

Tuesday, August 12, 2025



Reading Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

Summer is sadly almost over but we are so excited to welcome you back! In preparation for the new school year, you will find information on the following (*use links to jump ahead*):

- ★ [Popsicles in the Playground](#)
- ★ [Summer Patio Social](#)
- ★ [First Day of School](#)
- ★ [Back to School Nights](#)
- ★ [Team Chair Meet & Greet](#)
- ★ [Application for Family Leadership Program Series](#)
- ★ [SEPAC Business Meeting & Board Member Elections](#)
- ★ [Connected Reading Open House](#)
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- ★ [Visit the Student Services Website!](#)
- ★ [Contact Us](#)

★ Popsicles in the Playground

Aug 14 (Thu) 2-3:30pm @ Birch Meadow Elementary Playground

READING, MASSACHUSETTS



Popsicles in the Playground



Aug 14 (Thu) 2-3:30pm
Birch Meadow Elementary School Playground
27 Arthur B Lord Drive, Reading, MA 01867

SEPAC Website



Bring the family for an informal meetup at Birch Meadow's playground. The Reading Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) will provide popsicles and ice water to keep everyone cool.

Reading SEPAC | <https://sepac.reading.k12.ma.us/> | SEPACReading@gmail.com

Before school starts, bring the family for an informal meetup at Birch Meadow's playground. Reading SEPAC will provide popsicles and water to keep everyone cool. Drop in whenever you have time between 2-3:30pm. Hope to see you there!

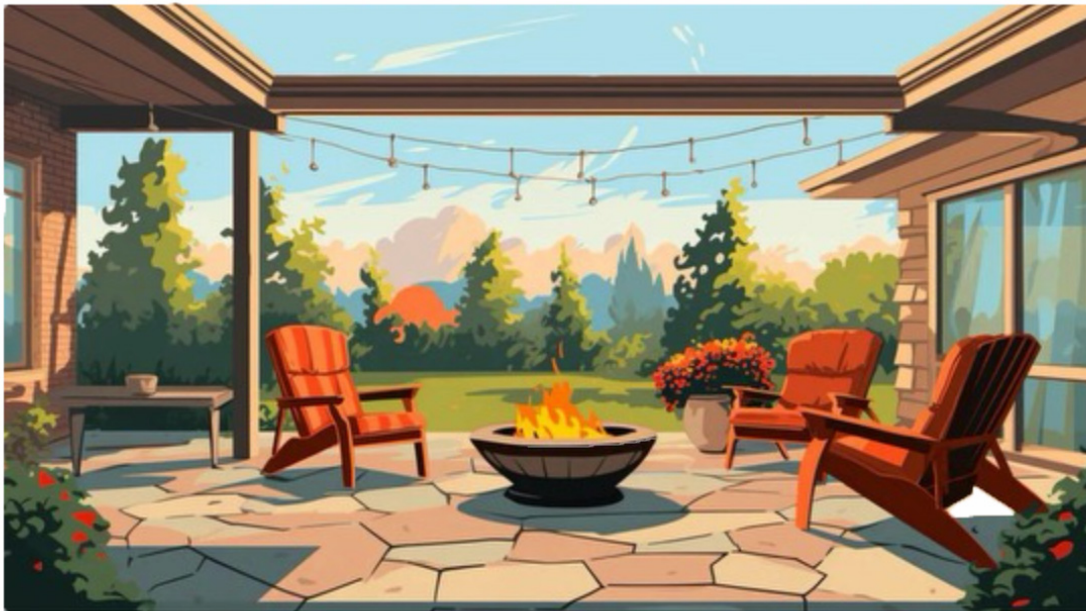
★ Summer Patio Social

Aug 21 (Thu) 6pm to Dusk @ Kiely Family's Backyard Patio

SEPAC BYOB Patio Social

Aug 21 (Thu) 6pm-Dusk

Join other SEPAC parents/caregivers for an impromptu *grownup* gathering at the Kiely family's backyard patio. Don't forget to spray for seasonal mosquitos. Email sepacreading@gmail.com for address.



For a grownup gathering before the end of summer, come join us for a patio social at the Kiely family's backyard. BYOB. Don't forget to spray for seasonal mosquitos. Email sepacreading@gmail.com for the address. Hope to see you there.

★ First Week of School

Aug 27 (Wed) First day of school for grades 1-12;

Sept 2 (Tue) First day of school for Pre-K to K (see note below on orientation dates)

Aug 29-Sept 1 (Fri-Mon) Labor Day; no school



Following are the official school start dates.

- Grades 1-12 official start date Wed, Aug 27
- Pre-K 30-min orientation Wed, Aug 27 or Thu, Aug 28 (notification will come from RISE)
- Kindergarten 2-hour orientation Wed, Aug 27 or Thu, Aug 28 (notification will come from your school/teacher)
- Pre-K to Kindergarten official start date Tue, Sept 2

Please note, during the first week of school there will only be 2-days in session. It is a very short week. There is **no school for everyone on the following dates:**

- Monday and Tuesday, Aug 25-26 (Teacher Inservice);
- Friday-Monday, Aug 29-Sept 1 (Labor Day weekend)

★ Back to School Nights

Sept 10, 11, 17, and 18, 11-1PM (Respective child's school; more details forthcoming)



Back to School Nights are afternoons & evenings for parents and guardians to meet their student's teachers and hear from their principal, PTO, and SEPAC. Please note, these events are usually adults only to minimize distractions during presentations. More details will be sent directly from your child's respective school.

★ Team Chair Meet & Greet

Sept 18 (Thu) In Person (more details forthcoming)



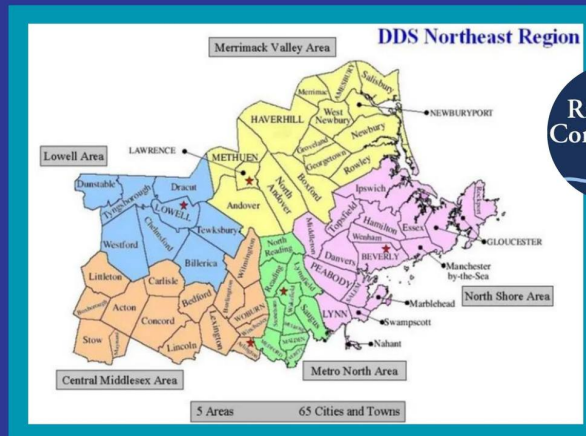
More details regarding an exciting opportunity to connect with the RPS Department of Student Services and Special Education are forthcoming. Relationship building helps form good partnerships, so we are excited to have this upcoming informal meet & greet opportunity again this year.

★ Application for Family Leadership Program Series

Sept 26 (Fri) Application Deadline (Apply Online)

Northeast, Southeast, and Central **Family Leadership Series Dates Announced**

(Stay tuned for announcements regarding Metro, West, and Statewide Virtual Series dates.)



Northeast conferences will be held at the Marriott in Peabody

Conference #1: November 7-8 In-person (Friday 9am - Saturday 4pm)

- December: 1-on-1 support (by appointment)

Conference #2: January 9-10 In-person (Friday 9am - Saturday 4pm)

- February: 1-on-1 support (by appointment)

Conference #3: March 6-7 In-person (Friday 9am - Saturday 4pm)

- March 21: Virtual with Central Family Leadership (9am-noon)
- April 11: Virtual with Central & Southeast Family Leadership (9am-noon)

Conference #4: May 1-2 In-person (Friday 9am - Saturday 4pm)

Become a Changemaker for Your Family and Community. For over 30 years, the Family Leadership Program has been the catalyst for parents of children and adults with disabilities to become powerful advocates. Graduates are more than just participants; they are changemakers who have expanded opportunities, forged partnerships, and driven real systems change.

What You Will Gain:

- **Become the leader you're meant to be:** Strengthen your voice, sharpen your advocacy, and learn to lead with vision.
- **Learn what works:** Discover proven strategies that support individuals and families in living fully and participating in every part of community life.

- **Create lasting bonds:** This series is for families by families. Connect with others who understand your journey and create lifelong friendships.
- **Balance advocacy with self-care:** Learn how to push for systems change while protecting your energy, honoring your story, and caring for your well-being.

Applications for the 2025-2026 Northeast Region Family Leadership Series are now **open until September 26**. Incoming cohorts must be ready to commit to attending a series of virtual and in-person meetings. For Reading residents which fall in the Northeast Region, this year in-person meetings will be held in Peabody. Complementary hotel overnight stay will be provided for in-person, 2-day events (Fri-Sun). Alternatively, for the all virtual program please visit the Family Leadership MA website for more details.

- Use this link to apply for the [In-person Family Leadership Series Application](#)
- See this website for an announcement of the [Statewide Virtual Leadership Series](#)

★ SEPAC Business Meeting & Board Member Elections

Oct 22 (Wed) online (more details forthcoming)



Topics for our next business meeting are forthcoming. In the meantime, **we are looking for fresh faces to join the SEPAC Board**. Here is a short list of what the SEPAC Board does behind the scenes to keep SEPAC running. **We welcome any nominees** who want to focus on even 1-2 of those tasks for the year.

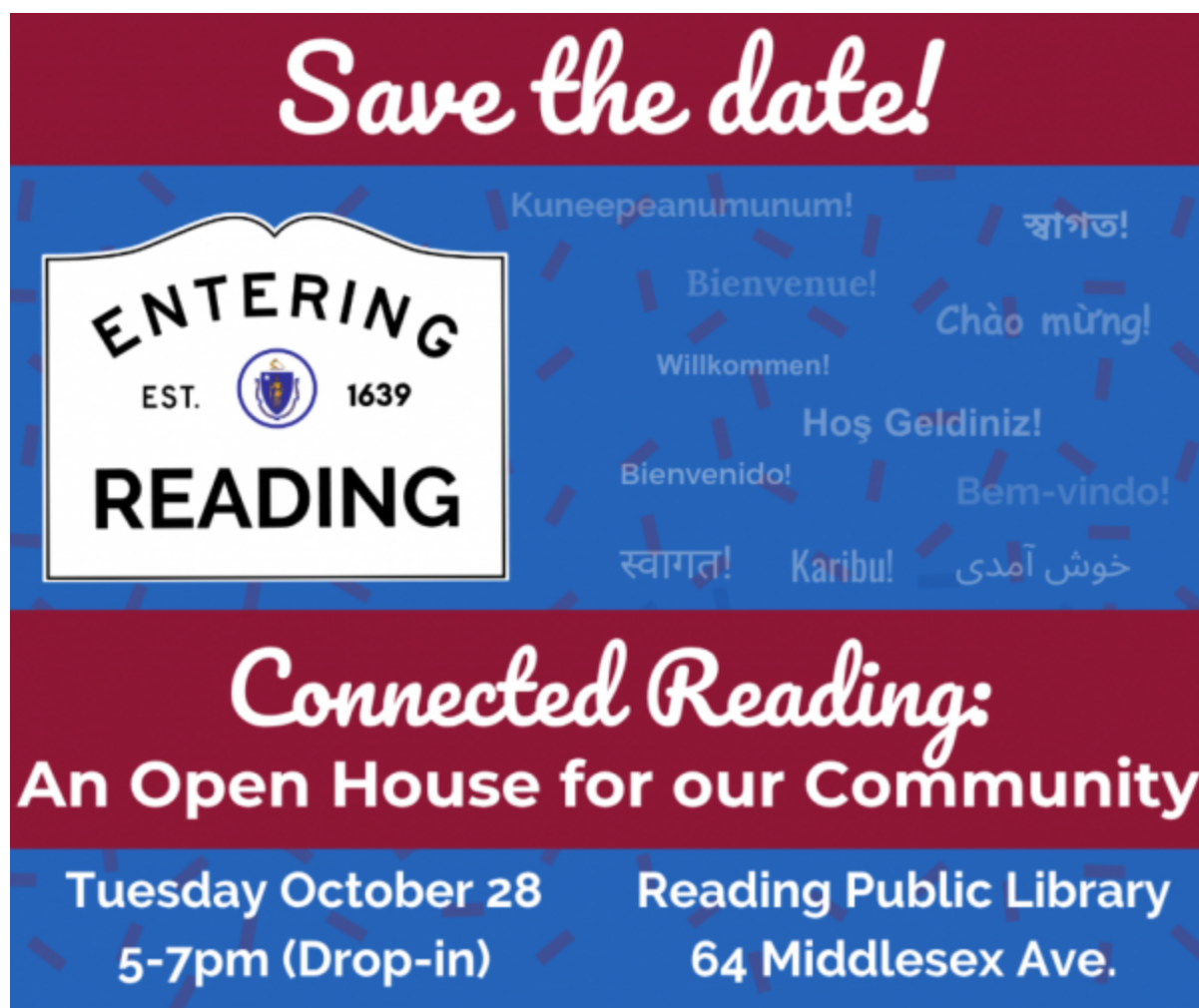
1. Create and distribute SEPAC newsletters
2. Create and submit district wide updates
3. Create flyers and information packets
4. Update our website and social media
5. Moderate webinars & introduce hosts
6. Schedule new workshops
7. Create and coordinate social gatherings
8. Monitor our group inbox and maintain our mailing list
9. Respond to questions or direct families to where they can get answers
10. Connect parents who are seeking other parents with children of similar needs
11. Collaborate with RPS, Student Services, METCO, PAIR, and other organizations
12. Advocate for the Reading SEPAC community

Nominate a Board Candidate: Please consider nominating yourself or a friend by sending us an email sepacreading@gmail.com.

Volunteer as an Election Coordinator: If anyone is available to help us coordinate our elections, we would really welcome your assistance. We need a volunteer to help us monitor SEPAC Board nominations and help run the elections on Oct 22 (Wed) at our next online Business Meeting. Send us an email if interested or [sign-up on our volunteer sheet](#).

Connected Reading Open House

Oct 28 (Tue) 5-7pm @ Reading Public Library



The Town of Reading is hosting a free Open House Reception for residents on Tuesday, October 28nd. This event has been previously referred to as the New Resident Open House, but this year the town wants you to know everyone is invited.

- Meet Representatives from town government and volunteer-led committees, schools, youth & faith-based groups, and community organizations
- Discover Reading's many resources, services, programs, and events.
- Enjoy refreshments and mingle with your neighbors!
- The first 50 attendees will receive a welcome bag filled with information and gifts from local businesses (one welcome bag per family)

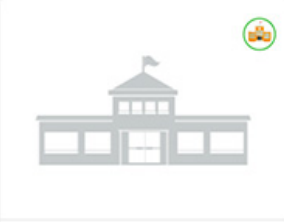
Reading's SEPAC will have a table at the event. Please swing by and say hello.

Use this link to [register for the Connected Reading Open House](#).

★ SEPAC Point Person (Liaison) Volunteers Needed

Volunteer liaisons needed for each school

School Liaisons for SEPAC Needed

 Alice M Barrows Grades K - 5 READING, MA	 Arthur W Coolidge Middle Grades 6 - 8 READING, MA	 Birch Meadow Grades K - 5 READING, MA	 Joshua Eaton Grades PreK - 5 READING, MA
 J Warren Killam Grades K - 5 READING, MA	 Reading Memorial High School Grades 9 - 12 READING, MA	 Reading Public Schools READING, MA	 RISE PreSchool Reading, MA
 Walter S Parker Middle Grades 6 - 8 READING, MA	 Wood End Elementary School Grades PreK - 5 READING, MA	We are in need of points of contact for each school in the Reading Public Schools district to serve as a liaison for SEPAC. These points of contact (POC or Point Persons) can help Reading SEPAC by keeping an eye out to ensure that the schools are sharing SEPAC's communication in their school newsletters and other forms of school communication (e.g. that the SEPAC section is not missing).	

If you are a new or existing volunteer able to be a liaison for your child's school for the 2025-2026 school year, please confirm your availability by registering with this QR link. Thank you for your support!





Example of checking if SEPAC's section is in a school newsletter

We are in need of points of contact for each school in our district to serve as a liaison for SEPAC. These points of contact (POC or Point Person) can help Reading SEPAC by keeping an eye out to ensure that the schools are sharing SEPAC's communication in their school newsletters and other forms of school communication.

If you are a new or existing volunteer able to be a liaison for your child's school for the 2025-2026 school year please [confirm your interest in being a liaison this year with this link](#). Thank you for your support!

★ **Mark Your Calendars!**



IMMUNIZATION
AWARENESS



SPINAL MUSCULAR
ATROPHY AWARENESS

Join us in continuing to celebrate

Aug Back to School, Immunization, MedicAlert,
and Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Month

Sept Blood Cancer, STXBP1, Pain, and
Suicide Prevention Awareness Month



BLOOD CANCER
AWARENESS



SUICIDE
PREVENTION

READING, MASSACHUSETTS



Save the Date 2025-2026 SEPAC Events & Reminders*

Summer 2025

Aug 14 (Thu) 2pm Popsicles in the Playground
Aug 21 (Thu) 6pm Reading Patio Social
Aug 29-Sept 1 (Fri-Mon) No School for Labor Day

Fall 2025

Sept 18 (Thu) Team Chair Meeting & Greet
Sept TBD SEPAC Presents at School Leadership
Oct TBD Fall Foliage Walk
Oct 22 (Wed) Business Meeting & Elections
Oct 28 (Tue) Connected Reading Open House
Nov SEPAC Awareness Month
Nov TBD (Thu) Movie Night

Winter 2025/2026

Dec 3 Day of Persons with Disabilities
Dec TBD Festival of Trees & Craft Session
Dec 10 Business Meeting & Executive Functioning
Feb TBD Transition to Middle School

Upcoming Socials!

Aug 14 Popsicles in the Playground
Aug 21 Patio Social

Spring 2026

Mar 4 (Wed) Wachusett Mountain Meetup
Mar 11 (Wed) Business Meeting
Mar TBD Transition to Adulthood
Apr Annual Survey
Apr TBD Neurodivergent Work Program
May 13 Business Meeting
May TBD SEPAC Presents at School Committee
May TBD METCO Boston Kite Festival

Summer 2026

June TBD Unified Sports
June TBD SEPAC End of Year Social
July/Aug Reading Popsicles in the Playground
July/Aug Reading Patio Social

**Please consider joining the SEPAC Board,
becoming a school liaison, or volunteering**



Nominate for Board



School Liaison Sign-up



Volunteer Sign-up

Guest Speakers TBD

Sara Ward, M.S. CCC/SLP
Lynn Lyons, LICSW
Federation for Children with Special Needs

**All dates/times/locations subject to change*

- 📌 Popsicles in the Playground, Aug 14 (Thu) 2-3:30pm
- 📌 Patio Social, Aug 21 (Thu) 6pm to dusk
- 📌 First Day of School Wednesday, Aug 27 (except kindergartners on Sept 2)
- 📌 No School for Labor Day Weekend on Aug 29-Sept 1 (Fri-Mon)
- 📌 Back to School Nights, Sept 10, 11, 17, and 18
- 📌 Family Leadership Program Open for Applications - Friday, Sept 26 Deadline
- 📌 Team Chair Meet & Greet - Wednesday, Sept 18 (Thu), 9am - Location TBD
- 📌 SEPAC Business Meeting and Elections - Oct 22 (Wed), 6pm

-  Connected Reading Open House - Oct 28 (Tue), 5-7pm
-  Fall Foliage Walk - Oct TBD

★ Past Events

Recorded events that are available on the [Reading SEPAC Website](#):

- Year End Business Meeting
- SEPAC Board Presentation to the School Committee
- New IEP Presentation
- School Transition Presentation
- Extended School Year (ESY) Presentation
- MCAS & Students with Disabilities Presentation
- Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) Presentation

★ Additional Resources and Opportunities

Follow us on [Facebook](#) for additional resources such as programs, webinars, recreation, etc. There are SO many opportunities! Here are some pertinent ones to highlight, but there are MANY more on Facebook:

- [The IEP for Home](#), a free monthly seminar put on by Tufts Children's Hospital. A general member wrote to us saying, "we have been attending virtually and it has changed our lives." First Wednesday of the month over the school year, 7:00 pm EST
<https://wellforce-hipaa.zoom.us/j/96786533105?pwd=OERPWkVvT2JSL1E5Ymw5OEcrVXRYUT09> Password: 12345
- A Parent's Guide to Special Education, written by the Federation for Children with Special Needs in collaboration with the [Massachusetts Department of Education](#), is available in several different formats and three languages: [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Portuguese](#).
- The [Federation for Children with Special Needs](#) hosts many Basic Rights workshops and other training opportunities for parents to educate themselves on the rights they have as the primary advocates for their children who require specialized education.
- The Bureau of Special Education Appeals offers Mediation and/or Facilitated Team Meetings. Click [here](#) for information.
- Click [here](#) for the School Committee's website. Meetings are open for attendance and are broadcast on RCTV (cable and Youtube). Following School Committee business is a good way to inform yourself about the current work being done at the central office level. [Click here to watch the recording of the Student Services / The Learning Center Review Update to the School Committee from Nov 30th.](#)

★ Visit the Student Services Website!

- Visit the [Student Services Website](#) for TONS of information, including updated Team Chair info.
- Student Services Administrators, Dr. Jennifer Stys and Allison Wright, offer office hours to provide time and space for families to connect with the District Student Services Department.
- If you have specific questions regarding the implementation of your student's IEP, services schedule or any specific questions about how they are doing, you should reach out to your student's case manager or Team Chairperson.
- If you have other questions or concerns regarding your student or if you have questions regarding the Special Education process, please utilize Student Services' office hour opportunities.

★ Contact Us

Contact Reading SEPAC

			
Email	Contact Form <i>(option to remain anonymous)</i>	Facebook Group	Website

Should you wish to reach out to Reading SEPAC, please use this [form](#) or email us at SEPACReading@gmail.com

Note: The form does not require your contact details, should you prefer to leave anonymous feedback.

Also, do not forget to follow us on [FaceBook](#) where we share additional information and opportunities.