

Chelmsford Special Education Parent Advisory Council

Presentation for the School Committee - February 2019



We are more alike than different.

Chelmsford SEPAC

Responsibilities & Duties

2018-19 Budget Review

Goals & Accomplishments

Concerns and Recommendations

Needs Assessment Survey

Concerns & Recommendations

2019-20 Goals

2019-20 Proposed Budget

Resources & Upcoming Events





CSE PAC Responsibilities & Duties

Bylaws updated and approved by parent vote November 2018

Our mission is to effectively communicate the understanding, respect, and support for all children with special education needs in our community.



Advise the school committee on education and safety for students with special needs



Participate in planning, development, and evaluation of special education programs



Collaborate with CPS to inform parents of their rights regarding special education



Disseminate information about programs and services in the school system



Help direct parents to advocacy, support services, and parent education



Inform parents about special education legislation



CSE PAC 2018-19 Budget Review

Total Budget, line item "PAC" under Special Education	\$750
MassPAC Plus Membership	-\$450
An IEP for My Child Workshop	-\$150
Additional funds coordinated with Byam School Association	\$46
Refreshments for workshops	-\$24.86
Remaining Budget	\$221.14



Cost of an additional workshop: \$300



CSEPAC 2018-19 Goals & Accomplishments

Goals as listed in 2017-18 Presentation

✓ Provide SEPAC community outreach at Open House

✓ Host True Colors Workshop

Attend A.P.P.L.E. Institute

✓ Complete Special Education Needs Assessment Survey

Apply for ALEC Grant

✓ Continue building a collaborative relationship with administration and school committee

✓ Establish SEPAC guidelines for open dialogue between parents and collaborative dialogue with CPS

✓ Continue building a collaborative relationship with PTO and BSA groups



CSEPAC 2018-19 Goals & Accomplishments

Community Supports

CHIPS packets include CSEPAC Handouts, coordinated by Mary Ellen Forty, CHIPS teacher

Coordinated staffing at the cupcake booth for a BSA event

Zen Den - a sensory friendly play space for use during school wide events, provided this service at Center School PTO's Trunk or Treat and BSA Sweetheart Dance

Hosted an activity table at the Harrington PTO's Heritage Festival and Chelmsford Farmer's Market

Attending Council of Chelmsford Schools meetings to share information

Coordinated with the CHS Exploring Early Childhood program to provide free babysitting for families during CSEPAC events

Continued collaborative relationship with the Chelmsford Special Education Parent Support Group, a separate organization that shares parent concerns at CSEPAC meetings



CSEPAC 2018-19 Goals & Accomplishments

Workshops

True Colors

September, Personality system to improve productivity and reduce conflicts

Parents, CSEPAC Board Members, School Committee, and CPS Administration attended

Basic Rights in Special Education

November, 12 participants, cost included in MassPAC membership

District is required to provide this workshop for parents annually

An IEP for My Child

January, 12 participants, cost reduced by half with MassPAC membership

Executive Functioning - April 4, 2019, informational presentation of techniques to use at home

504 Plans - Spring 2019, informational presentation by FCSN

Anxiety - June 2019



CSEPAC 2018-19 Goals & Accomplishments

Parent Support and Guest Speakers

Parent Support

6-7pm, co-chairs arrive early to provide time and space for parents to connect privately and confidentially before meetings begin

Guest Speakers

School Resource Officers: School Safety and Emergency Preparedness

LifeLinks Inc: Family Support Services

Chelmsford Board of Health: Project Interface

Health & Guidance Counselors: Mental Health Supports at School



Needs Assessment Survey

Survey tool and list sourcing

The Needs Assessment Survey Sub-Committee worked with the Director of ICTS on the following:

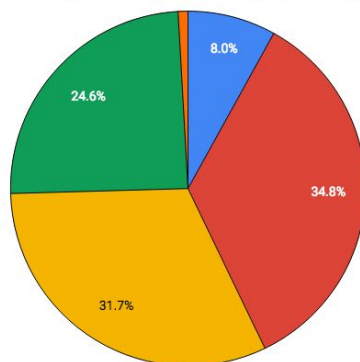
- Determining which software tool we could use to ensure anonymity as we knew more families would be likely to participate openly if they could be anonymous.
- Ensuring that the survey would be sent to any family within the district that had a child on an active IEP or 504 Plan regardless of whether they were in-district or placed out-of-district.
- **The survey was sent to 1,104 contacts and 227 contacts completed the survey.**



Demographics

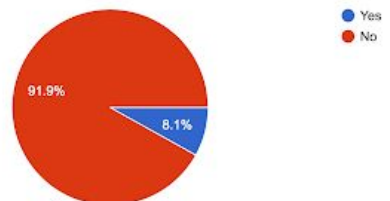
Percentage of School

● Preschool ● Elementary ● Middle School ● High School ● 18-22



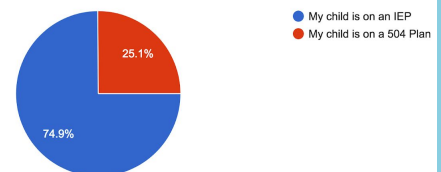
Have you already taken this survey for another child?

223 responses



Is your child on an IEP or a 504 Plan?

223 responses



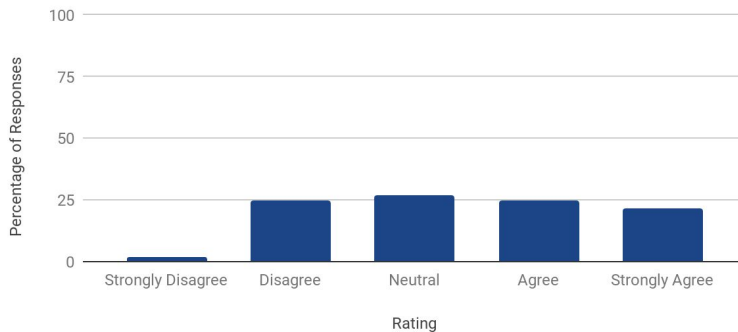


Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with 504 Plans

My child's 504 plan's accommodations are being used as written.

56 Responses

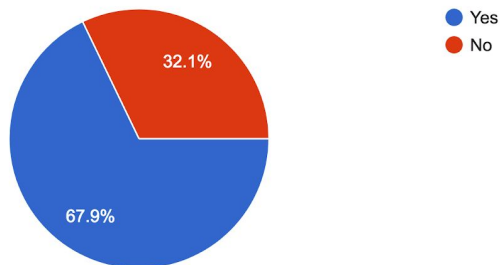


Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with 504 Plans

I know who to contact at the school if I have a concern about my child's 504 plan.

56 responses





Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with 504 Plans

- **87% feel their child is an accepted member of the school community.**
- 82% fully understand their child's 504 Plan.
- 84% feel that school staff are properly trained to understand the unique needs of their child.
- The majority of families know who to contact for updates and to share concerns.
- 64% are satisfied with their child's 504 Plan
- **57% parents feel they are included by the 504 Plan team as an active participant.**

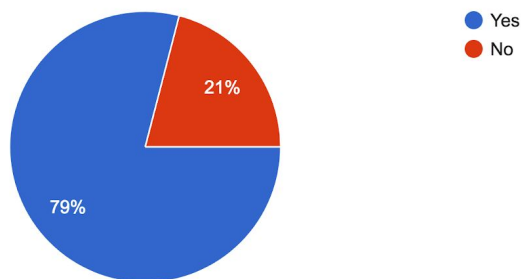


Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with IEPs

I receive communication regarding progress on my child's IEP goals.
(example: progress report)

167 responses





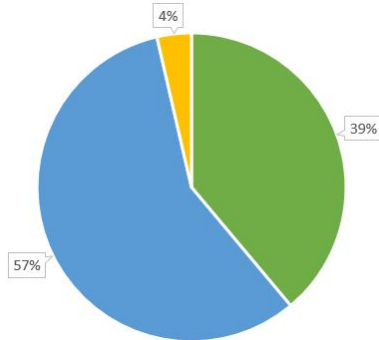
Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with IEPs

Is your child making effective progress towards their goals?

167 Responses

■ Yes, on all goals ■ Yes, on some goals ■ No, my child is not making progress on any goals

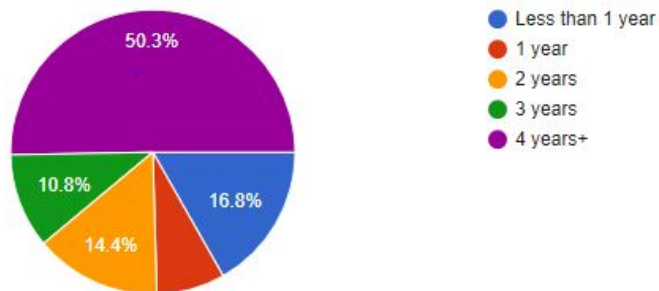


Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with IEPs

How long has your child been on their IEP?

167 responses





Needs Assessment Survey

Highlights of responses for families with students with IEPs

- **Almost everyone with a child on an IEP feels their child is an accepted member of the school community.**
- 76% of families understand their child's IEP.
- 68% feel that the district is doing a good job at including them as an active IEP team member.
- 86% feel that their child's IEP is being implemented as written.
- 33% shared that their child's IEP goals and objectives were developed prior to the team meeting.
- **22% feel dissatisfied with overall communication and response time from their IEP team members.**

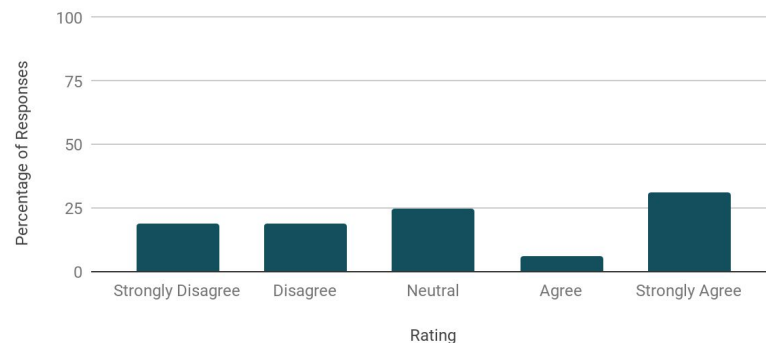


Needs Assessment Survey

Results for families with students with Out of District Placement (OOD)

Chelmsford worked collaboratively with me to decide on an out-of-district placement.

16 Responses





Needs Assessment Survey

Results for families with students with Out of District Placement (OOD)

- 7% of the survey submissions came from OOD families
- **The majority of OOD families feels they are receiving the right level of communication from their home school community.**
- 56% were not given more than one OOD placement option.
- OOD families were interested in workshops on the following topics: Trauma Sensitive Schools, Transition Options/Rights/Planning for Coming Back in District, and Legal Rights.

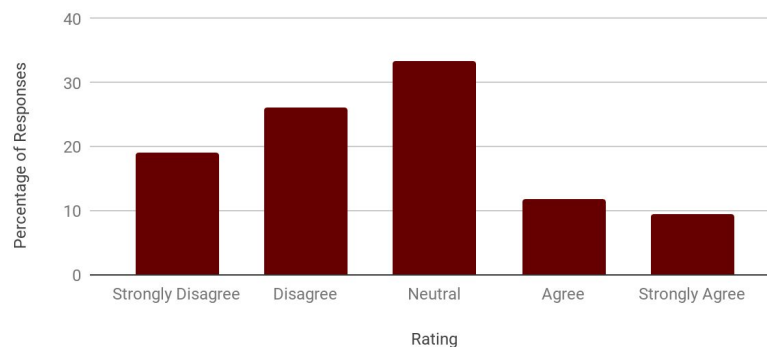


Needs Assessment Survey

Results pertaining to CPS Administration & Staff

I am satisfied with the support I received from Student Services.

42 Responses



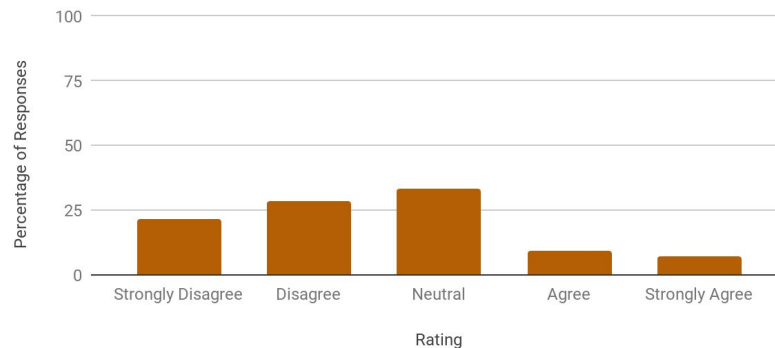


Needs Assessment Survey

Results pertaining to CPS Administration & Staff

The Student Service team member(s) advocated for my child's needs.

42 Responses



Needs Assessment Survey

Results pertaining to CPS Administration, Staff, and Transportation

- 56% of 504 Plan families and 65% of IEP families felt that school staff is trained to understand their children's unique needs.
- **80% of IEP families feel that related service providers (SLP, OT, PT) are doing a great job with their children.**
- 1/3 of families feel they do not receive responses in a timely manner from Student Services.
- **73% of families experience inconsistent pick-up and drop-off times.**
- 50% of families feel there is a lack of driver training.
- 46% experience a lack of communication with their child's driver.



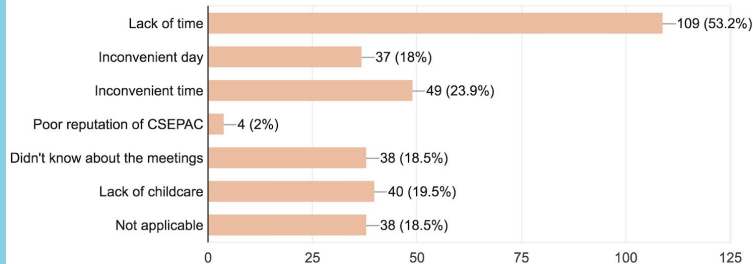
Needs Assessment Survey

Results of CSEPAC related questions

- 71% know what CSEPAC is what and CSEPAC does

If you have not been able to attend a CSEPAC meeting in the past, what has prevented you from attending? (check all that apply)

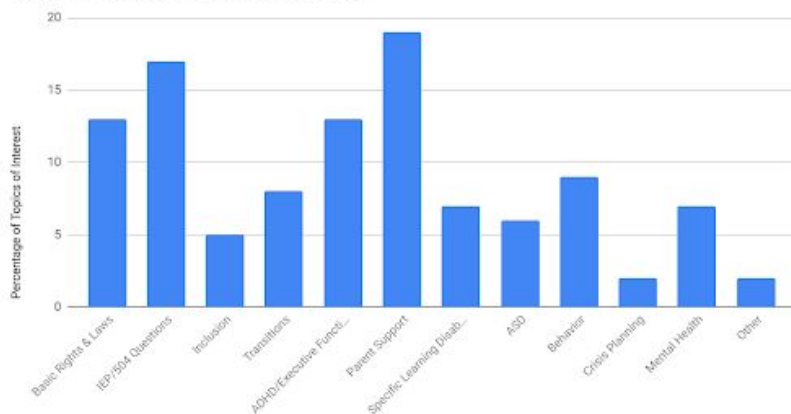
205 responses



Needs Assessment Survey

Results of CSEPAC related questions

Topics of Interest for Future Workshops





Concerns & Recommendations Based on Needs Assessment Survey

Concern: Wait time to receive responses from Student Services and IEP team staff

Recommendation: The district could develop and enforce communication guidelines for staff members to follow with clear escalation points for parents to utilize as needed. The district may want to evaluate staffing levels to ensure staff can deliver against the guidelines. Including “respond all” on email.

Concern: Parents are unsure who to contact regarding implementation of 504 plans

Recommendation: A flow chart could be created for each school outlining the hierarchy of professionals responsible for implementing the 504. Parent and teacher training on 504 plans.

Concern: Transportation issues and communication

Recommendation: The district could communicate a clear process for families to follow when reporting transportation issues. The district could share concerns with the transportation company and follow-up with families to ensure the problems are improving.



Concerns & Recommendations Based on CSEPAC Meetings

Concern: Difficulties for parents accessing meetings and training

Recommendation: CSEPAC should maintain a website with timely updates, share information on social media, share information with administration and school principals, share information at PTO/BSA/CoCS meetings, share information through Connect Ed, provide child care at meetings. CSEPAC should invest in professionally printed brochures to be handed out at IEP and 504 meetings, open house, and PTO/BSA/CoCS meetings. CSEPAC should investigate the possibility of airing meetings and workshops on Chelmsford TV. CSEPAC should redo the survey at least every 3 years to monitor effectiveness of these actions.

Concern: Communication within the district and to and from parents

Recommendation: CSEPAC and CPS could co-host a roundtable discussion to inform parents of how processes and timelines work for things like MTSS, SST, Title 1, IEP, and 504 Plans. The flow chart recommended on the previous slide could be presented at this event.



Concerns & Recommendations Carried over from 2017-18

Concern: Need update on the items that were partially or not implemented on the CPR

Recommendation: CSEPAC Chairs should meet regularly with administration and school committee to review our concerns & recommendations for the district, evaluation of special education programming and services, and PAC goals.

Concern: Removing recess is part of district policy for consequences for behavior. Teachers remove recess for reasons other than those listed in the parent handbook.

Recommendation: The district could evaluate the behavior policies, districtwide and by individual teachers, related to removing recess as a punishment. Investigate how PBIS plans relate to district behavior policies and consequences.

Concern: Out of District families requests for more guidance on home school community after school enrichment activity and sports options.

Recommendation: CSEPAC and CPS should continue to seek ways to include children with OOD placements in our community



CSEPAC 2019-20 Goals



Collaborate with the district to host **Basic Rights in Special Education** for parents in October



Regularly scheduled meetings with school committee and administration for the **evaluation of special education programming and services**



Collaborate with the district and parent groups to host a discussion: **"Integrated Learning in My Child's Classroom"** in November



Develop a **3 year plan** for CSEPAC



Schedule monthly **parent workshops** January through May



Provide support and information to families at **PTO & BSA events**



Plan an activity for families, like Co-host a **Sensory Friendly Roller Skating** night with local SEPACs



CSEPAC 2019-20 Proposed Budget

MassPAC membership	\$450
1st FCSN workshop: Effective Communication	\$150
2nd FCSN workshop: Suspension & Discipline	\$300
Activities	\$300
Community Outreach	\$300
Total Projected Budget	\$1500



Resources



chelmsfordsepac.weebly.com



ChelmsfordSEPAC@gmail.com



"Chelmsford SEPAC" group



csepac.liaisons@gmail.com

CSEPAC Board Members

Co-Chairs	Ali Barnes Kristen Eriksen
Secretary	Laurie McCarron
Treasurer	Jane Zhao

Director of Special Education: Amy Reese, 978.251.5100 Ext: 6920, reesea@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

School Committee Liaison: Donna Newcomb, newcombd@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

Upcoming Events

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 28, 2019, 7pm, CHS Learning Commons

Next Workshop

April 4, 2019, 7-8:30PM, Chelmsford Public Library

Topic - Executive Functioning - Presented by Speech and Language Pathologist, Karen Grabowski, and Special Educator & BCBA, Kristine Wiltz. Together, they will describe executive functioning deficits and focus on how to address your child's needs at home. Tools and techniques will be offered across all grade levels.

