

RISING TIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (RT-SEPAC)

SEPAC Board for 2021-2022:

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Facebook: Join our Facebook Group (RT-SEPAC) to ask questions, share information, and stay on top of announcements, resources, and information

Since 1986, Massachusetts special education law (Chapter 71B of the MA General Laws) requires all public school districts to maintain a Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). RT-SEPAC is the authorized and designated special education parent advisory council for Rising Tide Charter Public School in Plymouth, MA.

The mission of the RT-SEPAC is to provide support and information to all Rising Tide students with disabilities and their families; work cooperatively with the administration and staff of Rising Tide to ensure quality programs and services for students; and provide parents with informational programs and resources that will educate and inform them of their rights and responsibilities with regard to state and federal special education laws. All parents/caregivers of students who receive special education services and accommodations through an IEP or 504 Plan are members of the RT-SEPAC.

Who should be involved?

Parents and guardians of students who:

- Receive special education services.
- Think their child may have learning difficulties or differences, behavioral or attention issues, physical and/or intellectual disabilities.
- Are just learning about the special education process .
- Would like a support group who understand their issues and concerns.

Why get involved?

- Access to parent/guardian meetings and educational workshops.
- Learn how to have input into programs that could affect your child.
- Network with parents who have "been there" – get tips, advice, and feedback.
- Learn to become a more effective advocate for your child as you journey through the special education process.

Links and Resources Compiled by Parent Members of SEPAC

FEDERAL LAWS:

[Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children.

[Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#)

ESSA was signed into law in 2015 and replaced the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. ESSA is the main federal law for K-12 general education and covers all students in public schools.

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: What You Need to Know](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act – The ADA](#)

MASSACHUSETTS LAWS:

[MA General Laws Chapter 71B, Children with Special Needs](#)

[Regulation 603 CMR 28.00 Special Education](#)

[Students with Disabilities in Charter Schools: Notice of Rights to Access and Equity of Educational Services](#)

[Massachusetts Curriculum Framework](#)

[Federation for Children with Special Needs \(FCSN\)](#)

Located in Boston, the FCSN provides extensive information, [resources](#), assistance, and support to parents of children with disabilities. The [FCSN website](#) is loaded with helpful information.

[A Parent's Guide to Special Education](#)

Written by the Federation for Children with Special Needs in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Guide is meant to serve as a resource for parents, and the organizations that serve them. The Guide contains the most current and accurate information available regarding the special education system in Massachusetts. It is the hope of the Federation that this publication will assist families in obtaining the supports and services that their children with disabilities need to succeed in school.

[Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards](#)

The Parent's Rights Brochure is designed to assist the parent in understanding the special education process, and the rights of the parent's when their child has been referred for or is receiving special education services.

[Disability Definitions and Related Links - Special Education](#)

Definitions of each of the Massachusetts disability categories, and resources for each disability.

IEPs and 504s:

The IEP Team

By: National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

The IEP guides the delivery of special education and related services and supplementary aids and supports for the child with a disability. Without a doubt, writing and implementing an effective IEP requires teamwork. So, who's on the team?

Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004

Sec. 300.324 Development, review, and revision of IEP. From the U.S. Dept. of Education.

Massachusetts Department of Education: Special Education

Documents, Forms and Notices, Parents Notice of Procedural Safeguards

Q&A on IEPs, Evaluations and Reevaluations, revised September 2011

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has issued a revised Q&A document to provide states, state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), parents and other stakeholders with information regarding the **IDEA** requirements related to individualized education programs (IEPs), evaluations and reevaluations.

Wrightslaw

Wrightslaw is a definitive source for special education legal information. You'll find articles, law and regulations, and tips about how to get quality services in your child's IEP on this site. You'll also learn how to use tactics and strategies to negotiate with the school. Includes IEP cases, recommended books, and free publications about IEPs.

Assistive Technology Devices and Services

Wrightslaw website: IDEA 2004 requires IEP teams to consider the assistive technology needs of all children with disabilities. (20 U.S.C. 1414(d)(3)(B)(v)).

LD Online

Includes many articles about how to create a useful IEP, understanding the IEP process, and the importance of good communication.

Smart Kids with Learning Disabilities: Guide to Education Planning

Because your child with learning disabilities learns differently, educational programs must be tailored to his or her specific needs. That's the purpose of the IEP. Developed with input from you and your child's team, it is a blueprint for your child's education that will allow you to measure and monitor progress along the way.

Objectives for Behavioral Goals

Help with writing positive behavioral goals.

LD OnLine: Understanding the Differences Between IDEA and Section 504

An overview of IDEA and Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

This website provides information about the differences in these two pieces of legislations and the rights and protections of students with disabilities.

[United States, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office for Civil Rights \(OCR\)](#)

The federal government has general responsibility for overseeing compliance (technical assistance and enforcement) of Section 504 and the ADA. For matters involving the enforcement of civil rights in education environments (for persons of any age, including colleges/universities and adult education), contact:

Office for Civil Rights, New England Office
U.S. Department of Education
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02110-1491
Telephone: 617-289-0111
TDD: 877-521-2172
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

TRANSITION PLANS:

*The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) requires that transition goals are integrated into the Individualized Education Program (IEP) beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child is 16 or younger if determined appropriate. **However on August 6, 2008, with the passage of Chapter 285, Massachusetts requires that beginning when the eligible student is 14, the school district must plan for the student's need for transition services.** The school district must document the transition discussion annually using the [MADESE Transition Planning Form](#), designed to organize the transition discussion and lead to goals in the IEP.*

[MA DESE Secondary Transition](#)

For Massachusetts students receiving special education services, Secondary Transition is a time that begins when they turn 14 (or earlier, if the IEP team agrees).

[Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities](#)

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education is providing the information in this pamphlet to explain the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools.

[National Center on Secondary Education and Transition](#)

The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures.

[Autism Speaks: Why Do We Need a Transition Plan?](#)

[Massachusetts DESE Special Education](#)

[Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2013-1: Postsecondary Goals and Annual IEP Goals in the Transition](#)

[Planning Process](#)

The purpose of this advisory is to:

1. highlight the central role of appropriate measurable postsecondary goals and annual IEP goals in the transition planning process for students with IEPs, ages 14-22.
2. provide guidance to school districts concerning the inclusion of postsecondary goals in the Transition Planning Form (TPF) (28M/9) and the inclusion of postsecondary goals and annual goals in the IEP.

[Federation for Children with Special Needs](#)

[Transition from School to Adult Life – Real Transition Partners](#)

[Think College!](#)

College options for people with disabilities

[COLLEGE RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES GUIDEBOOK](#)

Support, Advocacy and Assistive Technology to Facilitate the Transition to Higher Education