

WELCOME TO THE  
**Porter County Education Services (PCES)  
Special Education Parent Advisory Council  
(SEPAC)**

CommUNITY Meeting  
November 2024

## WHAT IS A SEPAC?

A Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a district-level (and/or in collaboration with an interlocal that contracts with local districts), parent-driven group that provides input to the local special education provider on system-level challenges regarding special education and related services. A local SEPAC provides direct input to school personnel and leaders about policies, programs, practices, and services that have an impact on students with disabilities and their families.

Its purpose is to advise, advocate and offer guidance, not to decide policy.

An effective SEPAC can increase the proactive involvement of families by inviting their input in ways that can be used to share local special education policy.

WE ARE  
**PARENTS HELPING PARENTS**

## WHO IS YOUR SEPAC TEAM?

- ❖ **Duneland** ~ Jackie Hood & Rebecca Shellito
  - ❖ **East Porter** ~ Jessica Kruger
- ❖ **Porter** ~ Tracy Ruiz, Alexis Kegebein, Maja Nikolov
  - ❖ **Portage** ~ Dr. Lisa Pina-Awosika
- ❖ **Valparaiso** ~ Jessica Witherspoon, Jill Isley

## Special Education Administration

- ❖ **Executive Director** ~ Sandy Bodnar, sbodnar@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **CFO/Treasurer/HR** ~ Quinnlyn Van Rys, qvanrys@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **SELF Principal/IEP Trainer** ~ Jen Rogers, jrogers@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **SELF Assistant Principal/OT & PT Supervisor** ~ Erica Wood, ewood@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **M-Team Director/AT Supervisor/Medicaid Reimbursement/Complaint Compliance Coordinator** ~ Shannon Aardema, saardema@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **Shared Services Supervisor: Speech; Behaviorists & Student Service Coordinators; DHH & BLV programs; Nonpub Teacher; CPI Trainer; & Teacher Cohort** ~ Morgan Derby, mderby@pces.k12.in.us **New**
- ❖ **Speech Coordinator** ~ Alice Tokoly, atokoly@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **Career & Tech Center Executive Director** ~Audra Peterson, apeterson@pces.k12.in.us
- ❖ **Career & Tech Center Principal** ~ Kyle Becich, kbecich@pces.k12.in.us

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ **Format**
- ❖ **Etiquette**
- ❖ **Cell phone use**
- ❖ **Restrooms**
- ❖ **Handouts**

## IEP Roadmap

Navigating The Request For An IEP

## Article 7 = Indiana's Special Education Law

### Title 511 IAC (Indiana Administrative Code)

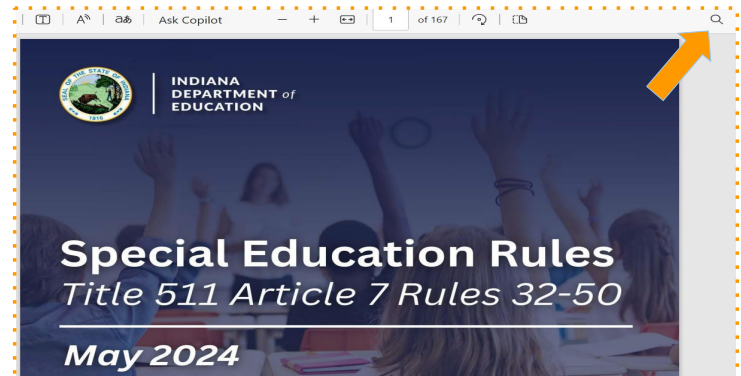
- **Article 7 is specific to Special Education**
  - This includes evaluations, IEPs, disciplinary protections, parental rights, dispute resolution options, timelines, etc
  - Has 50 Rules
  - Defines all of the roles and responsibilities of special education and related services
  - This is same law the school, parent and student follows

## Indiana's Special Education Law Article 7



[SCAN HERE](#)  
To Access Article 7  
(2024)

## Article 7: Keyword Search



## 13 IEP Eligibility Categories

Autism Spectrum Disorder	Language or Speech Impairment
Blind or Low Vision	Multiple Disabilities
Intellectual Disability	Other Health Impairment
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	Orthopedic Impairment
Deaf-Blind	Specific Learning Disability
Developmental Delay (early childhood)	Traumatic Brain Injury
Emotional Disability	

## Special Education Process



## What Is A Referral?

(d) A parent's request for an evaluation must be made to licensed personnel, which is defined in 511 IAC 7-32-58 to mean persons employed by the public agency who are:

- (1) teachers;
- (2) school counselors;
- (3) school psychologists;
- (4) school social workers;
- (5) building principals; and
- (6) other administrators.

A parent's request for an evaluation may be made verbally or in writing. After a parent makes a request, the public agency has ten (10) instructional days to provide the parent with written notice as specified in subsection (e).

## Referral Has Been Made, What's Next?



## Parent Will Then Receive

*Yes*  
**OR**  
*Not At This Time*

## Who Completes The IEP Evaluation?

### 511 IAC 7-32-65 "Multidisciplinary team" defined

Sec. 65. "Multidisciplinary team" means the group of qualified professionals who conduct a student's educational evaluation with input from the student's parent. The qualified professionals include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) At least one (1) teacher licensed in, or other specialist with knowledge in, the area of suspected disability;
- (2) A school psychologist, except for a student with a suspected:
  - (A) developmental delay, in which case the multidisciplinary team shall be at least two (2) qualified professionals from different disciplines based upon the needs of the student;
  - (B) language impairment, a speech-language pathologist and at least one (1) qualified professional from a different discipline based upon the needs of the student; or
  - (C) speech impairment only, a speech-language pathologist may serve as the sole qualified professional on the multidisciplinary team.
- (3) For a student with a suspected specific learning disability, the following:
  - (A) The student's general education teacher or, if the student does not have a general education teacher, a general education teacher qualified to teach students of the same age.
  - (B) For early childhood students, an individual who holds an appropriate license to teach early childhood special education.
- (4) For a student who is blind or has low vision, is deaf or hard of hearing, or has suspected multiple disabilities, the public agency may request that representatives of the state-operated schools serve as part of the multidisciplinary team only if the parent has provided written consent, in addition to the written consent to conduct the initial educational evaluation, for the representative's participation in the educational evaluation.

## What's Next?

<u>YES To An Initial IEP Evaluation</u>	<u>NO To An Initial IEP Evaluation</u>
Provide Copy Of Parent Rights	Provide Copy Of Parent Rights
Request Parent Consent	Provides Parent Prior Written Notice
After Parent Consent Has Been Signed & Returned, Has Up To (50) Instructional (School) Days To Complete IEP Evaluation + Meet As An IEP Team (Includes Parent)	Provides Parent With A List Of Resources To Contact If Additional Assistance Should Be Needed
Parent Can Request A Copy Of Evaluation Report Prior To 50-Day Meeting & Parent Can Request The Report Be Interpreted In A Language The Parent Understands Within (5) Days Prior to 50-Day Meeting	Parent Can Consult With District On Options Available Through Comprehensive & Coordinated Early Intervention Services and/or Resources Available Within The School Setting To Best Support The Student's Needs
At The 50-Day Meeting, The Team (Including The Parent) Determines Eligibility Based Upon Article 7 Criteria	Parent Can Consult With District On Options Available Through Section 504

## After 50-Day Meeting

- If the team determines the student to meet IEP eligibility, an IEP will be initiated
  - The parent is an equal member of the IEP team
  - The parent is entitled to meaningful participation
  - The parent is instrumental in the development of the IEP
  - The parent has a responsibility to read their parent rights
  - The initial IEP legally requires a signature in order to start
- If the team determines the student does not meet IEP eligibility, an IEP cannot be initiated at the time of the 50-day meeting
  - A parent can read Notice Of Procedural Safeguards (parent rights) to learn about what options are available

## After Initial IEP Is Created



## Notice of Procedural Safeguards

- At many IEP meetings copies of the procedural safeguards are given to parent(s)
  - Outlines the rights of the parent(s) of student with disability



It is the parent's *responsibility* to read through the safeguards to better understand their rights

## Quiz Time

## Questions?

## General Resources

- [NWI First Steps](http://indianafirststeps.org) - indianafirststeps.org
- [IN\\*SOURCE](http://insource.org) - insource.org
- [CoAction](http://coaction.care) - coaction.care
- [Area Agencies on Aging](http://in.gov/fssa/da/area-agencies-on-aging/) - in.gov/fssa/da/area-agencies-on-aging/
- [BDS](http://in.gov/fssa/ddrs/developmental-disability-services/) - in.gov/fssa/ddrs/developmental-disability-services/
- [Social Security](http://ssa.gov/benefits/disability) - ssa.gov/benefits/disability
- [Vocational Rehabilitation](http://in.gov/fssa/ddrs/rehabilitation-employment) - in.gov/fssa/ddrs/rehabilitation-employment
- [Family to Family \(Indiana\)](http://inf2f.org) - inf2f.org
- [The Arc of Indiana](http://arcind.org) - arcind.org
- [Indiana Department Of Education](http://in.gov/doe) - in.gov/doe
- [IEP Technical Assistance Center](http://iepta.org) - iepta.org

## HOW DID WE DO?



## Wrap-Up Announcements

- ❖ Future CommUNITY Meetings this academic year
  - January 22nd (Portage Library) - Guardianship
  - March 12th (@ SELF) - Medical vs Educational
  - June 2024 (Location & Date: TBD) - Placement
- ❖ SEPAC Opportunities
  - Don't have the time to join SEPAC but interested in helping the mission? Chat with a SEPAC member to discuss opportunities that may fit you!
  - Share what ideas you may have for SEPAC - We're eager to hear from you!

## CONTACT US

### PCES Special Education Parent Advisory Council

✉ - [pcesparentgroup@pces.k12.in.us](mailto:pcesparentgroup@pces.k12.in.us)

🌐 - [www.pces.k12.in.us/sepac/](http://www.pces.k12.in.us/sepac/)

📘 - [www.facebook.com/PCESSEPAC](https://www.facebook.com/PCESSEPAC)