



Berlin/Boylston Public Schools
Special Education Parent Advisory Council

2014-2015 Year End Report

August 1, 2015

Dear School Committee Members,

SEPAC has had a very busy and successful school year for 2014-15. We would like to share our activities in a summarized version with you.

Officers:

Boylston Co-President:	Christi Stille (2 yr. term expires 2015)
Vice-President:	Karen Groccia (1 yr. term expires 2015)
Secretary:	Rochelle Peret (1 yr. term expires 2015)
Treasurer:	Lori Michalak (2 yr. term expires 2015)

All-School Involvement:

SEPAC members continue to serve on various groups in the districts and attend School Committee Meetings. We have representatives involved in BES PTO, Tahanto PTO, as well as School Councils at BES and Tahanto. We also have members involved in the Literacy Committee. Officers would like to see more involvement from Berlin parents in this area.

SEPAC sent representatives to present information at Open Houses at the elementary schools, Kindergarten Orientations, and Preschool Info Night. Officers introduced themselves and informed parents about SEPAC's 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:

SEPAC Berlin Boylston has ventured into the world of social media! We now have a Facebook page to share resources and posts to help other parents. This is also where we can promote our events, as well as neighboring towns.

Our Officers has been active in helping the West Boylston SEPAC get organized as they build repoire and awareness in that town. We supported their events through attendance and marketing, as well as giving informal advice to their new Executive Board. West Boylston and Berlin/Boylston SEPAC also co-hosted a well-attended workshop this Spring.

SEPAC Programs:

SEPAC once again hosted National Inclusive Schools Week in December. The literacy theme in December was “What it means to be a good friend” at the elementary school level. This curriculum-based writing project was well-received at both BES and BMS. Every classroom at BES and BMS participated. At Tahanto, student groups led the theme of inclusion into various events around the Middle and High School. 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 2014: Presentation-ADHD-Strategies for School and Home; Sherree Foye
2. January 2015: Karen Molnar, PPS Director, presented the Annual Parent’s Rights and Responsibilities.
3. March 2015: “Creating a Vision” by MassPac co-hosted by WB SEPAC at West Boylston High School

Our membership has stayed steady this year with 91 members.

Excellent Educator Awards have become an annual event for SEPAC. We were so pleased to honor 19 teachers and staff who have significantly impacted the education of our children. 5 were nominated from Boylston Elementary, 4 from Tahanto, and 9 From Berlin Memorial School (one educator was nominated by 2 families!). Educators received a certificate and the letter from the parent(s) who nominated them. All employees’ names were published in a press release to local newspapers and honored in the presence of their class or colleagues at a staff meeting. A copy of the award was also given to the administration to place into their permanent records.

In Fall 2014, SEPAC conducted a Lyman Pie fundraiser in Fall to increase our scholarship fund. We were so pleased to be able to award two \$300 scholarships in June to Alyssa Michalak of Boylston and Joseph Considine, from Berlin.

The SEPAC website is up-to-date at www.sepac-berlin-boylston.org! All of our minutes, end of year reports, and upcoming events are listed there. There is also a section of special education on-line resources and membership information.

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:

- Maintain strong communication with Director of Pupil Personnel Services and the School Committees.
- Attend district school meetings and give input to programs and policies.

- Work with all three principals to increase their awareness of our mission and activities, as well as promote our group to teachers and staff.
- Maintain the SEPAC website, updating and enhancing its content.
- Provide an ongoing resource to parents on the special education process and laws.
- Continue to bring quality speakers to parents and the community.

Our goals for the 2015-2016 School Year include:

1. Continue to maintain a strong presence during National Inclusive Schools Week.
2. Invite staff and administrators to our events and presentations that may be related specifically to their field.
3. Continue Excellent Educator Awards and Senior Scholarship recipients.
4. Hold a Lyman Pie fundraiser to raise funds to support our scholarship goals.
5. Work towards establishing a Parent-to-Parent Support Group in the district.
6. Institute "Skype" options for as many of our programs as possible.
7. Update and add to our Membership List.
8. Devise, distribute and analyze a parent survey of our members to ascertain their needs and concerns.

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
Karen Groccia
Rochelle Peret
Lori Michalak