

BSEAC NEWS BSEAC NEWS

Version 1 2013-2014 school year

Hello all,

We are reaching out to parents of a child or children with special needs in the Belmont Public School System. We are excited to let you know about the many different ways your BSEAC (Belmont Special Education Advisory Council) is helping to inform, educate, partner, advise, and bridge gaps in our Belmont Public School system for our kids.

Listed below are a few things that we are involved with this school year. As you read, we hope that you can find some time to help out and be a part of the BSEAC community even if it is just returning some emails. **ACTIONS are listed in Red** with deadline dates per category.

- *New Superintendent Search Committee (**Immediate ACTION NEEDED!!!!**
Submit any suggested interview questions to Mary Jo by this Wed. 10/23/13 no later than 4pm))
- *Superintendent's Special Education Trend modeling Group
- *Director/Assistant Director Student Services Monthly Meetings
- *Parent Information Sessions (Next one is this Wed 10/23 6:30pm Parent Mingle 7pm
Speaker - Butler Library)
- *Parent Mingles and Coffee/Teas
- *Parents Helping Parents List (We need Parents who are willing to help other parents. Will you be on the list?)
- *Survey Says
- *1st ever Belmont Abilities Carnival (Targeted for Fall 2014)
- *Fundraising Team (Lets have Fun and Raise some funds for worthy SPED needs)
- *Volunteer Opportunities (It takes a village and every little bit counts)

Enclosed is our BSEAC Q&A and Wed Parent Information Session Flyer

We are so excited to launch a year of getting to know one another and building our support team of parents. Let us know you are out there. Come learn, play, discuss, and support your kids by networking with other parents.

Your Co-Chairs,

Mary Jo Peterman, Co-Chair

Heather LaPierre, Co-Chair

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*****News per category*****

New Superintendent Search Committee

Co-Chair Mary Jo Peterman is participating in the screening committee to assist in screening and interviewing potential candidates. If you would like to submit any suggested special education interview questions, she will be compiling your suggestions and creating and submitting interview questions to the committee. We cannot guarantee that all questions will be asked, but what questions are not used for the screening committee, we can use as direction for our council. **ACTION: DEADLINE DATE THIS WED 10/23/13 BY NOON**

Superintendent's Special Education Trend modeling Group

Co-Chair's Mary Jo Peterman and Heather LaPierre will be participating in the school committee's modeling group where the group will look at impact trends in Special Education; eventually looking at trends that impact Belmont. Our first discussion meeting will take place on Thursday Oct 31st. We will keep the BSEAC community informed of the findings and discoveries.

Director/Assistant Director Student Services Monthly Meetings

This is a time when the steering committee meets with the Director and Assistant Director to discuss updates, needs, upcoming sessions, immediate parent concerns, and for cross coaching and learning.

Parent Information Sessions

Parent Information sessions (PIS) are held monthly and they are a time for parents to increase their understanding about a specific topic or to learn about a new tool or technique that might just help their child. We try and coordinate these PIS's on the third Wed of every month. This year we have selected Butler Elementary School to hold our PIS's. Last year Wellington Elementary School was our host and a different school will be selected for next year. Listed below are the dates for this school year! We send out the topics for each month at the beginning of the month in flyer and email form via the schools list serves, and our BSEAC Yahoo Group email. So mark your calendar's and plan to attend!

All information sessions will be at the Butler Elementary School, 90 White Street, Belmont, MA from 7pm – 8:30pm. All our sessions are filmed and aired by the Belmont Media Center (BMC)

10/23/13 "Thinking outside the classroom" See Flyer enclosed

11/20/13 "Creative Visual Supports for Behavior Management"

12/18/13

1/15/14 (Location will be in the BHS TBD)

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October 22, 2013

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2/12/14

3/19/14

4/16/14

5/21/14 Annual Awards Ceremony (Note: Will be held in a different location TBD)

ACTION: If you are attending and would like to bring a snack to share, email Mary Jo at info@familyyoga.us the day before the PIS to let her know what you will bring. Recommended to be there at 6:30pm.

Parent Mingles and Coffee/Teas

This is a time where parents can share, discuss, and help each other regarding their child's individual issues or concerns. Sometimes Student Services staff that are supporting BSEAC will attend the evening parent mingles. We will let you know if staff members do attend and who they are via our flyers.

Parent Mingles happen at 6:30pm just before our monthly Parent Information Sessions (Dates listed above.)

Coffee/Teas happen during the day at 10:30am on the Third Thurs morning (Except Feb) of each month at Brueggers Bagels in Belmont Center. Here are the coffee/tea dates for the school year: 11/21/13, 12/19/13, 1/16/14, 2/13/14, 3/20/14, 4/17/14, 5/15/14. We hope to see you then.

ACTION: It would be helpful to let us know if you plan on attending, RSVP the day before – thank you!

Parents Helping Parents List

We need parents help! Many times parents will call one of the co-chairs asking to talk to another parent that might be going through a similar experience whether it is about their child's specific diagnosis, an IEP issue, questions about evaluations, outside help, resources, or more. We would like to be able to look down a list of parents who are willing to share with other parents about their special needs experiences, resources, etc. This is a confidential list maintained and managed by the BSEAC co-chairs only and updated at the beginning of each school year to ensure accuracy, privacy, etc. Let us know if you are willing to share with other parents your experiences – we would be grateful for your assistance.

ACTION: Email either Heather or Mary Jo the following information: Parent Name, Email, Phone, Grade levels you can speak to, SPED categories you are able to assist other parents with.

Survey Says

Last year there was a state wide survey that yielded some interesting results. When we have a summary we will post to the group. This year the BSEAC will be conducting mini-survey's on-line to obtain general information to improve the BSEAC program and to plan for next year. **ACTION:** Contact Sandi Gubin at gubin@theworld.com if you would

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like to assist with survey's.

1st ever Belmont Abilities Carnival

The vision: Picture information sponser tables of different organizations that support special education. Then picture fun activities for all Kids, making sure that Special Education kids take center stage, but all kids will have fun. Painting faces, wheelchair maze race, basketball challenge, sensory tables where kids can win prizes for things like mini boat races, and more!!!!

When: We were thinking a Fall 2014 carnival

The need: A volunteer committee to organize sponsorship, plan activities, solicit and manage high school and middle school volunteers, decide location, and help to create this unbelievable spectacular event.

Why: To build awareness, partnership, enhance integration, and most of all for kids of all ages and abilities to have fun.

ACTION: Contact Mary Jo Peterman at info@familyyoga.us if you would like to be on this committee.

Fundraising Team

Since we are a completely volunteer run organization, we have no funds and given some of our goals (Abilities Carnival, possible school playground donations, Awards Ceremony Dinner) we would like to generate some funds to make these events memorable. **ACTION:** Contact Diane Hutchins-Fridmann at email - dianehf98@gmail.com if you would like to be on this committee.

Volunteer Opportunities

Listed below are other BSEAC volunteer opportunities:

BSEAC School Representative – represent your school at PTO meetings

BSEAC Resource Coordinator – Identify and update SPED resource list

BSEAC Fundraisor committee – see note above.

BMC volunteer for speaker events – learn how to video and edit our Parent Information Sessions for the BMC

BSEAC Abilities Carnival committee member – see note above.

BSEAC Lending Library coordinator – Make a list of our Chenery Library materials, identify other materials we would like to add to the library, and send it out to the list.

ACTION: Contact Mary Jo Peterman at info@familyyoga.us or phone 617-721-2634 if you would like to discuss these in more detail.