



## Berlin/Boylston Public Schools Special Education Parent Advisory Council

2012-2013 Year End Report

September 3, 2013

Dear School Committee Members,

The Berlin-Boylston SEPAC is proud to share our activities in this summary from this past school year with you. The 2012-13 school year was a very busy and successful one for our members.

### Officers:

We were fortunate to have a full Board of officers for this past year.

Berlin Co-President :	Jill Mollica (2 yr. term expires 2013)
Boylston Co-President:	Christi Stille ( 2 yr. term expires 2014)
Co-Vice-Presidents:	Karen Groccia and Deanna King (1 yr. term expires 2013)
Secretary:	Angela Allred (1 yr. term expires 2013)
Treasurer:	Lori Michalak (2 yr. term expires 2013)

Jill Mollica will be leaving the SEPAC Board after many successful and innovative years on the panel. She was one of the original reorganizers of the current SEPAC board and she is truly admired for her determination and commitment to special education matters. Her contributions will be sorely missed.

### All-School Involvement:

SEPAC members continue to serve on various groups in the districts and attend School Committee Meetings. We have representatives involved in BMS LINK, BES PTO, and School Councils.

SEPAC sent representatives who presented information at Open Houses at the elementary schools, Kindergarten Orientations, and Preschool Info Night to introduce ourselves and to inform parents about our role in the district. We thank the school administrators for their continued support in inviting SEPAC to speak to parents and raise awareness of the group.

### Community Involvement:

We attended two MassPac Networking Nights this past school year that helped us gain relationships and program ideas.

### SEPAC Programs:

SEPAC once again hosted National Inclusive Schools week in December. We sponsored an Art Poster Display for students at the Elementary Schools. Over 300 submissions were displayed in the cafeterias! At Tahanto, 3 separate student groups sponsored programs for students during the school day at the Middle/High School. This included the Middle School HOPE club, Community Service Club, and the National Honor Society. The events received wonderful feedback from the student body.

We had several guest speakers throughout the year come and speak regarding various educational topics. Our guest speakers this year included:

1. November 2012: Kiera Reilly from Integrated Center for Child Development presented the topic of Assistive Technologies
2. December 2012: The powerful movie, "The Boy Inside" by Marianne Kaplan was shown to parents.
3. January 2013: Karen Molnar, PPS Director, presented the Annual Parent's Rights and Responsibilities.
4. February 2013: Linda Checola, School Psychologist and Carla Mason, Team Coordinator presented an overview of the program Think Kids: Rethinking challenging kids. This Collaborative Problem Solving approach was well received by parents!
5. April 2013: Federation of Children with Special Needs presented "MCAS: Access and Achievement for Students with Disabilities."

Our membership continues to grow! We have went from 83 to 88 members by the end of the year.

Excellent Educator Awards have become an annual event for SEPAC. We were so pleased to honor 13 teachers and staff who have significantly impacted the education of our children with the award; 10 from Boylston Elementary, 1 from Berlin Memorial, and 2 from Tahanto received a certificate from SEPAC and an anonymous letter from the parent(s) who nominated them. The awards were presented by the SEPAC Officers in a school ceremony and all teachers names were published in a press release to local newspapers. A copy of the award was also given to the administration to place into their permanent records and a press release.

SEPAC conducted a Lyman Pie fundraiser in the Fall to increase our scholarship fund. We were so pleased to award two \$300 scholarships in June to Kathleen Brewer and Andrew Howarth.

A significant SEPAC goal was achieved when Kate Ryan, Tahanto senior, helped us design and institute a new website for Berlin-Boylston SEPAC. It was go live this Fall semester.

SEPAC was successful in achieving many of our goals for the past school year, and continue to strive to increase our presence and awareness in the districts.

We will continue to:

- Communicate with Director of Pupil Personnel Services and the school committees.
- Attend district school meetings and give input to programs and policies.
- Provide useful workshops for parents.
- Work with all three principals to increase their awareness of our mission and activities, as well as promote our group to teachers and staff.
- Provide an ongoing resource to parents on the special education process and laws.

Our goals for the 2013-2014 School Year include:

1. Advertise and improve SEPAC website, including creating a Resource List.
2. Continue to maintain a strong presence during National Inclusive Schools Week.
3. Invite staff and administrators to our events and presentations that may be related specifically to their field.
4. Continue Excellent Educator Awards and Senior Scholarship recipients.
5. Hold a Lyman Pie fundraiser in the Fall to raise funds to support our scholarship goals.
6. Institute "Skype" options for as many of our programs as possible.
7. Update and add to our Membership List.

SEPAC's board would like to sincerely thank the Berlin-Boylston School Committee and the school administration for their continued support of our activities. It is gratifying as a parent to know that your voice is listened to and your opinion is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Christina Stille

Jill Mollica

Karen Groccia

Deanna King

Angela Allred

Lori Michalak