



Wake Special Education PTA
Bridging The Gap to Success

**Wake SEPTA
Newsletter
Volume 3,
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**SEPTA is a
district-wide PTA that
connects parents
and educators of
children receiving
special education
services from
preschool through
high school.**

**For more
information:**

**24hr Voicemail
919-788-2500
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www.WakeSEPTA.org**

**Mailing Address
P.O. Box 19472
Raleigh, N.C. 27619**

Annual dues are \$5

What I did on my summer vacation...

Let me start out by saying, I am not a country music fan. Not that I have anything against it, I was just raised in the 80s pop culture and music. So, you can imagine my surprise when I took a friend up on a free ticket to Wynonna Judd and the NC Symphony this summer. Besides being a really good show, it was a very interesting night. I had wondered how this icon of country music would perform with an orchestra. As it turns out, I wasn't the only one.

For those of you that don't have my vice for People magazine, Wynonna has had a rough few years. She alluded to it in her show and talked about blazing a new trail in her life after personal heartache and how you go from the Grand Ole Opry to a symphony hall.

It was about struggling to find some good out of life on a totally foreign pathway. She spoke of growth and stretching beyond her comfort zones to, as she put it, to go out on a limb – cause that is where the fruit is. I am sure most people that night were thinking of the transition from country music to symphony.....all I could think about are our children.

My own summer has been quite a learning experience. After some last minute scrambling, my son Josh ended up in a mainstream preK program this summer with a 30% inclusion ratio for special needs. I was nervous but the new school was fully informed and ready to work with him.

Within weeks at school, he was copying other kids playing head, shoulders, knees and toes, sitting through 2 circle times and starting to sign to his teachers. He was happy, healthy and, best of all, stretching successfully beyond his boundaries. His teacher told me that while he was obviously behind academically, he was participating in the class just the same as any preschool child. And now here I sit in August, amazed and potentially blazing an unexpected trail for him.

I always assumed my son would always be in a fully contained environment for special needs children. I think I am wrong. Maybe my son will be better off in a mainstreamed, small scale setting. Just maybe it will be the best for him. It will definitely be a stretch for me, but that is my issue.

This year Wake County will expand the pilot program and completely change the way contained classrooms and regular classrooms look and work together. While this is a very exciting change for those who have been waiting for full mainstreaming to be a reality, for others it is a very scary time.

How will our children, who have been in a safe, secure, small ratio environment, do in the big, wild world of elementary school? Will they be lost? Will they be

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All truth passes through three stages: first, it is ridiculed second it is violently opposed, third it is accepted as being self-evident.

— Arthur Schopenhauer

Wake SEPTA 2007-2008 Board Members

President:	Leslie Welch
President-Elect:	Leigh Menconi
Secretary:	Laurie Jaegers
Treasurer:	Andrea Pacyna
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VP Middle Schools:	Joan Alessandri
VP Preschool & Elementary:	Brenda Monforti

Educator Scholarships

SEPTA has received a grant to fund **FREE MEMBERSHIPS** to teachers and other WCPSS staff. See our [website](#) or call 788-2500

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afraid? And, for those of us with nonverbal kids, how will we know? It is way outside our comfort zone.

The good news is that most that participated in the pilot program or in mainstreaming elsewhere have reported it a success. Learning and growth increase and they are better prepared for middle school. The GREAT news is that we know our kids constantly impress us with their abilities to stretch and grow beyond our perceived limits.

And, as for SEPTA, we enter into our third year of service to the students, teachers and families of Wake County. We have big plans for 07-08. It is a time of growth for everyone. But it is good growth, it is putting ourselves out there on that limb just like Wynonna....."cause that is where the fruit is."

Have a great year and please check out our programming calendar and new website once it is complete. I look forward to serving you and your families this year.

Just another country music fan....

Leslie Welch
President, Wake SEPTA

Sponsorship and Support

SEPTA has been very fortunate in the past and again this year to be allowed to hold meetings at Nationwide Insurance, just behind Crabtree Mall in Raleigh. Thank you Nationwide!

We also have an anonymous donor who has sponsored more than 25 teacher and support staff SEPTA memberships in the past year.

We continue to look for new avenues of volunteerism, sponsorship, grant monies and support for meetings, newsletter printings, school liaisons, marketing materials and such. With success in this endeavor, we strive to not raise membership dues so that SEPTA is affordable for all.

If you or your company know of any potential fundraising opportunities for SEPTA, please let contact 919/788-2500.

Also, if you would like to volunteer some time to help keep SEPTA going, we always need help in both big and small ways.

In Our Community



Teen to Adulthood Parent Support Group :

- 9/8/07 "The Transition Team from WCPPS with Lorenzo Melton"
 - 10/13/07 "Start at Go: Single Portal with Suzanne Goerger"
- Contact Kathy Honeyman at honeymank@earthlink.net

Elementary Track-Out:

Raleigh Parks & Recreation is offering one week track out programs for children with special needs during each track's 3 week break. Contact Jennifer Tabery at 807-5402 for more information or refer to [Raleigh Park & Recreation's fall Leisure Ledger catalog](#).

SibShops: Raleigh Parks & Recreation is offering SibShops sessions for siblings of children with disabilities (siblings in the 6-12 age range) as well as a new, separate session for teens. Contact Jennifer Tabery at 807-5402 for more information or refer to [Raleigh Park & Recreation's fall Leisure Ledger catalog](#).

Miracle League Baseball: Register now for the fall season that starts on September 7th, ending October 26th. There is one game per week and no practice. Buddies are available to pair with your child so that you can sit and enjoy the game. Call 238-0333 or go to www.MiracleLeagueOfTheTriangle.org for more information.

Arc of NC Annual Convention

Durham, Sept 14-15: Breakout sessions include

- Resolving Disputes in Special Education
- What Makes a Good Transition Plan?
- Changes in NC Special Education Policies

Call 782-4632 or go to www.ArcNC.org.



See our website for more local workshop and event information.



SEPTA DOES NOT PROVIDE DIRECT ADVOCACY SERVICES TO PARENTS. RATHER, WE SEEK TO EDUCATE AND SUPPORT BOTH PARENTS AND EDUCATORS ON THE LAWS GOVERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION PLACEMENT AND SERVICES (IDEA).

THERE ARE RESOURCES IN THE COMMUNITY IF YOU ARE SEEKING ADVOCACY SUPPORT. VISIT OUR [WEBSITE](#) OR CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION.



First
Class
Postage
Required

PO Box 19472
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919/788-2500
www.WakeSEPTA.org

Thanks for your continued membership!

Wake SEPTA is beginning its 3rd year supporting the students, families and educators of Wake County. Take a look at some of the programming we are planning for this year:

General Meeting Programming:

- October 18, 2007
Functional Behavior Assessments
- January 17, 2008
Writing and Advocating for an IEP
- April 17, 2008
Alternative Therapies

Workshops:

- November 2007
Positive Behavior Support
- February 2008
Resource Fair
- March 2008
Report on the Roll Out of the Least Restrictive Environment Pilot Program (Elementary School Level)

Go to www.wakesepta.org for final dates, times and location of meetings