, the Exec Board decided to include a presentation on dyslexia next year, despite the lower votes, recognizing a need for district information on this topic.

2) Most useful SEPAC activities

answered question: 49

Monthly presentations	42 votes	85.7%
SEPAC advocacy efforts	25 votes	51.0%
Inclusion efforts	20 votes	40.8%
Board meeting with roundtable discussions	19 votes	38.8%
Disability awareness efforts	17 votes	34.7%
Teacher startup assistance	13 votes	26.5%
SEPAC awards	11 votes	22.4%
Craft Fair	10 votes	20.4%
Youth involvement projects	10 votes	20.4%
Professional development stipends	8 votes	16.3%
Resource library	8 votes	16.3%
Community-based scholarships	3 votes	6.1%

Comments

- 1) Note craft fair as useful as it funds everything we do!
- 2) Not "official member" therefore hard to say...
- 3) I only knew about the monthly presentations. Some of these items may have been helpful.
- 4) I mean to come to the board meetings because I have heard they are helpful but have not made it yet.
- 5) Maybe 2-3 topics presented for the whole school year
- 6) What is teacher startup assistance?
- 7) have never heard of a resource library-tell us how to access please
- 8) I appreciate the monthly emails with the community resources

Initial observations: We need to better publicize what we do. SEPAC members find our inclusion and advocacy efforts more important than our roundtable meetings. People appreciate all of what SEPAC does. We need to better publicize our resource library. We depend on our craft fair revenue: very important.

**3) I would be more involved in SEPAC if
answered question: 30**

I had more time or was not already committed elsewhere	21	70%
Meetings were at different times	6	20%
I had more information about SEPAC	4	13.3%
I had childcare so that I could attend	4	13.3%
There were other ways to be involved	3	10.0%
The benefits of being involved were clearer	2	6.7%

Comments

- 1) 4:00- 5:30
- 2) It seems so organized I think the current volunteers rock!!!
- 3) if invited

Initial observations: Parents and professionals of special education students are often keeping their heads above water and SEPAC is just one more thing. We need to make sure people understand the benefits of being involved. We may need to examine our meeting times? We need to better publicize our efforts and let people know where and when they can be more involved.

4) What does SEPAC do well?

answered question: 21

Comments

- 1) presentations
- 2) Need more information
- 3) Communicate what the monthly meeting topics are(most important to me)
- 4) advocacy for our kids
- 5) Excellent supports for families: resources, presentations, advocacy, information
- 6) generally the monthly topics are interesting and beneficial
- 7) Educating parents, school district on special needs
- 8) Good variety of presentations; well organized
- 9) wide variety of wonderful speakers
- 10) education and advocacy
- 11) Get information out, do nice presentations, give the credits for the staff, make people feel welcome who don't come all the time.
- 12) Informative speakers
- 13) speakers & parent support
- 14) The educational presentations - I always wish I could go to them! Plus the advocacy for new programs like ATP.
- 15) Bring opportunities to learn about differently abled kids to all
- 16) Presentations
- 17) Assist parents
- 18) Share information about resources
- 19) Wonderful conduit of information & keeping the profile of special ed high! Kudos, guys.
- 20) interacts with the district staff
- 21) the presentations

Initial observations

SEPAC members appreciate the information we bring to them, and our presentations clearly are our biggest success, so we can keep doing what we are doing. Our advocacy efforts are appreciated and we bring visibility to special education and disability-related issues in the district.

5) What does SEPAC need to improve?

answered question: 15

- 1) recruiting new active participants
- 2) need more information
- 3) Communicate to the larger community the changes they are affecting.
- 4) Maybe communicate community learning opportunities. Where else can parents go for help and information?
- 5) Still new and learning
- 6) It's a wonderful organization and I am grateful for it
- 7) can't think of a thing
- 8) I am not sure how to address this and I think SEPAC is wonderful, but I don't come to all of the presentations because they are not all relevant to my situation. Because the issues facing parents differ based on their child's level of disability, I think it's a little hard to make a commitment to go every time because the topic won't be relevant. If there were a way to have one month be for kids with one level of disability and then the next month for a different level- I don't know- it's hard. I hope you can figure out what I mean! I think you are all great!! And, I have good intentions of getting more involved.
- 9) getting inclusion committee running full swing & inclusion efforts in schools
- 10) Communication/accessibility
- 11) Better define its relationship with NSD. Is it part of the district, or just collaborating with the district?
- 12) communication with secondary parents - letting parents of less involved kids (with learning disabilities) know that this is a place for them as well
- 13) Publicity about itself - I know more about the community resources you share than about your organization
- 14) survey parent happiness w/each school and rate them
- 15) Outreach to the parents that don't make it to even one presentation.

Initial observations Communication continues to be an organizational challenge. We need to reach out to more members, and younger parents, to carry on what we do, bring us more information, keep us innovative and forward-moving. We need to better publicize what we are doing, especially changes we are effecting. Our inclusion committee needs to get its efforts off the ground, and is making strides as of late. We could look at more diversity in our presentations, and make sure they reflect the needs of all types of disabilities. We need people to understand that structurally we are an organization that works closely with the district in a collaborative nature; but that we are independent. It is important to keep our welcoming forum, where staff and parents feel comfortable bringing all sorts of issues that can be discussed openly and addressed. We need to be more transparent about our advocacy efforts, so people see the changes that are happening. Not sure about the happiness survey; but parity in school programs is an ongoing issue and maybe others have ideas.

5) Overall, how would you rate SEPAC as an organization?

answered question: 48

a. Very effective	22 votes	45.8%
b. Somewhat effective	22 votes	45.8%
c. Somewhat ineffective	2 votes	4.2%
d. Very ineffective	2 votes	4.2 %

Comments

- 1) I think SEPAC is poised to become more effective as we speak.
- 2) need more critical mass of parents to make a bigger impact, small group that is involved is doing a great job !
- 3) Need more information
- 4) You can't help if no one knows what you do and what you have to offer.
- 5) Honestly, I know SEPAC does more than I know. They do meet my needs so I am satisfied.
- 6) Foster a spirit of collaboration, cooperation and positive outcomes.
- 7) Not sure
- 8) don't know
- 9) SEPAC is important to NSD. It helps us as a district to focus on special ed students and families, not just general ed students.
- 10) We're lucky in NSD to have such a strong advocacy group-WAY TO GO!
- 11) It may be somewhat effective, I just have not personally witnessed any accomplishments driven by SEPAC. I have seen lots of information being provided by SEPAC.
- 12) SEPAC is a great group of caring parents. I would love to see better communication with parents of secondary students. I have not had any communication from the junior high over the last two years.
- 13) Kep up the great work!
- 14) can't comment, I am not involved enough to have an opinion
- 15) what improvements within schools have they spearheaded
- 16) Great organization, but always room for improvement!

Initial observations: Not much to add. We had one parent email me and say that she actually wanted to vote for very effective, instead of very ineffective: so we really only had one very ineffective vote. Overall, we can be proud of all of our hard work.

6) Other thoughts or comments

answered question: 4

Comments

- 1) Thank you very much for all your support!!
- 2) If you need volunteers be sure and advertise. I am not crafty so I can't really help with that but I can do other things.
- 3) Thank you for asking!
- 4) how do they help dissatisfied parents improve schools

Analysis

SEPAC volunteers do an amazing job, are caring, dedicated, well-organized, accessible and work very, very hard. It takes the minds and hearts and work of many to do what we do and many are very grateful for this group.