

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, modern aesthetic. The text is centered in the upper half of the image.

# Bedford Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Presentation to the School Committee

October 11, 2022

# Agenda

Introductions

What We Do

APPLE Institute

- Identified Areas of Opportunity
- SNOT Analysis
- Team Action Plan

Feedback - Strengths and Challenges

Upcoming Events

# Introductions

---

Marianne Vines - Director of Special Education

---

Erica Callahan - SEPAC Board Member

---

Erica Colbath - SEPAC Board Member

---

Coreen Garrett - SEPAC Board Member

# What we do

- ▶ Bring together parents and caregivers of children receiving special education services to provide support
  - ▶ nights out, daytime coffee, walk and chat
- ▶ Host quality speakers and trainings to educate families and the community
  - ▶ Lenora Campoli Speaker Series
  - ▶ FCSN presentation
- ▶ Host other events of interest during the school year
- ▶ Host social get togethers (caregivers or caregivers and families)
- ▶ Work closely with school administration and leadership to help improve special education services
  - ▶ Meet with Director of Special Education monthly
  - ▶ Meet with Superintendent 3x per year
  - ▶ Meet with School Committee 1-2x per year

# APPLE Institute

## Advancing Parent-Professional Leadership in Education

### What is the APPLE Institute:

a free training program offered by the Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN) to help parent leaders, special education administrators, and school community members build collaborative leadership teams to increase parent engagement in their school district

#### Districts accepted:

- Bedford ~ Blackstone-Millville ~Chicopee ~ Groton-Dunstable ~ Watertown ~ Wilmington

#### Dates:

- Full APPLE Institute meetings - May 6, June 10
- Bedford Meeting with FCSN representatives - May 18 & 27, June 7 & 10
- Ongoing district meetings to move toward implementation

# APPLE Institute - Identified Areas of Opportunity

Vibrant SEPAC  
Engagement

Promoting  
Community  
Acceptance and  
Inclusion

Increasing Awareness  
of Special Education  
Department  
Initiatives

Advancing School  
Success

Collaborate with  
Recreation  
Department and  
other town  
organizations

Enhancing in school  
social emotional  
supports for  
students with  
disabilities

# APPLE Institute - SNOT analysis

## Strengths

- Relationships with SEPAC, Administration, other Parent Led Organizations
- Committed group of SEPAC members

## Needs

- Parent engagement - (survey needs)
- Improved academic success
- Social needs and friends

## Opportunities

- Communications channels (both one way and two way) between students, school and community
- Collaborate with Recreation Department and town

## Threats

- Capacity and bandwidth to invest time to achieve objectives
- Lack of community empathy, social exclusion
- Engagement

# APPLE Institute Team Action Plan

---

**Action:** Create a monthly Director of Special Education Newsletter

---

**Success:** Increase awareness and transparency of the Special Education Department initiatives and successes

---

**Status:** Ongoing - started in September 2022

---

# APPLE Institute Team Action Plan

---

**Action:** Create a Bedford SEPAC flyer to be shared by the district and SEPAC at IEP meetings and other opportunities  
Translate flyer into multiple languages for accessibility and promote a welcoming supportive community

---

**Success:** Increase awareness of SEPAC and increase family engagement

---

**Status:** Flyer in process of finalization

---

# APPLE Institute Team Action Plan

---

**Action:** Create and distribute a survey for special education parents and caregivers  
Consider need for additional survey for additional groups

---

**Success:** Identify areas of strengths, needs and weaknesses for surveyed families  
Leading to increased engagement with impactful programs and offerings

---

**Status:** Target launch date - January 2023

---

# Feedback - Strengths and Challenges

## Strengths

- ▶ Collaborative relationship between SEPAC and administration
- ▶ Teachers and staff engaged in student success
- ▶ Orton Gillingham trained teachers and the impact on increased students
- ▶ Recreation Summer Adventures / ESY collaboration
- ▶ Dibels and sharing information with parents and caregivers

## Challenges

- ▶ Increasing family engagement
- ▶ Community acceptance and inclusion of children and families with differences
- ▶ Social inclusion opportunities
- ▶ Increased programming throughout the town to make programs and events accessible to families with visible and invisible disabilities
- ▶ Sibling supports for family members with special needs

# Upcoming Events

---

10/20 at 8:00pm - October SEPAC meeting on zoom

---

11/03 at 7:00pm - FCSN presents Learn about Section 504 Plans on zoom

---

11/09 at 8:00pm - Bedford SEPAC Parent and Caregiver Night Out at Red Heat Tavern

---

11/17at 8:00pm - November SEPAC meeting on zoom

---

Fall Speaker - in process of scheduling, details will be shared once finalized

---