

For Parents & Guardians of Children in Special Education

MEDFORD SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEDFORD SEPAC NEWSLETTER

January 2011

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This Month in Medford

“Race To Nowhere” Film Viewing - January 25 at Tufts University:

Sponsored by Eliot-Pearson’s Children School. Director Vicki Abeles, a concerned mother turned filmmaker, documents the pressures faced by school children and teachers with the illusion of achievement, competition and pressure to perform that has invaded our schools and our children’s lives. Read more at www.RaceToNoWhere.com.

Location: Tufts Aidekman Arts Center, Cohen Auditorium, 40 Talbot Avenue.

Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door.

Tickets may be purchased online at <http://rtnTufts.eventbrite.com>.

“Parent Coffee Hour on Bullying” - January 26 at Andrews Middle School:

Join Tim Blake, Principal at the Andrews Middle School, at 6:30pm as he...

- Reviews the new Bullying Law;
- Shares what the Andrews Middle School is doing to support the new law; &
- Learn what parents can do at home to support the home-school partnership on this important topic.

Upcoming SEPAC Events & Meetings

Thursday, February 10 at 6:30pm - “Basic Rights in Special Education” Clare Vann, Attorney & Speaker from Federation for Children with Special Needs

Location: McGlynn School Library, 3004 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford, MA

Register by contacting Mary Finn at 781-391-2353 or maryfinn@comcast.net

Medford SEPAC General Business Meeting: The purpose of a general meeting is to plan, review, & discuss SEPAC initiatives and to vote on agenda items that come before the board. Next meeting: February 16 at 6:30pm. Future meetings: March 15

NEW LOCATION!!!! Medford High School Library at 489 Winthrop Street, Medford.

Contact Kathy Aluia at kaluia@comcast.net or 781-956-8770 for more information.

Have questions about Special Education? Contact us!

School Contacts for SEPAC Board Members

For Early Childhood



For Early Childhood,
Brooks & Roberts Elementary,
Curtis-Tufts,
Medford High School, &
Medford Vocational School
Contact: Kathy Aluia at kaluia@comcast.net or 781-956-8770

Parent-to-Parent...

Thinking about next year? If not, you should be.

To plan for the upcoming academic year:

- 1) Meet with your child's current teacher to discuss your child's learning style & classroom needs. Ask if he/she has any new insights about your child.
- 2) Meet with your Education Team Leader to:
 - Ensure you understand the class/school assignment process.
 - Schedule time to observe classroom options.
 - Ask about upcoming open houses to meet Principal, staff, & hear from parents.

Considering a private school placement?

Contact the school to:

- 1) Ask about upcoming open houses,
- 2) Schedule time with the Special Needs Director or Principal, &
- 3) Ask about observation procedures for prospective parents. If possible, schedule a tour the school and observe classrooms.

"Bullying and the IEP & 504 Plan

A reminder to parents: There is a need to consider a child's learning profile and provide appropriate language in a

McGlynn Middle School,
Medford High School,
Medford Vocational School, &
Out-of-District Students (Privately placed by parents or district)
Contact: Mary Finn at maryfinn@comcast.net or 781-391-2353

McGlynn Elementary
Contact: Kathie Hunt at kevinjhunt@aol.com or 781-391-6148

Andrews Middle School & Columbus Elementary
Contact: Jen Maunsell at falcomaunsell@yahoo.com or 339-221-2002

Columbus Elementary
Contact: Kelly Tello at kellytello@comcast.net

For Parents/Guardians & Adult Children

"NEW! MFN Parents of Children with "Similar Differences" Support Group ~ Medford now has a support group for parents with children having special needs: For more information or to register, contact Marie Cassidy, Medford Family Network Coordinator, at 781-393-2106.

Can't make Medford's Basic Rights Workshop? Parents may attend on...
Jan 18 in Arlington: Hosted by Arlington's SEPAC. Held at Arlington High School. To register, contact arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com.

Jan 31 in Wakefield: Hosted by Wakefield's SEPAC. Held at Wakefield High School Cafeteria, 60 Farm Street, Wakefield. To register, contact Janine at detwin@rcn.com.

On Jan 20, Belmont SEPAC will host "When and Why to Hire an Advocate or Attorney" and "The New Massachusetts Bullying Law": The speaker will be Ms. Christina Gentile, Esq. and the event will be held at 7:30pm in the Community Room at Chenery Middle School. Contact Donata at barbernd@aol.com for more info.

Therapro, Inc Seminar Series: Seminars are free and held from 9am-11am
Location: 225 Arlington St, Framingham, MA Register at info@therapro.com

- Jan 22** "National Handwriting Month" Speaker: Peggy Morris, OTR/L
- Feb 26** "The School Assessment of Motor & Processing Skills" Speaker: Lou Ann Griswold Phd, OTR/L, FAOTA
- Mar 20** "S'Cool Moves for Learning" Speaker: Debra Wilson (Note: Held on Sunday from 10am-12noon)

Carroll School Speaker Series: For questions, contact edavidson@carrollschool.org
Feb 4 at 8:45am "Language & the Brain"
Location: Waltham Campus-The Great Hall, 1841 Trapelo Road, Waltham

Down Syndrome Allen C. Crocker Speaker Series at Children's Hospital in Boston: All events held from 6:30pm-8:30pm in Enders Auditorium at Children's Hospital in Boston. Dates & topics include:

504 plan or IEP about a student's behavior, alternate behavior plans (if different from the school's discipline process), and any needed services or training a student may need.

Documentation should be provided for a student who is on a 504 Plan, an IEP or have a suspected disability and due to his or her learning profile, may be at risk of being either a target for or a student prone to behaviors defined under the Medford's Bullying Plan and current law.

Hospital in Boston. Dates & topics include.

April 26 on Mental Health and Down Syndrome

May 24 on Feeding and Swallowing

Contact Angela at 857-218-4329 or angela.lombardo@childrens.harvard.edu for more info.

Executive Function Skill Development with Sarah Ward M.S., CCC/SLP:

Registration is open for spring workshops.

For info, visit www.executivefunctiontherapy.com.

Planning a Life~ Making the Most out of High School: This two day conference is hosted annually by the Federation for Children with Special Needs. The program offers transition planning information to include: vision development, self-advocacy issues, how to develop individualized transition goals, housing postsecondary education, employment options and more. Program dates are February 4 & 5 in Boston, and April 1 & 2 in Springfield. For more info, contact Terri McLaughlin at 617-236-7210 ext 336 or tmclaugh@fcsn.org. Registration is necessary and there is a fee of \$100 per person or \$150 per family. Space is limited, so register early.

REGISTER NOW! 2011 Family Leadership Series:

February 4/5; March 4/5; April 8/9

The series is organized into three two-day workshops and includes food and overnight lodging. You must be able to commit to the entire event. Event is free. Contact Ellen Scoggins at ellen.scoggins@yahoo.com.

REGISTER NOW: 2011 Annual Conference of Federation for Children with Special

Needs: Sat, March 12 at the World Trade Center Boston. Register prior to February 11 and receive a \$15 discount on registration. Visit www.fcsn.org.

Shriver Center Research Opportunities

The Shriver Center conducts an extensive program of research on the causes, treatment, and prevention of intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as understanding typical development. They are currently looking for children and adults with and without disabilities to participate in a variety of research programs.

To see a list of Shriver Center studies currently recruiting participants, with links to a description of each one, visit <http://www.umassmed.edu/shriver/recruit.aspx>

You may also call the Shriver Center Human Studies Office at 781-642-0047 or send email to shriver.recruit@umass.edu to get more information about studies that are currently recruiting participants.

Become a Special Education Surrogate Parent: SESPP (Special Education Surrogate Parent Program) is seeking volunteers to provide a voice for children who don't have a parent to speak for them in the special education process. Volunteers will attend a training session in which special education laws and regulations, the IEP process, and the role of the Special Education Surrogate Parent will be reviewed. Local sessions are scheduled for Oct 19 in Boston and Nov 2 in Lexington. For more info, call 508-792-7679, email sespp@earthlink.net or visit www.sespprogram.org.

For Children (In Medford & Local Cities)

EMARC Teen Sibling Group (Ages 13-19): EMARC coordinates a support group for teens who have a brother or sister with special needs. Group meets every other Wednesday at the West Medford Community Center. For registration and information, contact Chenine Peloquin at 781-942-4888 ext4036 or Rec@theemark.org.

For Children with Down Syndrome aged 16-21: Team Up for Fitness (TUFF) is a research project which aims to test the effectiveness of a YMCA-based exercise program TUFF is being conducted by researchers at UMMS/E.K. Shriver Center and is funded by the National Institute of Health. The exercise program will take place at the Waltham Family YMCA starting in February 2011. For more details, contact Heidi Stanish at 781-642-0292 or shriver-health@umassmed.edu.

Universal Access to Winter Sports and Events: For adaptive skating, sled skating, outdoor recreational opportunities and more, visit http://www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/a_events.htm.

TopSoccer Indoor Soccer (Open to Medford residents also): The Somerville Recreation Departments Indoor Soccer Program starting on Saturday January 15th - February 19th from 1pm - 2pm at Somerville High School Gym located on Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA. The program consists of instructional soccer, drills and scrimmages. This program is FREE for TopSoccer players. For more information, contact John at jteves@rcn.com

Coming Soon! TopHockey: Interested? Contact John at jteves@rcn.com.

Summer Programs: It's not too late to start planning for summer.

Power Kids Summer Program: Summer enrichment program for children ages 6-11 during the month of July. Located at St. Joseph's School, 132 High Street, Medford the program runs from 9am-3pm w/morning and extended day options. Contact Michael Coates, Program Director, for more info at trustedtutors2@yahoo.com or 781-507-0144. Visit <http://www.trustedtutors.net/summerProgram.html>.

Educational Resources

Trusted Tutors is an academic tutoring service that provides one-on-one remedial and/or enrichment instruction by highly motivated, professional staff. It has a network of over 100 local educators. Visit www.trustedtutors.net for more info or contact Michael Coates, Director & Founder at trustedtutors2@yahoo.com or 781-507-0144.

Special Education in Medford Public Schools:

For contact listing, service information, 504 or Title II resources?

Site link: <http://www.medfordpublicschools.org/departments-programs/special-education-pupil-services/>

List of National and State organizations & government agency websites:

Link: <http://www.medfordpublicschools.org/departments-programs/special-education-pupil-services/links/>

Looking for information on MCAS?

Overview of MCAS: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/overview.html?faq=8>

"A Parents Guide to Special Education": Written in collaboration between the Federation of Children with Special Needs and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Link: <http://www.fcsn.org/parentguide/pguide1.html>

Federation for Children with Special Needs: Offers training, resources and information to families and individual with special needs. The Parent Training Center has trained consultants who will respond to questions specific to your child's issues and information about educational advocates. Phone 617-236-7210 or visit www.fcsn.org

Consumer Empowerment Funds: Reimburses expenses for training of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. Prior approval is necessary. Call or visit website for contacts, program guidelines and application. Phone: 617-770-7676 or visit www.mass.gov/mddc/cefp/index.htm

Get Help with Universal Home Design: HomeFreeHome, Inc., provides free and low cost architectural design services to people with permanent disabilities who need to remove barriers and open up access in their homes. To apply for these services, fill out the questionnaire on HomeFreeHome's website at www.homefreehome.org. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated for feasibility of your proposed project and (if you are selected), assign a local volunteer

reviewed and evaluated for feasibility of your proposed project and (if you are selected), assign a local volunteer architect.

To request that an event be posted, contact kaluia@comcast.net.
Posting requests are subject to review of the SEPAC Board.