



SEPAG Drop-in Support Recap

Wednesday, September 30th, 2026 | 1:00pm-2:00pm

Thanks to everyone who joined us this week! Our conversation explored some important questions about the role of SEPAGs, sharing resources with families, creating comfortable opportunities for parent input, and building productive partnerships with districts. We also heard some great examples of how SEPAGs are making a difference in their school communities!

Below are a few highlights and resources from the discussion.

Sharing Resources & Supporting Families

One of this week's discussions explored an important question: **How can SEPAGs help families access useful special education information while maintaining their role as advisory groups?**

Participants discussed the importance of connecting families with reliable, relevant resources that can help them better understand special education processes, their rights, and available supports. The conversation also highlighted the value of thoughtful resource selection, including considering whether materials are accurate, accessible, and appropriate for the families they are intended to support.

The group emphasized that SEPAGs serve an important systems-level advisory role, gathering family input and working collaboratively with districts to identify needs and opportunities for improvement. Providing families with helpful information can complement this work, particularly when parent leaders and district representatives collaborate to identify resources that reflect their community's needs.

A key takeaway was the importance of maintaining open communication, mutual understanding, and a shared commitment to supporting families—even when parent and district perspectives differ.

Creating Multiple Opportunities for Parent Input

Not every family feels comfortable sharing questions, concerns, or experiences in a traditional SEPAG meeting. This week's conversation explored how offering different ways to connect can help families feel more comfortable participating and sharing their perspectives.

Participants discussed several approaches, including:

- Informal coffee hours or meet-and-greets outside of school
- Parent-only SEPAG meetings
- Smaller, less formal discussions where families can connect and share experiences

The takeaway? Meaningful family engagement doesn't have to look the same for everyone. Offering different opportunities to connect can help SEPAGs hear from more families while continuing to build strong family-school partnerships.

Building SEPAG Visibility Through Positive Activities

Participants shared some creative examples of how SEPAGs can build awareness, strengthen relationships, and establish themselves as valued partners within their communities.

One example involved incorporating Inclusive Schools Week and Neurodiversity Celebration Week into existing school spirit-week activities.

Rather than creating an entirely new event, another SEPAG worked with its district to introduce short, meaningful classroom activities that encouraged positive conversations about disability and inclusion.

Participants shared that starting with these positive, solution-focused activities helped build awareness of the SEPAG, strengthen relationships, and establish credibility that supported more challenging conversations later.

Other strategies shared included:

- Creating short informational videos with district staff on topics such as IEPs, 504 plans, and school transitions
- Maintaining a SEPAG presence at Board of Education meetings
- Hosting information tables at Back-to-School Nights
- Collaborating with other SEPAGs to share ideas, resources, and opportunities for families

The conversation reinforced that **SEPAGs can build influence not only by identifying challenges, but also by helping create positive changes in their school communities.**

Want to talk through your group's specific situation? Request a 1:1 office hour with a member of our staff:

go.rutgers.edu/sepagsupportofficehours

**Thanks for joining us
this September!**
The conversation continues in October.



SEPAG Drop-In Support Hours

Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

**New time
in October!**



Bring
a question



Share
an idea



Join the
conversation



Just
listen

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