February News. Coming to your inbox in February: we will be emailing a confidential survey to assess parents’ feelings about special education in the Concord-Carlisle region and identify areas that we can work together to improve.

In other news, beginning in the 2017 academic year, the Concord Preschool may be discontinuing the integrated preschool model and become a special education program only. For questions or comments about this, please contact the Director of Special Education, Jessica Murphy (jmurphy@concordps.org).

Did you know? Your child may be entitled to support during non-academic activities, such as recess under Present Levels of Educational Performance B of the IEP. See below to read about the importance of recess support for children with social challenges.


Do you have a child on the autism spectrum or with other social challenges? Do you wonder whether your child should be supported on the playground during recess? Recent studies examining social interactions on the playground in children with the autism spectrum suggest that adult support may be needed to ensure that children are fully engaged during unstructured recess time. In one study* published in the journal Autism, researchers found that elementary school children on the autism spectrum spent less time engaged than their typical peers. Children on the spectrum spent 30% of their time engaged in solitary activities relative to 9% of the time spent by their peers. In addition, while their peers engaged in reciprocal social interactions 70% of the time, children on the spectrum only spent 40% of their time engaged in these social interactions. In addition, another study** found that adult intervention increased children’s engagement with other peers on the playground but this benefit went away when the intervention was removed. These studies suggest that it is important to monitor children who have social challenges during these non-academic times to ensure that they are able to make use of the recess time to interact with their peers and be engaged. After an intervention, social gains should continue to be monitored if adult support is removed to ensure an appropriate level of engagement is maintained.


**Kretzmann et al. (2015). Improving peer engagement of children with autism on the school playground: A Randomized Controlled Trial. doi: 10.1016/j.beth.2014.03.006

Upcoming Events. We hope to see you at our future events!

The next SEPAC meeting will be held on Friday, February 5th, from 12:30-2PM in the Concord Free Public Library. All SEPAC meetings are open to the public. We encourage parents and caregivers of children on IEPs, receiving accommodations (e.g., 504 plan), or with any medical or special need to attend.

If you are a parent or guardian of a child with an out-of-district placement, please join us for our monthly informal networking group. Our next get-together will be on February 25th, from 7-9PM, at Trail’s End Café. We hope to see you there!

Please visit our website (www.concordsepac.org) for a list of our upcoming meetings and agendas, previous meeting minutes, and helpful resources.

CONNECT WITH US

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UPCOMING EVENTS

February 5: SEPAC Meeting
12:30-2 P.M.
Concord Free Public Library

February 25: Out-of-District Networking Group
7-9 P.M.
Trail’s End Café

For questions, comments, or ideas for future newsletters, please email concordsepac@gmail.com.