

Washington Township Public Schools
Special Education Parent Advisory Group
(SEPAG)



The New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:14-1.2(h): Each board of education shall ensure that a special education parent advisory group is in place in the district to provide input to the district on issues concerning students with disabilities. <http://www.spanadvocacy.org/>

Vision

Our SEPAG is a group of parents and professionals dedicated to helping students find their path to success.

Mission

The Washington Township SEPAG acts as a guiding source of information between parents, faculty, and school administration to communicate, educate and raise awareness of concerns for all students that receive special education services and support

Goals

Improve communication between parents and staff

Provide training opportunities for families and staff

Who Should Join?

Parents and/or guardians of special education services or accommodations in school, such as Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 accommodation plan or an out of district placement.

Parents and/or guardians who may have concerns their child may have special learning needs to include: physical, emotional, or behavioral.

Parents and/or guardians, educators, community members, district staff who would like to gain an understanding of Special Education process and how this translates to the District's Special Education program planning.

What is the purpose and function of a SEPAG?

A SEPAG gives parents the opportunity to provide direct input to their school district about policies, programs, practices, and services that have an impact on students with disabilities and their families. An effective SEPAG can increase the proactive involvement of families by inviting input that can be used to shape local special education policy.

Who are we?

The Washington Township SEPAG Steering Committee is made up of volunteer parents and other community members who have a desire to help advocate for children in our district.

What are the benefits of an effective SEPAG?

Outreach – Outreach can engage families of students with disabilities so that they are involved in helping to shape local special education programs and policies.

Positive relationships – Effective SEPAGs engage parents and school leaders to establish shared goals and priorities that benefit students with disabilities. They connect with teachers, Child Study Teams, and community resources as sources of support for helping improve programs and services for students and their families.

Collaborative problem solving – SEPAGs thrive on team spirit and team action. While members bring varied perspectives, everyone shares a common mission: to improve outcomes for all students receiving special education services and support.

System change based on input – A SEPAG can communicate the needs of parents whose children receive special education and related services, and can advise school leaders on unmet needs identified through parental input.

A trusted source of information – SEPAGs can strengthen the bridge between the school district and families. SEPAG members who educate themselves about school policies and channels of communication can be a source for parents who may need information, support, and resources from their school, and can steer them in the appropriate direction.

Information sharing – SEPAGs can provide an opportunity for districts to share information with all parents about instructional programs, professional development opportunities, and other matters related to special education.

Improved services and programs – Changes that come about as a result of input from SEPAGs are responsive to the identified needs of the school community.

Effective resource allocation - Parents can provide valuable input regarding allocating resources and establishing priorities.

A SEPAG is NOT:

an advocacy assistance group, which focuses on upholding rights for children and advocating for change from outside the system;

a limited campaign dedicated to addressing a single issue or immediate concern; or

a Special Education PTO or PTA, which might plan carnivals, classroom activities, dances, fundraisers, or other events.

For More Information

Visit the SEPAG page on the WTPS website or email wtpssepag@gmail.com

<https://www.wtps.org/Domain/2591>

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