
JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER



Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)



www.concordsepac.org



concordsepac@gmail.com



Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional Public Schools SEPAC



@concordsepac

Note to our readers: We hope you had a wonderful holiday season and wish you and your family a happy and healthy 2018!

Now that winter is officially here, it's harder to motivate to get outside. For some families, it can also be challenging to find a fun activity in which your child can participate. If you're interested in inclusive outdoor activities for your child, check out the adaptive ski or snowboarding lessons through Concord Recreation (<https://goo.gl/fDXaVD>). You may also want to check out Concord's wonderful natural outdoor Playscape (<http://www.ripleyplayscape.org/contact-us.html>). Outdoor activities in natural settings may not only be fun, but may also have added benefits for children with ADHD (see Science Alert).



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What is SEPAC?

We are parents and guardians of special education students who have voluntarily joined together to provide information and support to families of children in special education. As mandated by the state, each school district must have a SEPAC.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Special Education Parent Advisory Council is to provide education and information to parents and the broader community on special education issues and services, to establish better understanding of, respect for, and support of special education, and to work with the Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District to ensure that students' needs under Massachusetts Special Education Regulations 603 CMR 28.07(4)* and other applicable laws are being met.

As always, please feel free to contact us with any comments or questions at concordsepac@gmail.com. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.



Science Alert



The benefits of physical activity in natural outdoor settings for children with ADHD

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder is characterized by difficulty paying attention and focusing on tasks, high impulsivity, and/or high hyperactivity. Studies have demonstrated that engaging in physical activity can help decrease the symptoms of ADHD.

More recent research suggests that not all settings are equal in relieving ADHD symptoms. A 2004 study* compared different types of settings for physical activity. In a survey of 452 parents of children with ADHD, results showed that severity of ADHD symptoms were rated as being less severe after engaging in activity in a “green” (natural) setting relative to indoor or “non-green” outdoor settings (e.g., parking lot). A subsequent 2009 study** examined 7-12 year old participants’ attention levels after walking in a park, a neighborhood, or a quiet downtown area and found that attention (as measured by a digit span task) was increased after a walk in a park relative to a walk in other settings.

Though we may not be seeing actual “green” for another few months, physical activities in natural settings may be more beneficial than activities in indoor or settings out of nature.

*Kuo & Taylor (2004). American Journal of Public Health, 94(9), 1580-1586.

**Taylor & Kuo (2009). Journal of Attention Disorders, 12(5), 402-409.

Did you know?

Mediation may be requested by a parent or a school district to discuss any matter related to the special education process including (but not limited to) eligibility, evaluation, placement, and the development of an individualized education plan (IEP). Mediators, people who oversee the mediation process, are impartial and do not have any personal or professional conflicts of interest that could influence their ability to oversee the mediation process. Both parties need to agree to the mediation process.

Similarly, a **facilitated Team meeting** can be requested by a parent or the school district. Just as with mediation, both parties must agree to the facilitation process. The facilitator’s role may include (but is not limited to) helping in the development of and adherence to an agenda, keeping Team members focused on IEP development, helping problem solve and resolve conflicts, and maintaining open communication.

To find out more about these processes, join us for an informative presentation on Mediation and Facilitated Team Meetings on January 29th (<https://goo.gl/enr1V2>).

Source: [Bureau of Special Education Appeals](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

January 11

SEPAC Board Meeting

When: 12:30-1:30 PM

Where: Concord Fowler Library,
1322 Main St, Concord

All meetings are open to the public. We encourage parents and caregivers of children on IEPs, receiving accommodations (e.g., 504 plan), or with any medical or special need to attend.

January 29

Mediation and Facilitated Team Meetings

When: 10-11:30 AM

Where: Conference Room #1,
Ripley Building, Meriam Rd,
Concord

Presented by Myrto Flessas from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), this free presentation will cover how and when to request a mediation as well as how to prepare for and what to expect from mediation at the BSEA. All are welcome.

To register for these workshops (not required, but helpful for planning purposes) as well as for a complete list of all upcoming events, please visit www.concordsepac.org.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Find out how you can get involved by visiting concordsepac.org/volunteer-opportunities or coming to our next meeting.