



FEDERATION FOR CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

SEPAC Summer School

Session 3 – Communication and Outreach

INFORMING, EDUCATING, EMPOWERING FAMILIES

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



Workshop Objectives

- The Important Role of Parent Input
- Strategies for Engaging Families
- Working Towards Diverse Input
- Determining SEPAC Priorities

**WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU!**



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The Engine of a SEPAC

A good structure is the engine of the SEPAC:

- Mission Statement
- Well-organized framework/By-laws
- Clearly defined roles/Officers
- Meeting requirements - Agendas
- Elections and Turnover



Parent input is the fuel for the engine.



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Important Role of Parent Input

Input is the fuel for change... collected from:

- Parents
- Students
- Educators
- Community leaders
- Others



Tap into Diverse sources. Input can be used to identify systemic issues and solutions.

What is input?

letters, proposals, comments, concerns, complaints, feedback, stories, testimony, data ...



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Strategies for Engaging Families

- Multiple Communication methods: flyers, brochures, social media, website
- Participate in events, i.e., back-to-school nights
- Surveys
- Host a Listening Night
- Dedicated Email for input
- Present to PTA/PTO
- Workshops



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Components of Successful Engagement

- Welcome all families
- Communicate effectively
- Support the success of new leaders
- Sharing power and responsibility
- Partnering with the community



<https://masfec.org/>

Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center (MA SFEC)



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Supporting Diverse Input

What supports do families need to attend meetings?

- Childcare
- Translation services
- Transportation
- Food/drink
- Online access – phone or zoom
- Printed materials

**Most SEPACs
hold meetings at
different times
and locations**



* Is there another way to get input?



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Determining Priorities

Not every concern is a systemic issue.

Focus on 1 to 3 critical issues annually to direct your SEPAC's efforts.



Taking on too much can overwhelm volunteers. Leave room for issues that may arise.

Report on a periodic basis to School Committee.



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Indicators of Success

- High attendance at meetings
- Interest in SEPAC positions/elections
- Requests for input by school leaders
- Positive feedback from parents/stakeholders
- SEPAC advice is considered

**Follow-up with members
is vital for success.**



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National Parental Involvement Day



National Parental Involvement Day

<https://www.projectappleseed.org/national-parent-day>



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THANK YOU
Session 4 – July 28
Running a SEPAC Meeting

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