



**EAST PROVIDENCE LOCAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2008-2009**

## **East Providence School Committee Members**

Anthony Carcieri, Chairperson  
Steven Santos, Vice Chairperson  
Robert Faria, Vice Chairperson  
Shannon Barbosa, Clerk  
Luisa Abatecola

## **East Providence School Department Administration**

Dr. Mario Cirillo, Superintendent  
Lonnie Barham, Chief Operating Officer  
Edward Daft, Assistant Superintendent Education Services  
Caroline Caswell Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent Curriculum  
Arlene Garrison, Director of Pupil Personnel Services  
BJ DeCrescenzo, Director of Special Education

# **East Providence Local Advisory Committee**

## **Annual Report 2008-2009**

### **Purpose**

To assist parents of special education children to be more knowledgeable and effective in their advocacy role by collaborating with the school department in its efforts to provide quality education and services to all students.

### **Membership List**

Laurie Brown, Co-Chairperson

Karen Rebello, Co-Chairperson

Richard Moore, Secretary

Sherry Hernandez

Paula Paiva

Gina Wallace

Carmen Monzon-Read

Margaret Furtado

Stephen Furtado

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The East Providence Local Advisory Committee provides the East Providence School Department policy guidance with respect to Special Education and related services for children with disabilities in the city.

The EPLAC advises the school department on matters concerning: (a) the unmet educational needs of children with disabilities; (b) comment on findings identified in school support plans under Part B of IDEA; (c) comment on developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities. Our committee follows the state mandate, which is spelled out in the Department of Education regulation 300.900.

Membership of the committee is composed of individuals involved in or concerned with the education of children with disabilities. Parents of children with disabilities maintain the majority of the committee membership. To the extent feasible the membership also includes an individual with a disability, a special education teacher, a general education teacher, a public school administrator or any other member of the community at the discretion of the Committee and the East Providence School Committee.

The EPLAC meets monthly from August through May from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM.

### **2009/2010 Schedule of Meetings**

Location: Room 306 East Providence City Hall

Wednesday, August 26

Wednesday, September 30

Wednesday, October 28

Wednesday, December 2  
(Delayed 1 week due to Thanksgiving)

Wednesday, January 27, 2010

Wednesday, February 24

Wednesday, March 31

Wednesday, April 28

Wednesday, May 26

All meeting times are 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm.

## Message from the Chairs

The 2008-2009 school year has been a very productive year for the EPLAC. We started the Special Education Parent Liaison Program which provided us with a contact person in each school to distribute all pertinent information to parents and school personnel. This greatly improved communication between the committee and parents. Members also served on several school department committees such as the District Partnership Committee, Special Education Staffing Policy Committee and RIDE's Parent Survey Results Regional Work Session. This collaboration has strengthened the effectiveness of the committee.

On July 7, 2008, the school committee approved the school departments revised "Child Abuse and Neglect Policy". It clearly addressed what to do if abuse occurs on school department property by school department personnel. This was a successful conclusion to EPLAC's two-year initiative to get this policy revision.

EPLAC also provided 2 workshops this year that were beneficial to both parents and school personnel. They were "Individualized Education Program (IEP): A Blueprint for Success" and "Co-Teaching at the Middle School Level". We plan to increase the number of workshops available next year. The work of the committee is explained in greater detail in the Annual Report.

EPLAC introduced the First Annual Special Needs Recognition Program which identified those programs and individuals who have provided consistently outstanding services to advance the success of students with special needs by providing best practice in inclusive education. A Recognition Reception was held on June 4<sup>th</sup> at Martin Middle School where all the nominees were honored. It was our privilege sharing their stories with others and celebrating their commitment to the students of East Providence. Through their hard work and dedication, students were provided with opportunities that promote self-determination, interdependence and meaningful learning.

We would like to recognize the Highest Honor Program Winners:

- Hennessey Program:
  - Dena Tsonos-Resource Teacher
  - Erin Alves-Educational Specialist
  - Denise Dragon-Teacher Assistant
- Gail Ramos- Meadowcrest-Special Education Teacher
- Beth Studley-Oldham-Teacher Assistant
- Lorna Swearlingen-EPHS-Social Worker
- Victoria Jessop-Meadowcrest- Parent

An area of importance that EPLAC will continue to advise the district on is inclusion, especially concerning the new Bradley Partnership Program. As we know education is the key to developing an attitude of inclusion. The practice of inclusion provides the model of acceptance, belonging, participation, worth and dignity. Professional Development is another area of importance. We feel training will be the key to successful inclusion and our committee has already scheduled workshops for the next school year to assist in this area. We also plan to do a parent survey in December 2009 to aid the committee in advising the district in areas of need concerning the education of special need students. We feel this will be a valuable tool for both the committee and the district.

In closing, Karen and I would like to thank Arlene Garrison for her continued support, which has been a vital part of our committees' success this year. We would also like to recognize the school committee

members, especially Robert Faria, Steve Santos and Luisa Abatecola for their attendance at our monthly meetings and workshops. We'd also like to thank all the EPLAC members and welcome any new members to join us next year.

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Laurie Brown EPLAC Co-Chair

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Date

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Karen Rebello EPLAC Co-Chair

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Date

## **Annual Goals 2009/2010**

- ❖ Increase membership to the local advisory committee by increasing collaboration, notification and individual school participation in support of children with special needs.
- ❖ Support professional development for teachers and Para-Professionals including but not limited to Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS), Positive Education Partnerships (PEP), Collaborative Teaching and Inclusion.
- ❖ Revisit recommendations from RIDE's May 2007 School Support Visit to ensure that the necessary changes have occurred within the recommended timeline.
- ❖ Collaborate with school administration on how "Stimulus Funds" in relation to IDEA will be utilized.
- ❖ Development and distribution of parent survey to provide specific information on how to better support the needs of students and their families.

## **Yearly Review**

To increase meeting participation and become a more diverse committee, EPLAC started the Special Education Parent Liaison Program. In September 2008, we sent out letters to each school asking for volunteers to assist our committee in distributing information to parents. We asked each school for one representative who would be the contact person to distribute all monthly meeting notices/agendas and workshop announcements to parents and school personnel. The liaisons were instrumental in improving communication to parents and in turn improving meeting and workshop attendance. At the March EPLAC meeting, we also had a Parent Liaison Appreciation Night in which we thanked all the liaisons for all their hard work and discussed additional ways to improve communication.

EPLAC Committee members participated with East Providence School officials and served on several school department committees such as the District Partnership Committee, which focused on the development of embedded classroom programs in partnership with Bradley Hospital. A member also served on the Special Education Staffing Policy Committee which is currently setting the policy for the Special Education Staffing Plan that will ensure that appropriate personnel are available to deliver the services and instruction required to fully implement each student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan) and provide FAPE (free and appropriate public education) in the LRE (least restrictive environment). We also participated in RIDE's (Rhode Department of Education) Parent Survey Results Regional Work Session which took place at East Bay Educational Collaborative. RIDE reviewed the statewide results as well as each district's performance and then we set goals on how to increase parent participation.

EPLAC offered 2 workshops this year that were available to both parents and school personnel. The first workshop "Individualized Education Plan(IEP): A Blueprint for Success" was presented by Rhode Island Parent Information Network and provided an overview of the major components of the IEP as well as a step by step walkthrough of RI's newly designed IEP form for students ages 3-13. The second workshop "Co-Teaching at the Middle School Level" was presented by Linda Martin from the East Bay Collaborative and BJ Crescenzo, Director of Special Education. This workshop provided information about the current Co-Teaching Model at the middle school level as well as specific program models from Riverside and Martin Middle Schools. Both workshops were well received with good attendance.

EPLAC introduced the First Annual Special Needs Recognition Program. This program was designed to identify those individuals or programs that are providing consistently outstanding services to advance the success of students with special needs by providing best practice in inclusive education. In January 2009, the Recognition Program letter and nomination forms were sent out to each school to be distributed to all school personnel and parents. We received 18 nominations and 7 winners were chosen and honored at an Awards Reception held on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Martin Middle School.

**EAST PROVIDENCE LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**MEMBERSHIP LIST AS OF 6/09/08**

<p>Laurie Brown, Co-Chair/2007-2009 6/13/08 18 Yale Avenue Riverside, RI 02915 (401) 497-0470 Sbrown8025@verizon.net</p>	<p>Parent  Waddington</p>	<p>Appointed:  Ends: 12/31/11</p>
<p>Karen Rebello, Co-Chair/2007-2009 6/13/08 54 Woodland Avenue 06/13/11 East Providence, RI 02914 (401) 578-7476 krebello@epschoolsri.com</p>	<p>Special Ed  Teacher  at Orlo</p>	<p>Appointed:  Ends:</p>
<p>Richard Moore, Secretary/ 2008-2009 Parent 6/13/08</p>		<p>Appointed:</p>

41 Cadorna Street  
06/13/11  
East Providence, RI 02914  
(401) 438-4292  
mrallmoore@cs.com

EPHS

Ends:

Margaret Furtado  
6/13/08  
17 Mason Street  
East Providence, RI 02914  
(401) 431-2005  
ma22222@aol.com

Parent

Appointed:

EPHS

Ends: 06/13/11

Stephen Furtado  
6/13/08  
17 Mason Street  
East Providence, RI 02914  
(401) 431-2005  
saf1017@aol.com

Parent

Appointed:

EPHS

Ends: 06/13/11

Sherry Hernandez  
6/13/08  
206 Waterman Avenue  
East Providence, RI 02914  
(401) 435-4865  
sherodean@cox.net

Parent /Orlo

Appointed:

Special Ed  
Teacher

Ends: 06/13/11

Paula Paiva  
6/13/08  
72 Merritt Road  
Riverside, RI 02915  
(401) 258-7198  
papaiva16@aol.com

Special Ed

Appointed:

Teacher  
(retired)

Ends: 06/13/11

Gina Wallace 06/13/08 11 Dearborn Drive Riverside, RI 02915 (401) 437-2520 gbeanster@aol.com	Parent  Meeting Street -Waddington District	Appointed:  Ends: 06/13/11
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Carmen Monzon-Read 6/13/08 24 Hill Court 06/13/11 Rumford, RI 02916 (401) 489-7564 Monzon123@aol.com	Parent  Francis	Appointed:  Ends:
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The following member is on a temporary leave of absence:

Erin Tewksbury 6/13/08 69 Hope Street 06/13/11 Rumford, RI 02916 (401) 434-0339 Tewks6@cox.net	ABA Teacher  Parent  Francis	Appointed:  Ends:
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