

# PARENTS & GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

## ▶ WHAT IS A PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL?

A **Parent Advisory Council on Special Education (SEPAC)** is a formally organized group of individuals committed to the best possible services for children with special needs. The ultimate goal is to enhance special education service delivery for students throughout the school district.

The Island PAC is an organization run by parents in conjunction with the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools administration whose Director of Student Support Services is a non-voting member. Voting membership is open to all parents/guardians of children with disabilities, although all interested parties in the community are welcome.

## ▶ PURPOSE

The purpose of the IPAC is to:

- give children with special needs a voice;
- provide a forum for parent concerns and stimulate parent involvement; and
- establish an effective channel of communication between the school district and parents of children with special needs.

The IPAC has the potential to be a loud voice in our community but it requires parent involvement in order to effect change. It is the best way for the special needs community to be heard as a group by the Superintendent's office. In addition to parent/ guardian open voting membership, established bylaws call for seven voting committee members to serve on its Executive Committee. **PLEASE GET INVOLVED!**

## YOU HAVE A VOICE

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 2014  
6:30 p.m. at the YMCA**

### Massachusetts Special Education regulations state that each school committee shall establish a **PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL ON SPECIAL EDUCATION**

On Martha's Vineyard, that PAC is the **Island Parents Advisory Council**  
We need YOU in order to become a strong group of parent voices

The PAC is charged with many duties and is authorized to provide advice to the district regarding its special education programs and policies.

### PLEASE JOIN US.

#### For more information, contact

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<http://mvipac.tripod.com>

[www.doe.mass.edu/sped/pac/default.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/pac/default.html)  
(guides available in English and Portuguese)

## ▶ DUTIES OF THE PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Advises the school district on special education programs, training needs, and policy;
- Promotes communication between PAC members, local, state and national organizations, councils and groups
- Promotes understanding, acceptance and inclusion within the community
- Provides informational forums for parents, students, educators, and professionals

## ▶ WHO SHOULD JOIN THE ISLAND PAC?

- Parents and/or guardians of children who receive any type of special education services or accommodations in school, such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP), a 504 accommodation, or out-of-district placement.
- Parents who think their child may have some learning issues or differences.
- Parents who would like to understand or have an interest in the Special Education process.
- Parents, educators, or any members of the community who want to learn more!

## ▶ WHY GET INVOLVED?

- To network with other parents.
- To share your own expertise and experiences.
- To learn about the services available for children with learning issues or differences.
- To learn how to advocate for your child's needs more effectively.