

***SPECIAL EDITION***

Feb. 2010

Volume 1, No. 6

Co-chairs Peggy Ueda and Patrick Gabridge			
Liaisons			
BEEP - Kimberly Percival	Driscoll -Jillian Kalen,	Lawrence - Patrick Gabridge	Runkle - Jemelle O'Neill
Baker - Hillary Pizer	Laney Nielson	Lincoln - Polly Welch	BHS - Lisa Guisbond,
Devotion - Pam Katz,	Heath - Pam Palmucci	Pierce - Linda Strother	Karen Szeto
Dawn Edell	Out of district – Nancy Parker, Mary Ann McDonough, Liz Walpert		
PTO – Ben Norton		School Committee – Glenn Cunha	

**News**

***New team facilitator at Devotion***

Kristine Barker has assumed the team facilitator position at Devotion School, replacing Suzanne Shaw. Kristine comes to the Brookline Public Schools from the Home for Little Wanderers, where she was the principal at their Walpole site, a residential and day school for adolescent boys with special needs. Please call, email or stop by to meet Kristine at her office, directly across from Room 209.

***System-wide LBLD program moving***

The system-wide language-based learning disability program, currently housed at Pierce, is slated to move to Driscoll at the beginning of next school year, Sept. 2010.

***Fill out your post-IEP questionnaire***

Your IEP packet will soon include a questionnaire about the conduct of your IEP, such as whether deadlines were met. This is important feedback for the administration to ensure that the IEP process is adhering to standard policy and procedure. Please be sure to complete and return your questionnaire.

***What's the buzz?***

So far we have one volunteer and a sponsor for a SEPAC team to participate in the ***Brookline Education Foundation Annual Spelling Bee***; we need two more volunteers to make our team. This is an important fund-raising event for the Brookline Education Foundation, which has generously supported Brookline SEPAC. (Among other contributions, BEF provided the funding that allowed Brookline SEPAC to invite Dr. Stuart Ablon of MGH's Think:Kids to appear as our star speaker last spring.) The Bee takes place on Sunday March 14. Don't be shy! This is a fun and friendly event. In the spirit of the Brookline 2010 Community Climate Challenge, the theme this year is "green". For more information or to volunteer for our team, please write to [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com).

***Special Education Program Review***

Program Review Committee Co-Chairs Amy Martin and Denise Rochlin are scheduled to present the Phase I Report to the School Committee on Thursday, March 25. The School Committee meets on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of Town Hall starting at 7 p.m., and the meeting is open to the public. The Phase I Report may be found on the Public Schools of Brookline website after it is presented to the School Committee.

### ***Back on the Web***

Have you seen our new website? Tell us what you think! We are still refining some of the features and welcome your input. Please write to [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com) with your comments and suggestions or, better yet, to volunteer to help us keep it up to date!

### ***Help us improve our newsletter!***

We need volunteers to help prepare content, edit and/or format our newsletter to make it visually more appealing and easier to read. Please write [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com).

### ***More volunteer opportunities***

SEPAC runs on volunteers. We need help not only with the website and the newsletter but with programming, communications, refreshments, and more. Think about doing a small job now to gain experience to take a larger role later. Even if you have only a little bit of extra time we can find a way for you to help! Please let us know!

### ***Miss the WGBH "Educating Everyone" series on Special Education in Massachusetts?***

You can access it at <http://www.wgbh.org/897/programDetail.cfm?programid=860>.

### ***Brookline 2010 Community Climate Challenge: SEPAC eco-team(s) forming***

As a climate action partner, Brookline SEPAC is forming its own eco-team(s), an easy and fun way for people to come together to help the community and the planet. You may sign up for an eco-team through [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com). For more information go to [www.brookline2010.org](http://www.brookline2010.org) and [www.climatechangeactionbrookline.org](http://www.climatechangeactionbrookline.org).

## **Upcoming Events**

### ***Next SEPAC-SPED meeting 2/26, 8 a.m., 5<sup>th</sup> floor Town Hall***

Please send any items you wish to include on the agenda to [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com) and come share your thoughts in person.

### ***SEPAC-SPED Monthly Meetings***

SEPAC chairs meet with SPED administrators monthly on the third Friday starting at 8:00 a.m. in Town Hall. Meetings are open to all. If you have an issue you wish to address, please come, or you may submit it to [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com). We like to submit an agenda in advance to the administrators. The schedule for the remainder of the school year is as follows: February 26, March 28, April 16, May 21 and, tentatively, June 18. Meetings are held on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor or alternate site as posted.

### ***Coalition of Brookline Autism Parents (COBAP) parents meeting – Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m.***

COBAP parents will meet on Sunday, Feb. 7, at 7:30 p.m. at Village Family Chiropractic, 126 Harvard St., to discuss current concerns related to ASD families in Brookline. Wine, cheese and crackers will be served. New parents are welcome! For questions and to RSVP, contact [bkpubservices@yahoo.com](mailto:bkpubservices@yahoo.com).

### ***From School to Work and Independence: Practical and Legal Information for Effective Transition Planning – Thurs., Feb. 11, 7-9 p.m., MLK Room, BHS***

Attorneys Pamela Coveney and Janine Solomon of the Disability Law Center will present important information about transition planning, a required part of IEPs for students age 14 and older who receive special education services. The DLC presentation will address federal and state laws, transition planning and services, IEP development, MCAS and graduation readiness, how state agencies can help and the details of significant recent cases in Massachusetts. Light refreshments will be served. Brookline SEPAC is a Brookline 2010 climate action partner: please bring your own cup. Participants with Professional Licenses can earn PDPs if the content aligns with one of their IPDP goals.

***SEPAC General Meeting – March 18, 7-8:30 p.m., Runkle Library***

Melissa Battite of Brookline Recreation will describe new and ongoing recreation department programs for children with special needs and invite your suggestions for programs. We'll share our experiences in the schools and discuss SEPAC's future plans. Your participation and involvement is what makes SEPAC possible. Enjoy some refreshments, network with other parents and help shape the course of our organization. **Note date change from April 13.**

***College and Gap Year Night for Students with IEPs and 504s and Their Parents – Mar. 24, 7-9 pm, MLK Room, BHS***

Representatives from New England area colleges will speak about their support services for students with disabilities, and a representative from Dynamy will provide information about gap year programs. This event is co-sponsored by the BHS Career Center and SEPAC and is open to students of all grades. RSVP requested but not required; contact Janet Gottesman at 617-713-5019 or [janet\\_gottesman@brookline.k12.ma.us](mailto:janet_gottesman@brookline.k12.ma.us) or sign up in the BHS Career Center office.

***SEPAC Meeting with Program Review Report***

Program Committee Co-Chairs Amy Martin and Denise Rochlin will present Phase I findings to parents and answer questions at our SEPAC meeting to be scheduled from some time after their report to the School Committee. Watch for more information in the March issue of Special Edition. **Note change from March 18.**

***SPED Open Forum with Superintendent Lupini–May 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Town Hall 103***

Dr. Lupini will provide an update on special education in Brookline and entertain questions and comments.

***LBLD and ADHD: Is There a Connection and How Can We Help? Wed., May 26, 7-8:30 p.m., Heath School Auditorium*** Dr. Ronald Neessen, Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Hospital Developmental Medicine Center

***Liaison Appreciation, Planning Meeting and Election of Officers–date TBA, May/June***

**Guest column**

***Rick Rogers, Principal of Lawrence School***

**Landmark School Outreach Program Partnership  
Begins at Lawrence School**

Lawrence School is the pilot site for a new partnership between the Public Schools of Brookline and the Landmark School Outreach Program. The Landmark School is a private school in Beverly specializing in educating students with language-based learning disabilities and differences. Landmark School's Outreach Program provides teachers who work in other school settings a program of applied research and professional development that includes "appropriate learner-centered pedagogy; systematic, skills-based content materials; and models for adapting instruction to learner needs."

The Lawrence School/Landmark School Outreach Partnership is a yearlong collaboration to identify and implement common effective language-based instructional strategies that best support students with learning differences. The partnership includes a series of workshops, classroom observations, collaborative planning, and consultation built in twelve days of on-site work with Landmark consultants.

Teachers, special educators, and administrators serving grades 4-6 make up the core group of 18 staff members working with Landmark during the initial year. Teachers are working to develop and expand their repertoire of language-based instructional strategies that have been found to be most effective in supporting students with learning differences. Among the areas addressed to date:

- Introduction to and overview of language-based learning disabilities, including what language-based teaching looks like at Landmark School and how this might be translated to a public school setting.
- Understanding the complexities of language demands placed on students in general education settings
- Reading maps and graphic organizers to guide comprehension
- Two-column note-taking and varying degrees of language scaffolding strategies using two-column notes
- Sentence and paragraph frameworks as strategies for scaffolding the writing process
- Additional writing strategies specific to personal narratives
- Notebooking as an organizational strategy
- Creating a scope and sequence of study skills with a goal of determining what skills each grade level is responsible for teaching and how they will be implemented.

This model provides an opportunity for general education and special education teachers to learn from and apply Landmark's expertise in a context that is firmly grounded in daily classroom work. All students will benefit from the use of common language and strategies and teachers will hone their ability to "*adapt instruction to learner needs.*"

*Rick Rogers  
Lawrence School Principal*

### **In the Community**

#### ***Adapted winter sports programs***

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Universal Access Program offers adapted programs in skiing, kick sledding, snowshoeing, ice skating and more. The DCR provides free instruction, adaptive equipment and assistance in state parks for visitors of all abilities. To learn more about specific programs and locations go to [www.mass.gov/dcr/universal\\_access/a\\_events.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/a_events.htm).

#### ***Purim Carnival – Sunday, Feb. 21, 3-4:30 p.m., 1 Western Ave., Cambridge***

The Friendship Circle, a Jewish Organization which provides social opportunities for children with special needs, invites children and their siblings to a Purim Carnival! Information or to RSVP to 617-378-5765 or [info@friendshipcircleboston.org](mailto:info@friendshipcircleboston.org).

#### ***Executive Function February Skill Workshop Series***

Sarah Ward offers a series of workshops for parents, teachers and other professionals. See <http://www.executivefunctiontherapy.com/>

### ***MGH Programs for Youth***

- YOUTHCARE is a therapeutically-based program that helps youth with social-cognitive challenges such as Asperger's Syndrome develop social skills through group participation in recreational, social, and educational activities.  
[www.massgeneral.org/youthcare/](http://www.massgeneral.org/youthcare/); email [mghyouthcare@partners.org](mailto:mghyouthcare@partners.org) Patty Daigle [pdaigle@partners.org](mailto:pdaigle@partners.org) (617-726-0060).

#### *Ongoing programs:*

- SIBSHOPS provides workshops for siblings of youth with special needs
- YOUTHCARE TRANSITIONS PROGRAMS support teenagers as they develop into responsible and independent young adults. The programs focus on self-awareness, social thinking, executive function and life skills including career and post-secondary exploration.

#### *Winter/spring programs 2010:*

- TV DINNER GROUP ages 15-19 Wellesley Hills, MA, Tuesdays, 6:30-8:00pm,
- SATURDAY EXPLORATIONS ages 13-19, Charlestown, MA, Sat's 12:30-4:30

*Additional programs and services:* Summer Camps, Summer Explorations for Teens, Summer Career Development for Teens, Social Skills Groups and Clubs, Training and Professional Development and Consultation Services

### ***Sensory Integration: Clinical Innovations and Research – Boston Symposium, 3/18-20***

This workshop presented by Occupational Therapy Associates-Watertown, P.C., is intended for clinicians, educators, psychologists, researchers, parents, MDs and others interested in sensory processing disorder and sensory integration intervention. For information and registration go to <http://www.otawatertown.com/events.html>.

### ***Deaf Day at the State House – Feb. 23, 2010***

Go to the Disability Policy Consortium website, [www.dpcma.org](http://www.dpcma.org), for more information.

### ***FCSN Conference for Families and Professionals – March 13, 7:30 am - 5 pm., Boston***

The Federation for Children with Special Needs presents “Visions of Community 2010: A Conference for Families of Children with Special Needs and the Professionals Who Serve Them” at the Seaport World Trade Center. Visit [www.fcsn.org](http://www.fcsn.org).

### ***Youth Leadership Forum***

Initiated in 1992, the YLF identifies high school students with disabilities who have demonstrated leadership potential, academic success, involvement in their school and community and provides them with training and experiences, role models, and mentors to assist them in becoming tomorrow's leaders. A three-day YLF event is planned for July 7-9. For information contact Stacy Hart, Youth Transition Specialist, Boston Center for Independent Living, 617-338-6665 x 232 or [SRogers@bostoncil.org](mailto:SRogers@bostoncil.org)

### **Legal Corner**

***Did you miss Dan Ahearn's informative discussion of basic legal rights?***

Watch our website – we are in the process of posting his materials to it.

***Do you know about “transition planning”?***

What is involved in assessing transition needs and goals?

What are the requirements of a transition plan, and what kinds of programs and services can be included? Can programs and services outside of the school setting be part of an I.E.P. transition plan?

Who participates in developing the plan?

How does graduation affect transition services?

What adult service agencies can help with transition?

How have transition planning disputes played out in administrative and court cases?

***Make sure you know your rights and responsibilities about transition planning.***

Come to the MLK Room at BHS on Feb. 11 for the Disability Law Center presentation,

***From School to Work and Independence: Practical and Legal Information for Effective Transition Planning***

See details under “Upcoming Events”.

### **Special Section: Vacation and Summer Camps**

***SPED Child and Teen*** provides an extensive list of camp programs for children with disabilities at [http://www.spedchildmass.com/camp\\_2009](http://www.spedchildmass.com/camp_2009).

***\*\*If you know of school vacation or summer camp programs that may be of interest to our readers, please let us know so we can share information in future newsletters.\*\****

***Previously listed in our January Special Edition:***

***JCC Maccabi Camp Kingswood's Zohar Program, [www.kingswood.org](http://www.kingswood.org)***

***The Drama-Play Connection, [www.dramaplayconnection.org](http://www.dramaplayconnection.org).***

***More vacation and summer camp options:***

***The Charles River Center*** in Needham, a private non-profit agency that services children and adults with developmental disabilities, offers school vacation camps for children and teens. Go to <http://charlesrivercenter.org/>, click on "Programs" then "Family Support" then "Children's Programs".

***The Bridge Center (Building Resilience and Independence for People with Disabilities through Growth and Empowerment)***

The Bridge Center is a non-profit agency that provides recreational activities for children and young adults with disabilities through its Summer Day Camp, Saturday Camp, School Vacation Camp, After School, Therapeutic Horseback Riding, Carriage Driving, Hippotherapy, Stable Management, Boy Scout & Girl Scout Troops and special events on its 20-acre campus located in Bridgewater, MA. For information go to [www.thebridgectr.org](http://www.thebridgectr.org).

***Camp New Connections*** of the McLean Hospital Child and Adolescent Program is a camp for boys and girls, ages 7 to 17 years typically with diagnoses of Asperger's, Autism, Non-Verbal Learning Disorder, with typical co-morbidities of Anxiety Disorders, ADHD and psychoses. See [www.mclean.harvard.edu/patient/child/cnc.php](http://www.mclean.harvard.edu/patient/child/cnc.php).

## **Studies**

### ***Supporting Physical Activity and Recreation in the Community (SPARC)***

The UMMS-Shriver Center in Waltham, MA, is screening and enrolling participants for a new research study that is a physical activity and walking program for teens ages 12-17 who have a moderate level of autism. The program, called the "SPARC Walking Club" will take place 2 days/week at the Newton and Malden YMCAs and will run for 16 weeks, starting in February. For more information contact the SPARC study team at 781.642.0259 or [shriver.study@umassmed.edu](mailto:shriver.study@umassmed.edu)

## **Networking**

### ***Cerebral Palsy contacts sought***

A Brookline family with a lower elementary child with cerebral palsy (hemiparesis) wishes to connect with other families to build friendships and help their son meet other children in similar situations. Interested families may write [brooklinesepac@gmail.com](mailto:brooklinesepac@gmail.com).

### ***Friendship Circle***

Friendship Circle is a Jewish organization that provides programming for children with special needs. FC partners with teenagers and college students for weekly visits with children as well as special monthly events. In addition, the organization provides a special bi-monthly program for teenagers and young adults at Harvard University. For more information visit [www.friendshipcircleboston.org](http://www.friendshipcircleboston.org), email [info@friendshipcircleboston.org](mailto:info@friendshipcircleboston.org), or call 617.378.5765

### ***Coalition of Brookline Autism Parents (COBAP)***

COBAP is a group of Brookline parents who meet bi-monthly to discuss issues related to helping their children diagnosed with PDD-NOS, Asperger's or Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Membership is open to any person who is the parent or guardian of a child who lives in Brookline and has an autism spectrum disorder, or who lives elsewhere but attends school in Brookline and has an autism spectrum disorder.

To join COBAP or for more information, please contact Beth Kaufman at [bkpubservices@yahoo.com](mailto:bkpubservices@yahoo.com). We welcome Brookline ASD parents join our Yahoo group by visiting [www.yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com), enter "COBAP" in the box that says "Find a Group".

### ***Brookline QUEST (Quality Unique Enrichment for Special Needs Teens)***

Brookline QUEST supports traditional and innovative recreational, leisure and cultural activities for Brookline teens with special needs. Visit their website at [www.brooklinequest.org](http://www.brooklinequest.org) to learn about their extensive schedule of activities.

### ***ADD/ADHD Support Group***

Periodic meetings of parents and guardians of children with a suspected or confirmed ADD/ADHD diagnosis. For more information contact Valerie at 857-272-2164 or [valerie\\_ball\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:valerie_ball_98@yahoo.com)



## ***Brookline SEPAC***

visit us at [brooklinesepac.org](http://brooklinesepac.org)

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*Brookline SEPAC is a Brookline 2010 Climate Action Partner*

