



Presentation to School Committee 2021  
by Co Chairs Danielle Graziano and Kimberley Ferreira

# **Meet the New Board**

Co Chairs: Kimberley Ferreira and Danielle Graziano

Secretary: Christine O'Hara

At Large Member: Kimberly Petit

Representative to the School Committee: Mena McCabe

Representative to the Town Wide Parent Council: Paloma Fernandes

Seeking a Treasurer!

# What is SEPAC?

Weymouth Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is an all-volunteer town-wide group of parents and caregivers of students with special education needs. SEPAC has joined forces with Town Wide Parent Council (TWPC) to promote equal access to educational opportunities, exchange ideas, and share solutions to both complex and challenging issues facing all children in our schools and community.



SEPAC aims to:

Inform parents of their rights, education laws, and regulations that impact their children.

Serve as a resource for information about the special education process.

Promote a network of parents and guardians of students with special needs and provide a local forum to share information.

Promote a community wide understanding of the issues influencing special education. Foster collaboration within our schools and our community.

Encourage full access and inclusion for all Weymouth students.

## **How is a SEPAC different from a Parent Council or PTA/PTO?**

A SEPAC is a public body which serves as an adviser to the School Committee and district on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities.

In addition, the SEPAC has a duty to meet regularly with school officials to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of the district's special education programs. SEPAC does not represent families from one school, but serves all families of children with special needs from the entire school district.

# **Presentations in 2020-2021**

- **De-Escalation Strategies: for families**  
by Erin Devine M.ed BCBA
- **Basic Rights: Evaluation and Eligibility**  
by the Federation for Children with Special Needs
- **Department of Developmental Services: Programs and Services**  
by Julie Evans
- **Effective Communication**  
by Leslie Leslie, the Federation for Children with Special Needs



# Collaborations



**WEYMOUTH  
EDUCATORS  
ASSOCIATION**

SEPAC and Weymouth Educators' Association Co-Hosted a Parent/Caregiver support group with special guest speaker Bryna Rogers from Bay State Community Services

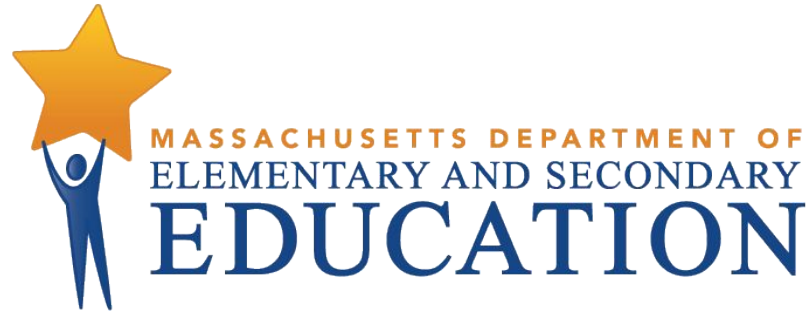


Weymouth for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity gave an Introduction of their group and the amazing work they are doing in Weymouth

# DESE - Tier Focused Review

SEPAC hosted a meeting to introduce parents to and initiate dialogue with DESE representative to aid the Tier Focused review for the Special Education Department

Co Chairs met with DESE as part of the review to discuss the family experience





# Visions of Community Conference

## Conferences attended

- Exploring the Intersection of Race and Disability
- Making Family Engagement Real: It's important to to Public Health
- Using Psycho Social Data to Improve the Special Education Experience
- Motivating Neuro Diverse Learners to do the No-Fun, Boring and Tough Stuff.
- Unlocking the Language in the Script: Empowering Communication through Echolalia
- Identity Mattes: Providing Effective Advocacy for LGBTW, LEP and Other Underserved Communities
- Key Special Education Law Updates

Also had the opportunity to connect with other SEPAC boards across the state

# Big NEWS!!

## Friends of Weymouth SEPAC Granted 501c3 status

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### Clean out your closets for Friends of Weymouth SEPAC!

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Friends of Weymouth SEPAC was formed to assist and support educational opportunities and events to support Weymouth SEPAC. Weymouth SEPAC is a townwide all volunteer group of parents and caregivers of students with special education supports. This parent advisory committee is self supporting and previously relied on free opportunities. Now as a recognized 501(c)(3) we can fundraise, funds raised will go toward making Weymouth a more inclusive, equitable and diverse community for all.

#### We Are Collecting

##### Clothes

men's, women's and children's clothes, coats, shoes, scarves, handbags, wallets, fashion accessories, ties, belts, backpacks, etc.

##### Household Textiles

bedding, comforters, blankets, sheets, towels, linen, tablecloths, curtains, pillows, etc.

Please gather clothes and household textiles in bags. All items must be clean and in sellable condition.

## **WHY?**

Funds raised by this separate entity are raised in the name of the private organization, with separate by-laws and governance documents filed with the Attorney General's Division of Public Charities, and not in the SEPAC's name. In addition, the responsibility for the privately-raised funds rests with the private organization's officers, who are subject to state and federal laws governing fund-raising by private individuals and groups.

A school committee has no oversight role with regard to privately-raised funds to support education-related activities, and there are no other restrictions on their use besides the state and federal fundraising laws.

## **Whats that mean?**

**We can fundraise to provide direct funding for SEPAC programming**

# Whats Next for SEPAC?



- ★ A collaborative effort to plan and execute a special olympics that Unites all
- ★ Increase family participation across all Grades and need levels
- ★ Collaborate with Special Education Dept. and Building admin to review and rewrite district wide special education programs descriptions
- ★ Review with Special Education administration and a sub committee on the ESY (Extended School Year program)
- ★ SEPAC would like to be involved with the Safety Committee in district to provide insight on the Safety concerns of our Students
- ★ Create more inclusion opportunities and events....
- ★ Bring back SOME FUN- such as our SEPAC Picnic, create new events
- ★ GROW as resource for ALL Weymouth families and help foster equitable opportunity to understand education rights

SEPAC has brought together family and education, through the nurturing of relationships that promotes positive growth in the schools and community- Jenn Loud WEA, CEP Teacher Wessagusset

SEPAC raised awareness about townwide issues in Special Education

This year SEPAC has been incredibly inclusive! The amount of care and thoughtfulness for families has made SEPAC feel more welcoming to all.

SEPAC has been a valued and instrumental advocate for all the students of Weymouth this year. Their commitment to keeping parents informed, providing relevant presentation, and supporting our most vulnerable community is inspiring on many levels. The challenges of this year have created a stronger partnership between TWPC and SEPAC and I believe our unified advocacy to the students of Weymouth will continue to grow. Mary-Ellen Devine TWPC

## How did SEPAC impact Weymouth this year?

SEPAC was an amazing lifeline for parents during this school year. They were a resource center and a group of parents to connect with and be heard during an extremely difficult year.

Amazing--thank you for all that you do!

Addressed Covid concerns

SEPAC helped parents understand community supports like DDS and DMH

SEPAC has created a robust support system for Weymouth families and continuously strives to open lines of communication between caregivers and District administrators. Our district is exceptionally fortunate to have such a strong SEPAC - the work they do in service of Weymouth families and students is truly remarkable.- Dr. Rebecca Shangraw Weymouth School Committee

SEPAC educated parents in being best advocates for their child. SEPAC is a safe place for support. It's the feeling of your not alone

This year SEPAC was more inclusive and has welcomed more people into the group. They have given more families a voice.

# **Thank You to School Committee for your Support this year!**

SEPAC has continued to provide families with support, education, connection and empowerment. Our community is fortunate to have such a dedicated and active group.

This past year I have watched SEPAC approach their advocacy with the intention of connecting with other parent/guardian groups in town, as well as ,with our Administrators and School Committee. This has deepened our communities' understanding of student's needs and provided us all with the opportunity to learn, connect and to work collaboratively to improve the educational experience of all students. I have witnessed the vitally important space that SEPAC holds for families and I look forward to the ways we can work together!

Carrie Palazzo  
Weymouth School Committee

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- Dr. Rebecca Shangraw Weymouth School Committee

**Thank you to Patti Hayes for commitment to  
the Special Education families of Weymouth**

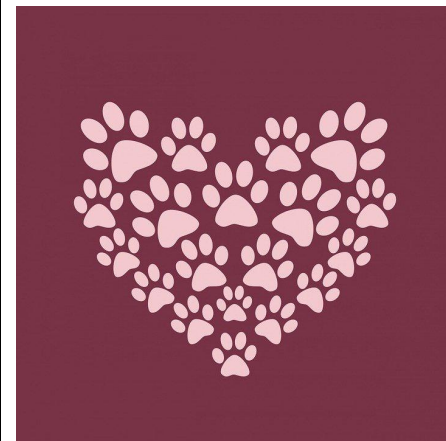
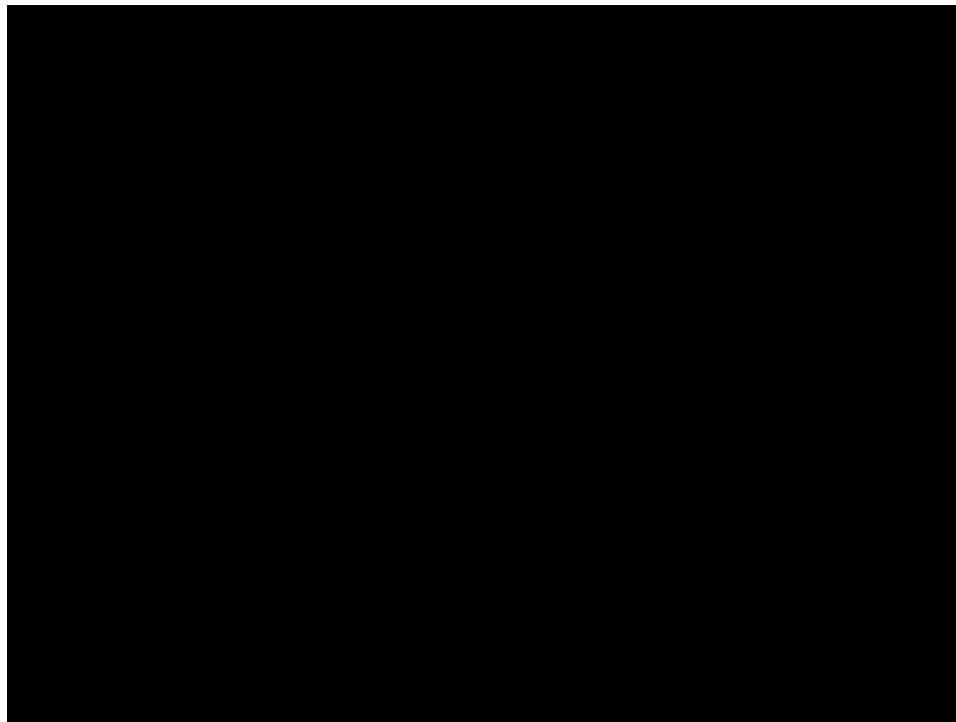




**Shout out to Weymouth Street Hockey  
For their Inaugural Season of Champions Division  
creating a new opportunity for our kids to engage in  
a team sport**



We want to Thank ALL the Teachers. There's no way we can describe the challenges this year presented but the parents will try to express their gratitude



# Contact

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/WeymouthSEPAC>

Community group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1798716330372043>

Email me:

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