

Mesa Special Education Alliance

Fact Sheet

Transparent and Accessible Information

OUR GROUP

Mesa Special Education Alliance is a community-led, grassroots group of parents, educators and service providers committed to working collaboratively to effectively improve and enhance the educational experiences for students, families, teachers, and providers.

SUPPORTED BY EXPERTS

The Pacer Center provides guidance to parents who serve on special education advisory councils and encourages questions of school leaders to increase parents’ knowledge, open communication and to help find solutions to common concerns.¹

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs advises that a successful SEPAC is parent driven, meaning “parents determine priorities and activities...[and] District leaders participate, *provide information, background, data and support*” to achieve a win-win partnership.²

KEY TOPICS

Link: [SEPAC Compiled Questions](#)



Contact Us

mesapedalliance@gmail.com

Introduction

Transparency and a free exchange of meaningful information are critical components of trust between parents and school leaders.

Background

October 2020	November 2020	February 2021	March 2021
At the request of Raising Special Kids (RSK) and the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education, Theresa Baca, the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) asked to learn about five high interest topics.	SEPAC members received a PowerPoint from the District with an invitation to ask further questions about the material.	SEPAC members submitted a compiled list of questions in hopes that dialogue about the questions could be used for various Q & A presentations with District representatives.	RSK suggested the questions represented a good starting point to transition to the advisory aspect of SEPAC. Ultimately, the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education declined to address or answer any of the questions, stating she found some of them accusatory.

During the SEPAC Leadership meeting on March 3, 2021, Ms. Baca decided a SEPAC sub-committee would prioritize educational topics for parents in the future and told the Leadership team to start over on this endeavor.

As of December 2021, there have been no educational opportunities regarding these key topics offered to parents. All documented questions and concerns remain unanswered by the District’s Special Education Leadership Team.

Impact to the Community

Despite MPS’ Strategic Goal to “Engage our Community,” which affirms “District communication is accessible and transparent to engage and empower the community in decision making,” parents of students in special education have found there is no effective vehicle for meaningful communication.³ This lack of transparency negatively impacts the trust in our school district.

Join Us

We invite you to work with us to build a collaborative community team that aims to effectively improve and enhance the educational experiences for students, families, teachers, and providers.

Sources

- [Key Questions for Special Education Advisory Council \(SEAC\) Parent Members to Ask \(pacer.org\)](#)
- [National SEPAC Guide 120218.pdf \(parentcenterhub.org\)](#)
- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CXjje4Jsg4rkmgcAHVsLsFX4ErQE6iU2cL54EPnQKM/preview>