

SEPAC

Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

The mission of the Millburn Township School District's Special Education Parent Advisory Committee is to support and promote appropriate education for all children with special needs in our community by meeting regularly with the Department of Special Services to be a conduit for information and concerns between parents and the school district, to provide information and support to parents, and to encourage honest, effective, and respectful dialogue within the community.

Do you know the **SEPAC** representative from your school? They are:

Dorothy Kelly – Deerfield
Sharyn Stein Berezin – Glenwood
Melanie Rosenbaum – Hartshorn
Tracey Knewitz - South Mountain
Laura O'Neil – Wyoming
Kimberly Vitetta – Wyoming
Debra Clifford – MMS
Ana Holm - Preschool
Natalie Hiott-Levine - MMS
Sonali Ganti – MMS
Sharon Cohen – MHS

Not sure who to contact? Do you want to ask a question but would like to remain anonymous? Send your questions and concerns to millburnsepac@gmail.com.

The Millburn Special Education Parents Advisory Committee is in the process of planning its second Social Skills Workshop for the Spring. Below is a link to a questionnaire designed to identify topics for discussion that are of interest to the community. Please take a moment to fill out this brief questionnaire:

<https://goo.gl/forms/CMYZ4eQsikNorXzT2>



Upcoming Events

Strategic Approaches to the IEP presented by Autism NJ March 7, 7-9pm at the Ed Center

This workshop will identify the components of an IEP and how to use those components to build appropriate services, including in-home behavioral supports when necessary.

How to Create an Educational Technology Toolkit to Support Your Child's Needs

March 16, 7:30-9pm – Morris Union Jointure

Morris Union Jointure Commission
7:30-9:00 PM
New Providence NJ www.muic.org
(must preregister)

A Parent's Guide to Supporting Siblings of Students with Special Needs

April 4, 10-11:30am, 7-8:30pm at the Ed Center

This presentation will address the unique sibling relationship, the impact on siblings of having a special needs sibling, including concerns and opportunities, as well as tips for dealing with challenges.

A Note from the Director of Special Services

Jennifer Sowa

Many parents look for advice in supporting their child with homework. Stop the homework battle before it starts! It is important to set up some good practices to support your child and reduce the chance of conflict surrounding homework.

Start with Mapping out a GREAT HOMEWORK SPACE.

- Dedicate the space.
- Easy access to a computer to check assignments, online books & assignments.
- Dedicate the time. Establish a daily routine. Children need and thrive on schedules.
- Keep things quiet.
- Stock it. Make a list of necessary supplies - pencils, pencil sharpener, erasers, lined paper, stapler, ruler, and scissors.
- Show off accomplishments. If space permits, display prized work.
- Make it easy to monitor. Proximity to parent.
- Make it fit the age of the child. Desk/table and chair right size.
- Let them move. Take a walk while reviewing the spelling words, or play catch. Allowing them to lie on the floor to read.
- Break. Take a break every 30 minutes.
- My Space. Involve the student in designing the space.

News from the High School/Middle School Supervisor

Brent McGuinness

This year the Real World Math class and Structured Learning Experiences classes are working diligently to fundraise for their class trip to Philadelphia this spring. From bagging groceries at Shop-Rite, to selling popcorn, the students are committed to their fundraising efforts. However, they are even more committed to their slogan "Millburn Gives Back". Rather than

keeping all of the funds from their efforts the students decided they would rather take a portion of the money and donate to a Millburn family whose son was diagnosed with Leukemia. The idea that the money can be used to make that child's holiday season a little more joyous was a motivating factor for the class. A special thanks goes to Kelly Brandt and Roger Askins for organizing the class trip, fundraiser and charitable efforts. The students will continue "giving back" as there are arrangements to work with Habitat for Humanity during their trip to Philadelphia

Not to be outdone, through the efforts of Jessica Landis, Pam Boccia and Michele Acitelli, the Replacement English Class also got involved in a service project. Working in conjunction with the group "Knitting Without Borders" an organization that knits teddy bears for suffering children, the students planned to deliver the bears, along with coats and household goods to the IRC (International Rescue Committee). You can read more about this project on the student's blog page: <http://room370clubhouse.blogspot.com/>

Thank you to both classes for their efforts both in and outside the classroom.

TIPS from the District Speech Language Therapists:

Language Practice

Gift giving is a great time to practice language skills. Start by describing the present: What shape is it? Talk about the color, size, and weight. Ask your child to guess what could be in the box (inferencing skills). If you are looking for suggestions for what to give your child, think about board games. Board games are wonderful for practicing turn taking, attending, following directions, and fine motor skills, too! There are board games available for the preschool age child all the way through adults. Books are also a great gift. Read with your child often – start a family tradition by selecting a special book to read every year. When you get tired of playing games, head into the kitchen and cook with your child. Cooking involves language (reading the recipe and direction following), math (measuring), and science (what makes that cake rise). Enjoy time with your child!

TIPS from the District Physical Therapists:

Winter Activities

Although the cold weather is here, there are still many ways to stay active. Here is a list of some activities that can be done to keep your children growing stronger every day.

Indoor gross motor activities

- Bake/cook with your child
- Assist in doing chores (carry laundry/push basket, vacuum/dustbuster, clean up toys)
- Make obstacle course/tunnels using furniture
- Make an indoor fort using blankets and pillows
- Dance to music
- Exercise with parent
- Hopscotch
- Ball skills – catch, throw, bounce, roll and kick different size balls
- Indoor bowling – use empty water bottles as pins
- Have a “snowball” relay race – blow a cotton ball with a straw across a table or on the floor
- Go to an indoor facility – basketball, pool, bounce house, etc.
- Walk in the mall while shopping – use the stairs instead of the escalator
- Assist in grocery shopping – help put items in basket, push basket, put items on counter at register
- Be active while watching tv – stand up and move around during commercials

Outdoor gross motor activities

- Make a snow angel
- Make snow balls
- Make a snowman
- Make a snow fort
- Help shovel or clean off cars
- Go ice skating
- Go sledding or tubing – do not carry your child up the hill
- Go snow trekking with snow shoes

TIPS from the Occupational Therapists: OT SNOW FUN

Winter is here! Here are a few activities for both indoor and outdoor fun.

- **Snow Obstacle Course:** Obstacle courses are essential for developing the integration of multisensory skills. This activity will help you child develop their upper body strength, visual motor skills for targeting, listening, posture, coordination and motor planning. This activity is very rich in proprioceptive input (knowing where the body is in space from input to joints and muscles) and may improve modulation (the process in which the brain takes in all of the various types of sensory input and messages and sorts it all out).
 - Make a starting and finishing line in the snow with a branch. Designate areas for multiple tasks.
 - First area, make a snow angel.
 - Second area, make a pile of snow and trudge through it.
 - Third, make three snowballs and throw them at a target.
 - Fourth, move 5 shovelfuls of snow from one place to another.
 - Finally, push someone across the finish line on a sled.
- **Snow Putty Indoor Fun:** Your child will have endless hours of fun with snow putty
 - Follow the directions to create your own snow. You will need 2 teaspoons of Borax, 3 cups of water and 1 cup of white school glue. Make a snowman!
 - Use pom poms, buttons, sequins, popsicle sticks and foam pieces to accessorize the snowman.
 - Enjoy some sensory fun that will also improve fine motor skills. Flatten out the snow and write some letters or words using a popsicle stick.

DO YOU KNOW?!

Common Special Education Acronyms

IEP – *Individual Education Plan*
LRE – *Least Restrictive Environment*
FAPE – *Free and Appropriate Public Education*
BIP – *Behavior Intervention Plan*
LDTC – *Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant*
FBA – *Functional Behavior Assessment*
IDEA – *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*
LEA – *Local Education Agency*
OT – *Occupational Therapy*
PT – *Physical Therapy*
SLP – *Speech Language Pathologist*

Facts About Reevaluation

Reevaluation is the process of examining existing data and determining if there is a need to gather additional data in order to:

- Determine continuing eligibility for special education and related services
- Assure that the continuing individual needs of a student are identified based upon standardized data
- Assure appropriate educational programming (review and/or revision of the IEP)
- Identify needs that may indicate additions or modifications to the program
- Identify areas to address in the goals and objectives based upon Standardized data.
- Identify the need or modification of related services (if applicable)

Requirements under NJ 6A:14 Special Education Code:

- At the minimum must occur every three years and can not occur more than once a year
- Is completed within 60 day of consent
- Must occur when a change in eligibility is being considered
- Reevaluation must be completed by June 30 of a student's last year of eligibility for preschoolers with disabilities
- When reevaluation is complete a meeting of the student's IEP team is conducted and if the student remains eligible an IEP meeting is held to review and revise the IEP with the updated data
- In certain circumstances, if after reviewing existing data at a planning meeting; And if BOTH parents and district board of education agree that no additional data is needed a reevaluation can be waived. This waiver confirms student progress and that the student continues to be a student with a disability. Generally speaking, however, updated data is important for use in the development of an IEP.