

SEPAC

# Executive Committee Summary

2021-2022 School Year

Presented to the Livingston Board of Education  
June 21, 2022

# Purpose and Responsibility of SEPAC

- The Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee exists to fulfill the requirements of the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h):
  - *“Each Board of Education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the District to provide input to the District on issues concerning students with disabilities.”*
- SEPAC works collaboratively with all special education parents and District staff in an advisory capacity to the District.
- Building level SEPACs are responsible for parent and building collaboration, leading building meetings, gathering questions to be answered, celebrating successes of students, families & special education in each school, and bringing important information about special education to the District.

# SEPAC 2021-2022

## Executive Committee for the District

- 30 member committee with parents, general and special educators, supervisors, principals, directors, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, and Board of Education members represented.
- All Executive Committee SEPAC members have made the commitment to remain on the committee for two full years. This allows for continuity in the work of the committee.
- Committee members lead building based SEPAC meetings to celebrate successes, create open lines of communication, share information, consider questions about special education, and share information with the District on important questions regarding special education. Additionally, building based SEPACs offered parent workshops that can be found later in this presentation. Resources and materials from these can be found on each SEPAC webpage.

# SEPAC Mission Statement

*Livingston Public Schools SEPAC ~*

*Empowering*

***E***ducate ***A***dvocate ***C***ommunicate ***H***elp  
*to Learn, Create, Contribute and Grow*

*\*SEPAC Mission Statement developed by the LPS - SEPAC Executive Committee in the 2016-2017 School Year*

# District SEPAC Executive Committee

Meets twice annually  
This year our meetings were:  
October 28, 2021  
May 18, 2022

This year's focus was on examining and affirming the SEPAC Bylaws, sharing building level plans and celebrations, and establishing protocols for future work.

# Bylaws for the Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee:

The Livingston Board of Education Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) exists to fulfill the requirements of the New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h):

*Each Board of Education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the District to provide input to the District on issues concerning students with disabilities.*

The Livingston Public Schools' SEPAC will work collaboratively with all parents of children with disabilities and District staff in an advisory capacity to the District in order to:

## I. Establish, review and maintain bylaws

Ensure that parents of students that receive special education services have the ability to provide input to the District regarding special education in Livingston and have access to information. The SEPAC bylaws will be accessible on the District's SEPAC website. At their first meeting each school year, the Executive Committee will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the bylaws. Every five years the Executive Committee will formally review the existing bylaws and determine if any adjustments are necessary. At that time the voting members of the Executive Committee will vote on the bylaws that will be in place for the next five years.

# Bylaws for the Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee:

## II. Foster increased communication of services and information for families of students with disabilities

The District currently has many existing resources and communication processes for families of students with disabilities. The committee will be relied upon to consistently review and provide suggestions to the school administration for improving Building and District communication to parents of students with disabilities.

## III. Facilitate and foster family involvement in family education resources

The committee is encouraged to develop and provide resources and information to families of students with disabilities through a variety of sources such as general parent meetings at the building level and specialized workshops, webinars, and/or meetings. These can be provided to the District administration for the most effective advertising and dissemination of information.

## IV. Foster and promote inclusive settings for all students

The committee is encouraged to collaborate with the entire school community, including those students who attend school out-of-District, to foster inclusionary practices for students with disabilities and their families. The committee is charged with the responsibility of increasing communication to the families with PT Council.

## V. Provide advisory information to the District regarding issues pertaining to Special Education Services in the District

# Bylaws for the Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee:

## A. Scope and Duration of the Committee's Operation

The SEPAC Executive Committee and building based SEPACs exist to meet the expectation of NJAC 6A:14-1.2(h).

## B. Committee Membership

1. A formal written notice will be provided to all families of students with disabilities regarding the selection process and opportunities to volunteer to serve as a member of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be comprised of twenty-one parent voting members, with representation as follows:
  - Two parents from each of the nine schools; one parent recommendation from the principal and one parent volunteer from the PTA/HSA
    - One parent volunteer who is a member of the PTA/HSA. If more than one parent volunteers for this position, a name will be chosen at random by the PTA/HSA.
    - Two parents with students in Out-of-District placements; one parent recommendation from the Assistant Superintendent for Equity, Inclusion, Intervention, and Inspiration and one parent recommendation from the PTA/HSA.
      - A subcommittee of the Executive Committee will develop a standard selection process to address conflicts that may occur in the process for volunteering.
      - One parent from the PRIDE program; recommendation from the PTA/HSA.
  - If the PTA/HSA is unable to provide a representative to the SEPAC, that position will be appointed by the principal.
  - Names of the Executive Committee members will be provided to the Assistant Superintendent for Equity, Inclusion, Intervention, and Inspiration no later than October 1st of each school year. These will be posted on each school's web page and on the District SEPAC webpage.



# Bylaws for the Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee:

2. **Ex-officio non-voting members of the Executive Committee will include at least one representative from each of the following groups as appointed by the Assistant Superintendent for Equity, Inclusion, Intervention, and Inspiration:**
  - **Child Study Team Member;**
  - **Special Education Teacher;**
  - **Regular Education Teacher;**
  - **Principal;**
  - **Assistant Superintendent for Equity, Inclusion, Intervention, and Inspiration;**
  - **Directors of Special Education;**
  - **Supervisor of Transition Services;**
  - **One member of the Board of Education as appointed by the Board of Education President.**

## **C. Duties of the Executive Committee**

1. **To provide input and make recommendations on special education policy, programs and practices in the District;**
2. **To act as liaisons between families of students with disabilities and the District in order to share comments and concerns with District leaders;**
3. **The committee may elect to establish subcommittees for areas of focus on topics that are determined by the Executive Committee.**

# Bylaws for the Livingston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Committee:

## **D. Reporting to the District**

**Written agendas and minutes from the building based SEPAC meetings should be shared with the Assistant Superintendent for Equity, Inclusion, Intervention, and Inspiration after each meeting. She will then share with the SEPAC Executive Committee annually. At least once a year, the SEPAC Executive Committee, in conjunction with the District administration, will provide an overview of the work of the committee and provide input to the District on issues critical to special education, at a scheduled meeting of the Board of Education. At the first Executive Committee meeting each year, the voting members will determine which two representatives who with the administration will co-present the work of SEPAC at the annually scheduled meeting with the Board of Education.**

## **VI. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised**

**Shall govern all meetings in all cases in which they are applicable, and in which they are not in conflict with these bylaws.**

## **VII. Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**SEPAC will work to ensure that membership reflects the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of our community.**

Every Parent of a Child with an IEP is a member of  
SEPAC at their building

Structure of building meetings:

- ★ Celebrations
- ★ Updates from the District
- ★ Questions to be answered - How can we help?
- ★ Parent programming and resource sharing

Celebrations from our  
SEPACs

# Building-Based SEPAC 2021-2022

- Elementary School Based Meetings
  - **Burnet Hill Elementary School**
    - November 16, 2021 - Parent and staff discussion prior on building-based special education programs and supports
    - April 13, 2022 - presentation from Jennifer Quirk, Shining Stars: Adaptive Recreation Coordinator/LYCS Program Supervisor; Senior, Youth and Leisure Services
  - **Collins Elementary School**
    - November 9, 2021 - Parent and staff discussion prior to Book Fair on building-based special education programs and supports
    - April 12, 2022 - Presentation on *Why is Word Level Reading Important?*
  - **Harrison Elementary School**
    - January 27, 2022 - Parent and staff discussion on building-based special education programs and supports
    - April 11, 2022 - Presentation on *Reading Supports*
  - **Hillside Elementary School**
    - March 1, 2022 - Parent and staff discussion on building-based special education programs and supports
  - **Mount Pleasant Elementary School**
    - November 17, 2021 - Parent and staff discussion on building-based special education programs and supports
    - May 16, 2022 - HSA Connection
  - **Riker Hill Elementary School**
    - September 22, 2021 - Parent and staff discussion at Back-to-School Night on building-based special education programs and supports
    - May 31, 2022 - Presentation on *Coping with Emotions: Mindfulness*

# Building-Based SEPAC 2021-2022

- Secondary School Based Meetings
  - Mount Pleasant Middle School
    - November 16, 2021 - Presentation on *Executive Functioning*
  - Heritage Middle School
    - January 19, 2022 - Engaged in a dialogue to identify areas that parents may be able to best support one another
    - April 11, 2022 - Presentation on *Balancing Screen Time for Adolescents*
    - SEPAC hosted a bowling social event for families to connect on April 29, 2022
  - Livingston High School
    - February 10, 2022 - Parent and staff discussion on building-based special education programs, supports and transition
  - Out-of-District
    - Students in OOD placements have successfully participated in District extra-curricular activities including plays, musicals, athletics, and clubs.
    - Meetings were held on
      - January 27, 2022 - Crisis Counseling Program at the Mental Health Association
      - March 29, 2022 - Respite Care Resources in our area

Impact of SEPAC on LPS

in 2021-2022

# How SEPAC Impacted Our District This Year

## Questions brought to SEPAC this year:

1. How can we better communicate with all families served but most especially parents of students in OOD programs?
2. How can we better communicate the intricacies of the transitions from HMS to LHS in the scheduling process for students with IEPs?
3. How can we continue to support mental health resources outside of the district for our families?

## Impact from SEPAC collaboration with District:

1. The implementation of an OOD SEPAC structure ~ two meetings were already held this year!  
More opportunities for advertising SEPAC information and representative contact information including:  
On District email signatures and all written notices for meetings of the IEP team  
*“For information regarding the Special Education Parents Advisory Committee and representatives, please go to <https://www.livingston.org/Page/392>”*  
The development of a SEPAC Parent Information Sheet which is now sent to every family before every meeting with the Child Study Team  
Enhanced collaboration with HSA/PTAs to expand opportunities for participation at the building and District level
2. Clarification at the building and District SEPAC level regarding the continuum of programming and the correction of misinformation
3. District has partnered with CareSolace, an outside agency designed to provide mental health resources to families- communicated through the district Spotlight, staff signature lines, and all websites



# Special Education Parents Advisory Council



## SEPAC is here for you!



The Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) is a Livingston resource for all parents whose children receive special education services. Each school as well as the families who have children out of district have two parent representatives who are here to help you with your journey, and they serve as members of an Executive Board that represents all schools and out of district placements at regular meetings. We connect directly with district representatives and report to the Livingston Board of Education.

- We will elevate comments, suggestions, or concerns.
- We will get answers to your questions.
- We are volunteers who respect families' privacy and are happy to help facilitate communication and education for all.

*The building representatives for Livingston High School are:*

*Alyse Heilpern - [lyseeb@aol.com](mailto:lyseeb@aol.com)*

*Marnie McNany - [marnie.mcnany@gmail.com](mailto:marnie.mcnany@gmail.com)*

LPS SEPAC Website - <https://www.livingston.org/Page/392>

*Livingston Public Schools SEPAC empowering EACH to learn, contribute, create, and grow!*

# SEPAC 2022-2023

The District SEPAC Executive Committee will establish goals at their first meeting in the 2022-2023 school year. Some areas that will continue to be a focus:

1. Communication
2. Engaging more parents in building based meetings and events
3. Building strong relationships with school communities for ALL students