



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

SEPAC Summer School Session 9 – Meetings, Workshops and Events



INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

617-236-7210 | www.fcsn.org | fcsninfo@fcsn.org

Workshop Objectives

Learn how to:

- Conduct meetings/work under the Open Meeting law
- Cooperate with the District on annual rights workshop
- Develop a workshop schedule based on input
- Plan other events – social, fund-raising etc.
- Advertise/Collaborate with other groups/SEPACs
- Use MassPAC benefits



SEPAC Meetings

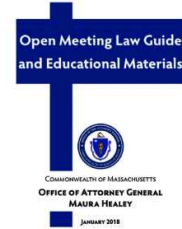
All SEPAC Meetings should be public meetings – subject to the Open Meeting law

- Post agenda, 48 hours in advance
- Open to the public
- COVID rules

SEPACs should have a public calendar of meetings

- No requirements as to # of meetings
- Meet needs of your community

SEPACs officers representing less than a quorum can “meet” with the school administration



Open Meeting Law during COVID

Revised public meeting rules - <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-during-the-covid-19-state-of-emergency>

- public body provides **adequate, alternative means of public access** to the deliberations of the public body
- quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location is suspended
- notice must include clear instructions for accessing the meeting remotely
- all votes must be taken by roll call
- at the start of the meeting, the chair must announce the name of the members who are participating remotely (recorded in minutes)



Annual Rights Workshop

Each school district shall conduct, in cooperation with the local parent advisory council, at least one workshop annually within the school district on the rights of students and their parents and guardians under the special education laws of the commonwealth and the federal government and shall make written materials explaining such rights available upon request.

- Basic rights workshop is the responsibility of the District
- SEPACs should cooperate with District – help advertise
- Discuss ways to meet the needs of non-English speaking families
- MassPAC PLUS benefit provides free workshop



Workshop Planning

- Conduct SEPAC business first/last
- Educational workshops support - not within formal role of SEPAC
- Meet the needs of your community/families - surveys
- Plan ahead – school calendar, snow dates!
- Finding Speakers
- Budget for workshops

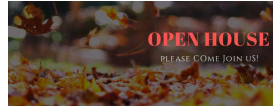


Other SEPAC Events

Parent/Family and Student/Sibling Support Groups

SEPAC Socials/Networking/OOD Connections

School Open Houses



Special collaborations with PTO/District (resource fairs)

Community resources/Town Recreation



Fund and Friend raising events
(SEPAC Recognition Celebration)

Special Olympics/Challenger Sports/Understanding our Differences



Advertise/Collaborate

Discuss with District how to use their systems

Develop your own Email/Phone List

Invite all parents in your District

Invite Administration and School Committee members

Create a social media site for announcements/sharing resources

Collaborate with neighboring SEPACs/Share work and cost



Using MassPAC Benefits

PLUS level members get a free Basic Rights workshop for the District plus a half-price option for an additional workshop

<https://fcsn.org/ptic/workshops/request>

Access to Monthly FCSN Networking Series - meetings/speakers

One free registration to annual Visions of Community Conference

Participation by MassPAC/FCSN in District/SEPAC resource fairs

Promotion of workshops/events/activities through MassPAC Listserve and Facebook page

Connections to other SEPAC leaders

<https://fcsn.org/masspac/home/membership/>



Best Practices

Work with the District or inform District of workshop plans

Invite Special Education Administrator to address group/updates

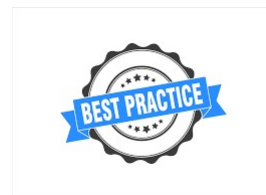
Create an Annual Budget – ask for District support

Look for free options in your community – Ask!

Open discussion/share resources/book group

Address accessibility issues - translators

Use both in-person and virtual platforms, even after COVID



Session 10 – September 15 at 7PM

SEPAC Self-Assessments



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