

Welcome to Fairfield SEPTA

Membership and sign up for activities!

<https://fairfieldsepta.membershiptoolkit.com>

Check out our website: <https://fairfieldsepta.org>



Fairfield Special Education PTA, Inc.

Agenda

March 31, 2021

- *Call to order*
- **SEPTA updates**
 - General resources – Christy Vitale
 - Fundraising update – Emily Luske
 - FairfieldCountyGivingDay raised \$855 in single-day!
 - Nominating committee [update](#) – Tracy Pechkis
- **SEPTA Scholarship Update** – Chris Librandi and Ken Brachfeld
 - High School seniors, Deadline May 7
- **Special Ed Dept Report** – Rob Mancusi
- **Meet and Greet** – Zoe Dolan, Elementary Special Education Coordinator
- **Save the Date: April SEPTA Meeting**
 - April 28, 7:30 pm
 - **Making Time for Self-Care:** Our friends at Inspire Inc will present ideas and strategies to help busy, special needs families prioritize self-care to improve overall care



Resources & Activities

- Adaptive Recreation
 - The **Special Summer Playground Program** is for any child enrolled in a Fairfield Public School *Special Education* Program. Daily activities include quiet and active games, arts and crafts, movies, exercise and on-site special events. The program takes place at Burr School in air-conditioned classrooms, site subject to change.
 - Any questions regarding the Special Playground program can be addressed to Kathy Morehouse kmorehouse@fairfieldschools.org
 - Registration and details at: [Fairfield Parks & Recreation - Adaptive - Special Playground \(fairfieldct.org\)](#)
 - Volunteer Coach needed for **Challenger Soccer**
 - For information, contact Chelsea Seres, Recreation Coordinator, Town of Fairfield (CSeres@fairfieldct.org)



SEPTA Roles and Responsibilities

| Executive Committee | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| President | Coordinate the work of the officers and committees to ensure that the mission and responsibilities of SEPTA are met |
| President-Elect | Watch and see! This is a learning role. Will fill in for the President if he/she cannot attend |
| 1st Co-VP Fundraising | Coordinate fundraising efforts, support efforts of the collective executive committee and board |
| 2nd VP Membership | Coordinate active membership campaign with board support, track and maintain via Membership Toolkit |
| Secretary | Accurately record and prepare the minutes of all PTA business at membership and board meetings and maintenance of business correspondence |
| Treasurer | Keep accurate financial records of all PTA gross income, receipts and disbursements |
| Treasurer-Elect | Assist the Treasurer in his/her duties. learn the Role! |
| Administrative Adviser | Liaison on behalf of district to provide support and encourage active communication |
| Board of Directors | |
| Past President | Advise the incoming leadership, function as Nominating Committee Chair |
| Past Treasurer | Support to incoming treasurer |
| Programming Chair | plan and coordinate programs across membership to include parent as well as student activities |
| Communications Chair (star) | Coordinate communications including social media and bi-monthly newsletter |
| Parent Resources Chair | Coordinate parent-focused resources and oversee SEPTA resource recommendations |
| PTA Council Representative | Liaise on behalf of SEPTA with PTAC, attend meetings and coordinate shared activities |
| Board of Ed. Representative | Listen and report back goings on at BOE |
| Ed. Budget Representative | Listen and report back goings on at BOE and BOF |
| Early Childhood Center Rep | Coordinate information event b/t SEPTA and the ECC |
| Grants Chair | Coordinate committee to oversee grant application and delivery process |
| Committees | |
| Webmaster | Know a little word press? Help keep www.fairfieldSEPTA.org up to date |
| Volunteer Coordinator | Help reach out to the SEPTA community to staff/run in person events or fundraisers |
| Diversity Day | Connect SEPTA diversity goals with elementary Diversity Day efforts |
| Sunshine | When someone needs a little SEPTA love, help to send a little something to let them know we are thinking of them |



SEPTA 2020-2021

| EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE | |
|---|------------------|
| President | Christy Vitale* |
| President-Elect | OPEN |
| 1st Co-VP Fundraising | Emily Lusk |
| 2nd VP Membership | OPEN |
| Secretary | Kelly McWinnie |
| Treasurer | Katia Garin* |
| Treasurer-Elect | OPEN |
| Administrative Adviser | Rob Mancusi |
| All Elected Officers Listed Above. *indicates mid-term | |
| BOARD OF DIRECTORS | |
| Past President | Tracy Pechkis |
| Past Treasurer | |
| Programming Chair | Emily Lusk |
| Communications Chair (star) | OPEN |
| Parent Resources Chair | Scott Andraesen |
| PTA Council Representative | Tracy Pechkis |
| Board of Ed. Representative | Trisha Pytko |
| Ed. Budget Representative | Bonnie Rotelli |
| Early Childhood Center Rep | Jerrian Mitchell |
| Grants Chair | Kathleen Dunn |

| STANDING COMMITTEES | |
|--|-----------------|
| Webmaster | Scott Andraesen |
| Volunteer Coordinator | |
| Diversity Day | |
| Sunshine | Maria Piccolo |
| Hospitality | |
| FOS Award | Bonnie Newman |
| Parks & Rec (town activities / events) | |
| Gifted & Talented Rep. | |

SEPTA Scholarship Fund

2021 Deadline: May 7

Contact your high school counselor or Chris Librandi at CLIBRANDI@fairfieldschools.org

Organizing Principles

1. The SEPTA Scholarships are awarded each June to deserving Fairfield Special Education students. These students have spent all or part of their schooling in the Special Education Department. The Scholarship monies are intended to help students with the costs of higher education.
2. Eligible students may submit an application for Scholarship to the SEPTA Scholarship Committee. The committee includes members of SEPTA and representatives from the Special Education Department at each High School.
3. The Scholarship decisions are based on objective and subjective criteria.
 - a. Objective criteria include academic performance, school activities, sports, clubs, after-school activities, jobs.
 - b. Subjective criteria include multiple essays, teacher recommendations, interviews.
4. The SEPTA Scholarship is a one-time award. Students are monitored on an on-going basis by members of the Fairfield Special Education Department.
5. No special consideration is given to students or their families that have any connection to the Fairfield SEPTA organization.



FPS Special Education Report

Rob Mancusi, Director Special Education

- Update on return to full day class schedules
- Update on district plans for ESY
- Update on status of contract bid for OT/PT services for Fairfield Public Schools
 - Next steps

Meet Zoe Dolan

- Elementary School Coordinator, K-5



Zoe Dolan

Elementary School Coordinator, K-5

- Welcome to Zoe is currently the Pre-K – grade 5 special education coordinator for the North Haven Schools. She has served in her present position since October 2016. Prior to her time in North Haven Zoe served as the grades 3 – 5 Special Education Department Head in the Wallingford Public Schools from August 2012 – October 2016. Prior to entering special education administration Zoe was a special education teacher in the Rocky Hill Public School.
- Zoe has experience in special education program oversight with students with complex learning needs as well as with students with social, emotional and behavioral challenges, and students with significant learning disabilities. She has a bachelor degree in special education, a masters degree in reading and a sixth-year degree in Educational Leadership. We look forward to Zoe joining the special education department on March 15 and successfully serving our elementary students with disabilities and their families.



BACKUP

SPEd Team
SEPTA Reps



SPED Team

- Welcome Rob Mancusi, Director of Special Education, and the Fairfield SPED Coordinator Team

Rob Mancusi

Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services
rmancusi@fairfieldschools.org

Mary Ellen Betzler

Coordinator of High School
Special Education (Ward)
MBetzler@fairfieldschools.org

HS

Chantelle Palumbo

Coordinator of High School
Special Education (Ludlowe)
cpalumbo@fairfieldschools.org

HS

Amanda Kirik

Special Education Coordinator,
Walter Fitzgerald Campus and CPP
akirik@fairfieldschools.org

HS

Kristin Bruno

Coordinator ECC
kbruno@fairfieldschools.org

Pre-K

Zoe Dolan

Coordinator of Elementary
Special Education
LSCHWARTZ@fairfieldschools.org

Ele: K-5

Jon Goodison

Coordinator of Middle School
Special Education
jgoodison@fairfieldschools.org

Mid: 6-8





SEPTA

Fairfield Special Education PTA, Inc.



- **Fairfield SEPTA is an independent PTA representing students, parents, and teachers across the 18 schools in Fairfield who share an interest in Special Education**



- **Improve** access to social and educational activities and resources for all students, especially those who learn differently



- **Educate** and connect parents to support resources, workshops, and other parents



- **Sponsor** and create adaptive programs and events, many free for member's students (and their families)



- **Support** professional development and new ideas for teachers in classrooms through the SEPTA grant program

Visit us online at: <https://fairfieldsepta.org/> OR Reachout to your school SEPTA Rep!

SEPTA Reps

Pre-K

Early Childhood Center (ECC)

Parent –
Teacher – Jerrann Mitchell

RLA

Remote Learning Academy

Parent – Wendy Papageorge
Teacher –

Elementary

Dwight
Parent – Kelcey King
Teacher – Laura Webster (TBC)

Mill Hill
Parent –
Teacher –

Riverfield
Parent –
Teacher –

Sherman
Parent – Katia Garin
Teacher – Lauren Ward

Elementary

Holland Hill
Parent –
Teacher – Brie Roberts (TBC)

Osborn Hill
Parent – Laura King
Teacher –

Jennings
Parent – Cynthia Rodriguez
Teacher – Steven Udal

North Stratfield
Parent – Katie Flynn (TBC)
Teacher –

Elementary

Burr
Parent – Trisha Pytko
Teacher –

McKinley
Parent – Erik Hayden
Teacher –

Stratfield
Parent – Meg Ryan
Teacher – Jennifer Tinelli-Biondo

Middle

Roger Ludlowe Middle School

Parent – Ann Asher
Teacher – Kim Mullen (TBC)

Middle

Fairfield Woods Middle School

Parent – Susana de Moura
Teacher – Nancy Winstead

Middle

Tomlinson Middle School

Parent – Bonnie Rotelli
Teacher –

HS

Fairfield Warde

Parent – Kelly Takacs
Teacher –

HS

Fairfield Ludlowe

Parent – Maria Piccolo
Teacher –

HS

Walter Fitzgerald Campus

Parent –
Teacher –

HS

Community Partnership Program

Parent –
Teacher –



As of October 15, 2020. Contact Scott Andreason (scottandreason@hotmail.com) to learn more about how to represent SEPTA at your school!



The Role of the SEPTA Rep

It is Fairfield SEPTA's goal to **improve access and information sharing** across the 18 schools in district, that each school should have **2 SEPTA representatives: 1 parent and 1 teacher**

Responsibilities

- **Be (or Become) a SEPTA member**
- **Be Involved:** Attend a minimum of 2 SEPTA meetings each year and introduce yourself to the current Board to encourage information sharing and relationship building
- **Be Aware:** Know what SEPTA offers and be aware of events and priorities for the year, direct parents or staff to SEPTA website (<https://fairfieldsepta.org/>) or to board members based on questions
- **Be a Facilitator:**
 - Your name is available at a school-based level to the local parent population via PTA website and/or SEPTA website
 - Proactively engage with school principal/social worker etc. Introduce yourself and encourage they share your contact information with ALL families with an IEP/504 (or as appropriate)
 - If appropriate, share your details directly with SPED department teachers (liaising with the School's Staff SEPTA rep is key) and introduce yourself to parents
 - Encourage local PTA in development of Diversity Day material and promote SEPTA's Diversity Day Grant program (available to each elementary school)
 - Ensure that your school's website has active and easily identified link(s) to SEPTA website
- **Staff Rep (specific):**
 - Refer families to SEPTA or to the school parent SEPTA rep, encourage relationship building, and share information about navigating the school and finding resources
 - Share information about SEPTA resources with school-wide staff via staff meetings, encourage staff to refer families to you for information about SEPTA
 - Share information with SEPTA on challenges or programs that you think SEPTA might be able to support, implement, or problem-solve
- **Be a Communicator:** Disseminate information about SEPTA events, meetings etc with home school via local PTA blasts/meetings. Proactively report to the SEPTA Parent Resources committee and the board about *innovative ways your school has included our population* of different learners so we can idea-share across schools
- **Be friendly!** Engage parents/teachers by speaking positively about the school, the district, and the programs SEPTA offers. Answer questions based on your experience and direct parents to resources for broader information. **We do not expect you to have all the answers, but to be open minded and inviting, demonstrating the camaraderie we believe SEPTA can offer to parents**
- **By being involved** we hope you will not only encourage membership and resources but also work with reps across the district to brainstorm ways to encourage and facilitate improved access to traditional PTA events for your special education population

Email SEPTA Parent Resources (scottandreasen@hotmail.com) or info@fairfieldsepta.org with questions about being your school's SEPTA Rep!

