



November SEPAG

Special Education Parent Advisory Group

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November 25, 2025

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Welcome! SEPAG Meeting Agenda

Welcome & Introductions (5-10 minutes)

- Greeting from facilitator (Heather Palmieri)
- Brief overview of SEPAG purpose (Strengthen family–school relationships, Improve programs and services for students with disabilities, Provide feedback to the district, Offer parent education, support, and resources)
- Introductions of parents, staff, and administrators

What is SEPAG? Roles & Responsibilities (10 minutes)

Overview - **SEPAG (Special Education Parent Advisory Group)** is a district-level parent group that works together with school staff and administrators to improve special education programs and supports for students with disabilities.

- **SEPAG is led by parents.** It gives families a voice in how special education services are developed and improved in the district.
- **It's open to all parents** of students with disabilities, whether they have an IEP, 504 plan, or are in the evaluation process.
- **SEPAG is not a complaint or crisis group.** Instead, it focuses on big-picture issues that affect many students, not individual cases.
- **The group shares concerns, ideas, and experiences** to help the district understand what's working and what needs attention.
- **The district listens.** School leaders and special education administrators attend meetings to collaborate with parents.
- **The goal is partnership.** SEPAGs help build stronger communication, increase parent engagement, and support positive changes in special education.

How the group supports families, students, and the district

- SEPAG gives parents a direct way to share questions, concerns, and ideas with school leaders. This helps the district better understand what families need and where improvements can be made. Information on rights, services, and supports
- This empowers families to feel more confident navigating the special education system.

Expectations for participation and collaboration

Review of Special Education Process (10 minutes)

Quick overview of IEP, evaluations, and parent rights

- 1. Identification** -A student may be referred for evaluation by a parent or school staff if there are concerns about learning, behavior, or development.
- 2. Evaluation** -The school conducts assessments (academic, psychological, speech, etc.) to understand the student's strengths and needs.
Parents must give consent before testing begins.
- 3. Eligibility Meeting** - After evaluations, a team—including parents—meets to decide if the student qualifies for special education under one of the disability categories.
- 4. IEP Development** - If eligible, the team creates an **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** that includes: (Goals, Services (ex: speech therapy, resource room), Accommodations, How progress will be measured)
- 5. Services Begin** - The student receives the supports and services listed in the IEP.
Teachers and providers implement the plan in the classroom.
- 6. Progress Monitoring** - The school regularly tracks and reports the student's progress toward their IEP goals.
- 7. Annual Review** - At least once a year, the IEP team meets to review and update the plan based on the student's growth and needs.
- 8. Reevaluation** - At least every three years (or sooner if needed), the student is reevaluated to determine continued eligibility and services.

Key contacts in the district - Teacher, MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports) Coordinator, School Administrators, and Case Managers

Time for clarifying questions

What do parents want this year? Group Goals (10 minutes)

- Identify priorities (communication, trainings, community-building, advocacy, etc.)
- Brainstorm topics families want addressed
- Narrow down 2–3 main goals

Planning Ahead: Events & Meetings (10 minutes)

- Meetings will be held virtually on a monthly basis
- Outline potential workshops (IEP basics, transition services, behavior supports, etc.)
- Identify guest speakers or resources needed

Communication Plan (10 minutes)

- How the SEPAG will share information with families
- Creating a contact list or email group
- Discussing translation needs and accessibility

Parent Voice Time (15 minutes)

- Open Forum/Parent Concerns
- Space for families to share experiences, questions, and ideas
- Identify themes to address in future meetings

Next Steps & Action Items (5 minutes)

- Summary
- Date/time of next meeting - **Monday, December 15, 2025**

Virtual link will be sent out and also available on the SEPAG Site

Closing Remarks (5 minutes)

Thank you for attending!

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Email

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Top 3 Priority Trainings

1. Understanding the Special Education Process & Parent Rights

Topics to include: Steps of the special education process, Timelines and key terms, Procedural safeguards (parent rights), How to prepare for IEP meetings

2. IEP Basics: Goals, Services, Accommodations & Progress

Topics to include: What makes a strong, measurable IEP goal, The difference between accommodations vs. modifications, How services are delivered, How progress is measured and communicated

3. Family–School Communication & Effective Advocacy

Topics to include: How to communicate respectfully and effectively, How to write clear emails and requests, Collaborative problem-solving, How to bring concerns forward constructively