



**Wake SEPTA
Newsletter
Volume 4,
Issue 6
April 2009**

**SEPTA is a
district-wide PTA that
connects parents and
educators of children
receiving special edu-
cation 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
Join & Pay Online
Using PayPal**

Spring?

My calendar says that it is spring. However, looking out my window today, I am beginning to wonder if I need to move even further south to actually experience it this year, and boy do I feel like I *need* it this year more than ever!

Spring is always such a welcome change. We see neighbors who have been holed up in their houses for months, flowers bloom and, at least for me, I feel lighter and ready to face the world again. Good timing this year because with the recent economy, I haven't much felt like coming out of my hole yet.

Which brings me to a very unsavory topic: the economy. As we all collectively hold our breaths waiting for something...anything...to improve, I read no less than 3 articles in this morning's News and Observer about Wake County schools. Two more teacher work days a year, early release once a week, eliminating the long-term suspension programs, converting year-round schools to traditional calendars — nearly all of it comes down to money and the economy.

If we don't think that this budget squeeze is going to affect our children receiving special education services, we ARE still living in our winter holes. Although legally the schools can not alter services for our children because of cost, I am positive the ramifications will be felt in other ways.

There is no cap on our specialist's case loads. With regular education class sizes potentially increasing, what will stop our self-contained classes from enlarging as well? I know some people are hanging their hats on the stimulus money for education. According to some Wake County administrators, that money comes with strings. If you can't sustain the funding after 2 years on your own, you can't use it for that purpose. In that person's mind, this meant that you cannot spend it on teacher salaries. And, this is only the tip of the iceberg.

What this says to me is that we all need to stay on top of our children's services and IEPs and that now, more than ever, SEPTA needs to be at the forefront in making sure that our collective voices are well heard and represented to those who create policies and services.

What can you do? First and foremost, educate yourself. Attend our April meeting where WCPSS, Legal and Compliance Staff, present on IEPs in Wake County — or as Bob Sturey put it “the Wakinization” of IEPs. That meeting is on April 16th at 6:30 pm. Learn the process behind IEPs in Wake County and how that pertains to your child.

What else? Volunteer to help SEPTA. We understand that you are overwhelmed at home, I understand that every day is a struggle and there is

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too much to do and not enough time and resources...but we need you. Without the few new folks who have stepped up to run for the 09-10 SEPTA board of directors, we very nearly DID NOT HAVE A SEPTA AT ALL after this spring.

Most of what we do for SEPTA, we do from home. Just to give you an idea of what you could do here is a short list:

- Assist in putting on one of our monthly meetings. Is there a topic that interests you? Make a few calls or emails and help get a speaker or two lined up. We have the topics, location and dates already, speakers bring their own handouts and presentations, and all we need is your help!
- Assemble a newsletter. Work with the board to put together our bi-monthly newsletter. You can design it (we use publisher), gather people for an assembly "party" (this only happens when we have the budget for a mass distribution) and then just make sure our web person gets it online. Be involved in all or part of this process.
- Manage the website. We have a great volunteer who handles anything design-wise or difficult. But maintaining the calendar and uploading the newsletter PDF files is fairly simple if you have a little website experience.
- Check the SEPTA answering machine and return calls. We probably get a handful of calls a week, for the most part you are routing information to other folks and we do all of that electronically from the comfort of your own home.
- More adventurous? Chair a committee. We have always been in need of a legislative committee or an actual communications committee. Still, most of this is a from-home job.
- Join the board. There will still be at least one vacant spot this spring and someone needs to fill it. We don't bite and it is a great way to get out of the house once in while!

But most of all --- COME TO THE APRIL 16TH SEPTA MEETING! Even if you are an old hand at IEPs, this presentation by Wake County should help you ease your next meeting and get everyone on the same page, plus we are having officer elections that night as well so we need you there to make quorum!

I really hope to see everyone at the April meeting. This would be a very bad time for SEPTA to fail. We need to stand strong as a group -- and, on a personal note, I am looking forward to getting out of my winter hole for an evening and enjoying spring.

Leslie Welch
President
Wake SEPTA



What if you were unable to speak for your child in an emergency?

SEPTA is offering window clings for your home or car that alert emergency personnel that an occupant might not be able to respond to verbal commands.

We offer these clings for sale at our meetings at a cost of \$3 each or 2 for \$5. Online, because of payment processing fees and mailing costs, they are offered at \$4 each or 3 for \$10.

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SEPTA Calendar

General Meeting, Elections and IEP Presentation: WCPSS Legal and Compliance Department will be presenting on the process and fundamentals of IEPs in Wake County. General meeting and annual board elections will also be held. Begins at 6:30 pm, location below. Pre-registration is required at 919-788-2500, please leave your name and phone number.

SEPTA meetings are held in the Kresge Auditorium at the Cate Center on the campus of Meredith College, 3800 Hillsborough Street just inside the 440 beltline. See our [website](#) for a map and directions.
All SEPTA events are FREE and open to non-members. No childcare is provided.

In our Community

Spring Dance Sponsored by the Triangle Down Syndrome Network (TDSN) April 3, 2009, 7-9:30 pm at Jaycee Community Center, 2405 Wade Avenue, Raleigh. For all students with special needs ages 12 and over. Free. Refreshments will be provided. For more information contact Paula Goldberg at 605-6365 or pgoldberg@cbc-raleigh.com.

Accessing Disability Services Triangle Down Syndrome Network Support Group Meeting. April 4, 2009, 10am-noon, Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church. 4415 Pleasant Grove Church Road, Raleigh. Suzanne Goerger of Wake County Developmental Disability Services will demystify the process of getting services for your child. For more information contact Leigh Menconi (919) 788-3646 or leigh@triangledownsyndrome.org

Wake County Cerebral Palsy Support Group April 14, 2009, 7pm. Michael Dean's Restaurant, Falls of Neuse, Raleigh. For more information contact Rachel Pack (919) 319-0286 or rapack29@aol.com

Annual Spring Carnival for Children with Special Needs and their Families April 18, 2009 11am –2pm. Brooks Avenue Church of Christ, 700 Brooks Avenue, Raleigh. Free. Fun and games, food, petty zoo, crafts, prizes, music and entertainment. For more information contact Brooks Avenue Church of Christ at (919) 821-2400 or www.brooks.org

Autism Society of NC, Newly Diagnosed Workshop April 28, 2009, 10am-noon. For Parents of children that have been recently diagnosed with Autism. Autism Society of NC, 505 Oberlin road, Suite 230, Raleigh. Registration is required. Childcare not available. For more information or to register contact Lisa Townsend at (919) 743-0204 x 36 or ltownsend@autismsociety-nc.org.

Autism Society of NC, Journey to Adulthood Workshop May 4, 2009, 6:30-9pm. Preparing children with autism for the transition from high school to life as an adult. Autism Society of NC, 505 Oberlin Road, Suite 230, Raleigh. Child care not available. Register in advance, seating is limited. For more information contact Linda Griffin (919) 743-0204 x35.



First
Class
Postage
Required

PO Box 19472
Raleigh, NC 27619
919/788-2500
www.WakeSEPTA.org

Save the Date!

THE "WAKE-INIZATION OF IEPs" WORKSHOP PRESENTED BY WCPSS LEGAL & COMPLIANCE

Meredith College, Kresge Auditorium, Cate Center
Thursday, April 16, 2009, 6:30pm-9:00pm

This event is FREE and open to non-members but
pre-registration is required.

Call 919-788-2500 and leave a message with your name and phone number.