



**Wake SEPTA
Newsletter
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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**

**Info@WakeSEPTA.org
www.WakeSEPTA.org**

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

**Annual dues are \$5
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Change is in the air

There has been, as usual, lots of talk these days about redistricting, secession from the county, and changes in special ed classroom types and availability. I say "as usual" because discussion, disagreement and anger about these topics are nothing new in Wake County. With exponential growth has come exponential problems, not only overcrowded classrooms but transportation issues, staffing issues and reassignment from one school to the next, year after year. But, what am I saying? I am preaching to the choir here. You would have to live under a rock, on top of a hill, in the middle of nowhere in this area to not be involved in this issue. I guess what surprised me is that Wake County isn't the only one feeling this pinch.

Leigh Menconi circulated an article online recently about a complaint by special ed parents that their kids were affected by redistricting more often than other kids. The surprise? It wasn't about Wake County. It was Rogers, Arkansas. The article goes on further about a complete lack of basic resources for special ed students – right down to a lack of textbooks.

While I'm sure some of those sorts of issues occur here from time to time, it made me think how fortunate we are to live in such an affluent county. One that has most of the basic resources for our kids and doesn't treat them as an afterthought or "addendum" to planning as the Arkansas schools were accused of doing.

It's easy to complain about our schools. Easy to "think" about seceding from the district and forming a new, smaller district. But, less easy to dig in when the going gets tough and work it out. My own experience with my son is that it is still up to me to drive the "right" services to my child and ensure those services grow with him. That means I have to be involved – sometimes more than I think I should.

What I wonder is how many of you think about the "other" kids out there? The ones that don't have a parent or adult advocating for them?

I say that because I know that some feel that some parts of our schools would be better off separated from the rest. What most fail to realize is that there are much wider implications to our society if we divide off. What happens to those kids in less affluent neighborhoods? What happens to the special ed kids?

What it does is create silos. Places where learning is directly tied to dollars. Meaning, if your neighborhood can't support it financially, learning suffers. Then what?? We have a society with fewer well-educated kids, who may or may not make it to higher ed. Who have few examples to aspire to. We have kids in special ed who become afterthoughts. In many ways, it is the same argument that supports mainstreaming. Higher examples raise the bar for all. Maybe I get that now.

(Continued on page 2)

Only those who dare to fail greatly, can achieve greatly..

Robert Kennedy, former U.S. Attorney General and U.S. Senator

SEPTA would like to thank the following exhibitors at our recent Summer/Track Out Resource Program

Camp Grace: Raleigh & Apex YMCA locations, www.asmallmiracleinc.com/camp_grace.html

Camp Sunshine at WeeCamp: Fuquay-Varina (919) 552-9586, www.fvbaptist.org/edu/weecare.php

Center for Student Success: Durham, (919) 680-8921, www.success-in-mind.org

Genesis After school Care and Tutoring: Raleigh, (919) 832-1649 x319

Raleigh Little Theatre Youth Program: Raleigh, (919) 821-4579 x 235, www.raleighlittletheatre.org

Raleigh Parks & Rec. Special Programs: Raleigh, (919) 807-540,1 www.parks.raleighnc.gov

Rytham & Rehab, the CAT Club: Raleigh, (919) 961-2605 www.rhythmandrehab.org

SOAR, Inc ADHD Camp, Balsam, NC, (828) 456-3435, www.soarnc.org

Southeast Family Services, Raleigh, (919) 783-8846, www.southeastfamilyservices.com

The Clubhouse @ Bright Horizons, Cary, (919) 380-2003, www.brighthorizons.com/clubhouse

In any case, the winds continue to push all of us toward change. Redistricting, mandatory year-round, elimination of CC classrooms, the movement towards two tracks in special ed (Standard Course of Study and non) in classrooms, etc, etc...

I, for one, would like to keep on top of how the wind is blowing. One way is to keep up with the news, another is to keep up with SEPTA and you can also come to our meeting on March 20th and hear Bob Sturey, Director of Special Education Services for WCPSS, give his "State of Special Ed Services" address.

Come, hear what plans are in the works for our kids and dig in to make a difference for all.

Leslie Welch
President
Wake SEPTA

In Our Community

FSN & SEPTA Present: *Goodbye Early Intervention: Hello Preschool.* March 13, 7-9pm. Project Enlightenment, 501 South Boylan Avenue, Raleigh. Contact [Rene Morrison](mailto:Rene.Morrison@WakeSEPTA.org) to preregister (event is free) 919-662-4600 x257.

Holland Tour Group Meeting: *Sensory Integration/Apraxia/Dispraxia; What Are They?* March 18th, 6:30-9pm. Brooks Avenue Church of Christ, 700 Brooks Avenue, Raleigh. Contact [Sara](mailto:Sara@WakeSEPTA.org) at 919-662-4600 x257 for more information and childcare options.

SEPTA Presents: Bob Sturey, WCPSS Dir of Special Education Services: *The Status of our Schools — an Update.* March 20th, 7pm, Nationwide Insurance, 4401 Creedmoor Road, Raleigh. For more information go to www.WakeSEPTA.org or call 788-2500.

WrightsLaw Conference: September 18th
Cosponsored by Wake SEPTA, The Triangle Down Syndrome Network and the NC Chapter of the International Dyslexia Association. To have your name put on the mailing list for this event, send an email to WrightsLaw_Conference@WakeSEPTA.org.

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