

Lapeer County Intermediate School District Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) for Special Education



Newsletter for the Families of Children with Special Needs

Fall Edition
Sept./Oct. 2019
Issue: 1 of 3



"The strongest people are not those who show strength in front of us but those who win battles we know nothing about."
- Unknown

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lapeer County Intermediate School District Parent Advisory Committee is to promote partnerships among parents and educators that benefit students with disabilities.

PAC Representatives

ALMONT

Dawn Wedemeyer (586) 615-7858
Melissa Bordogna (586) 531-1591
Anne Wilson (586) 531-4330

DRYDEN

Melanie Starr (810) 895-6449

IMLAY CITY

Rachel Pratt (810) 721-0548
Denise Kipp (Rossen) (810) 721-1342
Heather Brown (810) 614-4746

LAPEER

Kim Hall (810) 664-4743
Debbie LeClaire (810) 656-1188
VACANCY

LAPEER COUNTY ISD

Regina Starr (810) 623-2041
Patricia Smith (586) 322-4576

NORTH BRANCH

Becky Baksa (989) 245-7308
VACANCY

CHATFIELD

Contact Lapeer County ISD

Feel Free to contact your local representative for assistance or questions.

NEW PAC REPRESENTATIVES

Anne Wilson (Almont)
Melissa Bordogna (Almont)
Patricia Smith (ISD)
Rachel Pratt (Imlay City)

Read More About Our New Members On Page 2

The Lapeer County ISD Special Education Parent Advisory Committee

The Lapeer County Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is a group of educators and parents representing our local school districts whose primary focus is to stay informed regarding Special Education plans and changes, current trends in Special Education at the County, State, and Federal level, and if needed, to assist and promote partnerships among parents and educators that benefit students with disabilities.

The PAC takes an active role in the development of the Lapeer County Special Education Mandatory Plan, a document which describes the delivery of special education services in Lapeer County. The PAC provides workshops and speakers from the county and state-wide programs which can richly serve not only the parents of children with special needs, but in many instances the individual with the disability.

The PAC meets at:
Lapeer County ISD Education and Technology Center
690 N. Lake Pleasant Road, Attica, MI.
6 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Please visit the ISD website at: www.lapeerisd.org

Meeting Dates

2019:

September 30

6:00 PM-7:00 PM

"Assistive Technology"

Business Meeting

November 4

6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

"Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy"

2020:

January 13

6:00 PM- 8:00 PM
Business Meeting Only

February 3

6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

"Getting & Keeping the First Job"

March 9

6:00 PM- 7:00 PM

"Estate Planning-Special Needs Trusts"

Business Meeting

May 4

Daytime Event Time TBA

"Rethinking Guardianship"

The Next Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) PRESENTS:

“Assistive Technology Supports”

Helping Students Through The Use Of Technology

**Lesley Bruder, OTRL from
the Lapeer ISD Will**

Present:

- iPads Apps
- Google Chrome Extensions and Apps
- Overview of Different Types of Assistive Technology



**Monday,
September 30, 2019
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Lapeer County Education and
Technology Center
690 N Lake Pleasant Rd, Attica
48412**

**Free Training
No Registration Required**

Conference Room 146



Parent Advisory Committee Meeting Dates 2019-2020

- September 30, 2019 - “Assistive Technology” / Business Meeting
- November 4, 2019 - “Skills for Effective Parent Advocacy” (Michigan Alliance for Families)
- January 13, 2020 - Business Meeting
- February 3, 2020 - “Getting & Keeping the First Job” (Michigan Alliance for Families)
- March 9, 2020 - “Estate Planning- Creating Special Needs Trusts” / Business Meeting
- May 4, 2020 - “Rethinking Guardianship” (Daytime Presentation w/ Luncheon – MAF)

You're invited!

Welcome New

Parent Advisor Committee (PAC) Representatives!

Hello! My name is Patricia Smith (Patti) I have 3 wonderful young adults. One of which is my nephew. All three are in the Lapeer County School District. All three have special needs (Fragile X). We've lived in Imlay city coming up on 8 years now. I did work as a medical assistant before moving here. I now am a stay at home mom. Although not my career choice the benefits of staying home to raise these crazy, lovable kids, far out weights any career. I'm new to a lot of obstacles that come with special needs territory. Aka social security, guardianship, placement after high school...etc. I however managed to muddle through. I love helping others. I believe it stems from needing help when I was younger. I too was in special education and struggled my whole school career. It wasn't until later in life that I learned it was ok to take longer than the person sitting next me. And most importantly it's ok not to know the answer right out of the gate. If you don't know the answer it's ok to do the research and find what works for you. In short I'm just like everyone else. Trying to live my best life and be the best mom, wife and respected adult.



My name is Anne Wilson. I am a mom to two great boys Adam and Vinny ages 10 and 7, who both attend Almont Orchard Primary. My oldest son Adam has special needs, and has had complex health issues since birth. Even with all of his challenges he is a very sweet and happy kid. My youngest Vinny has a big personality and is very social, and loves his big bro. He is already a great little advocate for his brother. They have a very special relationship with each other. I'm married to my high school sweetheart Mark, and as a family we love staying active. During the summer we are especially busy, and like to frequent the UP where we have a family cabin where we like to camp. I'm always looking for new experiences and adventures to expose my boys too.

I'm a gradate of Almont, and Western Michigan University where I received my degree in Social Psychology and Social Work, but I think I've always been a "helper". My parents are both in helping professions with my mother being a special ed teacher, and father being a state police officer. So I grew up with the belief that helping other was really important. As a child in school I was always the kid that liked to help the other kids who needed a little extra help, so I guess I was destined to go into the field I chose, and am well suited to be the mother to a child with special needs.

Due to Adam's complex health needs I have been a stay at home mom for the last six years. Prior to that I worked with at risk youth in a residential facility for three years, and was a Social Worker at Macomb Oakland Regional Center for ten years where I worked with adults with special needs, and their families in a variety of community placements. I always felt like I was empathetic to my clients and their families struggles and needs, but it wasn't until I became a mother to a child with special needs that I really had a true understanding of their struggles. I learned so much from the families and clients I had the privilege of working with. Hopefully some of my experience will be useful to PAC, and I can be a help to others.

During my work as a Social Worker I really started to see the value and importance of integration. When integration is possible whether it be in school, a community placement or employment I think it should always be pursued. My clients that were the happiest with the strongest supports were the ones who received an integrated education and remained active in their community after graduation. I am also passionate in seeing that students with special needs receive a fair, and equal education to what their neuro typical peers receive. Through PAC I hope to learn more about special educational services and supports, and use my knowledge to help in anyway I can.

Welcome New Parent Advisor Committee (PAC) Representatives!



My name is Melissa Bordogna and this will be our third year in Almont!. I have 4 children, 2 that are in the Almont School District and both receive special services for different reasons. Each one of my kids has had a mix of private, public and home education. I have been at stay at home mom for 16 years. In the beginning of my special needs story, I thought someone was going to come and give me all the answers, but I quickly learned that special needs/special education is a journey, individual to each of my children. There are many people that help along the way and I have found that some of the best information has come from a parent that has had some experience with special education. I think this opportunity will give me the chance to pass on some of my knowledge and help someone on their journey. I also look forward to learning some things that I can use to help my own children to become productive people in our community.



My name is Rachel Pratt. I have 3 wonderful boys ranging from 6-10 years old. All three go to Imlay City schools and love it there. My oldest has ADHD and impulse control issues and it has been an on going battle working with him since he was in preschool. I am a working mom-full time, but I am blessed to be able to work from home for a hospital in Utah. I am a medical coding supervisor and love my job! I am also a den leader for my youngest son's den in cub scouts and his soccer coach. I have been married for 14 years and am loving it!!! My husband is the minister at the Romeo Church of Christ and we love the family we have there. I have been really enjoying volunteering within our kids schools and various things in the community. I love being able to help others. I always have. Being able to be there for parents with special needs children, is an amazing opportunity. I love helping and supporting people. I am really looking forward to being a part of this community too.



Halloween Trick or Treat Cards



trick or treat
CARD CUTOUTS



Raising Children with Disabilities with Resilience and Disability Pride

A Weekend of Learning & Celebration for Parents of Children with Disabilities

Where: [Zehnders Splash Village Hotel & Waterpark](#), Frankenmuth, Michigan, (730 S. Main Street, Frankenmuth, MI 48734)

When: Evening of **Friday, September 27** through **Sunday, September 29** at noon. A detailed schedule will be sent to registered participants.

Who: Parents* of children with disabilities. * When we use the term parent, we are also including guardians and are embracing all types of families (i.e. same-sex partnerships, grandparents raising grandchildren, co-parenting, kinship and foster parents etc.). We support families of choice which can include parents, step-parents, domestic partners, neighbors, communities, religious leaders, and any other person the individual with a disability defines as a parent.



Registration Fee: This event costs \$75*please note refund for attending all weekend, \$25 will be returned to you after you participate in the whole weekend. Meaning this event is only \$50! Your registration fee is nonrefundable if you are unable to attend.

Please remember this includes your lodging, waterpark tickets and food for the weekend. The food and hotel costs alone are over \$800, if you were to pay for them yourself)



<http://www.herpowermdrc.org/parents-weekend.html>

Michigan Department of Education—Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) provides consultation, guidance, training, and resources to families and educational teams serving students who are Blind or Visually Impaired and/or Deaf or Hard of Hearing.



Low Incidence Outreach

Services include:

- Workshops and events for families and educators
- Braille, large print, and digital books for students
- American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Federal Quota products and textbooks
- Professional development materials and guides for teachers

September MDE Low Incidence Outreach Newsletter

Can Be Found At The Web Link Below:

<https://mailchi.mp/da0834671ca6/june-2019-newsletter-2445853?e=fd20d410f5>

Protect and Calm Kids with Autism in Unprecedented Ways

Prepare for first responder situations



News 2 You (n2y),

The way students learn evolved, so did n2y – transforming from print to digital to help individuals with special needs experience meaningful access to the world around them.

Check Out The Website Below For Great Resources:



Empower kids to make safer decisions

4 RULES OF SAFETY



Help them avoid dangers online



<https://www.n2y.com/blog/protect-and-calm-kids-with-autism-in-unprecedented-ways/>



Your connection to early childhood programs in Lapeer County

By subscribing to Text For "Tots" messages you will receive important information and tips for your kids ages birth to kindergarten entry.

Learn more about:

- Developmental screenings
- Preschool programs
- Nutrition
- Parent groups
- Local activities
- And more!

TEXT TOTS TO 33222

Funded by:



Family Matters

Learn about special education topics. Find resources to help you and your child.

What is Family Matters?

Family Matters is an outreach effort from the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education (MDE OSE). Family Matters provides parents with information about special education and other resources. See their website for various "Fact" sheets on a number of special education topics.

Visit our web page

michigan.gov/special-education-family-matters



Family Matters
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education

Advocating for Your Child
Being an advocate means to speak, write, or act on behalf of another person who may not have the knowledge, experience, or skills to advocate for themselves. Parents and legal guardians are the main advocates for their children. While parents may get help from other agencies, educators, private advocates, or professionals, they remain the central support for their children.

Things You Can Do as an Advocate for Your Child

1. Learn as much as possible about special education and your child's rights.
2. Keep an organized file of documents. Keep notes and copies of everything (e.g., individualized education program, progress reports, report cards, written requests for services, and correspondence) in a folder or file so you can find documents easily. Ask for a summary or notes from the meetings you attend.
3. Be prepared for meetings. Use relevant resources, such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP), to prepare for meetings. If you have an individualized education program (IEP), practice what is required to successfully implement it.
4. Build strong relationships with your IEP team and school staff. Be polite and stay calm even if it is a challenging situation. The more you can strengthen these relationships and come to agreements on issues, the more likely your child will benefit.
5. Assume the best. Most educators want the best for your child. If you cannot reach agreement, consider to hear and seek assistance.
6. Reference the Michigan Department of Education website, which provides many free webinars, learning opportunities, and individual parent practice services to help you enhance your advocacy skills.

Michigan Department of Education
1-888-320-8384
michigan.gov/special-education-family-matters

Family Matters
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
Students with a disability are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Schools must provide a FAPE through programs and services. The FAPE must meet the student's unique needs and provide an educational benefit.

To provide a FAPE, schools must:

- Create an individualized education program (IEP) for each child with a disability that is written specifically for that child.
- Provide special education services that meet your child's specific or unique needs.
- Provide related services so your child can benefit from special education. An example of related services is a hearing evaluation device.
- Provide appropriate accommodations to your child so he or she can effectively receive and benefit from the general education curriculum.
- Educate your child in the least restrictive environment (LRE), which means your child should be educated as much as possible in the general education classroom with children who are not disabled. Related services and accommodations are only allowed if it is needed to meet your child's specific needs.

What to do if you believe your child is not receiving a FAPE

Options for what you can do:

- Contact your school administrator
- Contact your local education agency (LEA) representative
- Contact your state or federal representative

Michigan Department of Education
1-888-320-8384
michigan.gov/special-education-family-matters

Family Matters
Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education

Individualized Education Program (IEP)
The IEP is a written document created for each student in a public school who receives special education programs and services. There are three basic reasons for the IEP: 1) to identify the student's needs; 2) to set goals that are important and possible for the student; and 3) to put services in writing that a school district will provide for a student.

The following are selected from the [Basic Education Act](#).

What's in the IEP?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires certain information to be in the IEP. The IEP team can look different, but must include:

- Parent
- At least one regular education teacher
- At least one special education teacher
- At least one representative of the general education curriculum
- At least one representative of the student's organization or disability rights group
- At least one representative of the state or local education agency
- At least one representative of the state or local education agency
- At least one representative of the state or local education agency
- At least one representative of the state or local education agency

When to do the IEP
An IEP must be developed for each child with a disability who is eligible for special education services. The IEP must be reviewed annually, or more often if the child's needs change. The IEP must be reviewed at least once a year, or more often if the child's needs change. The IEP must be reviewed at least once a year, or more often if the child's needs change.

Michigan Department of Education
1-888-320-8384
michigan.gov/special-education-family-matters

Lapeer County Community Mental Health



Providing crisis response for mental health emergencies for children (birth to 21) in the home or community.

To provide a mobile response team for children and their families who have a serious emotional disturbance and who are in crisis, and to reduce the need for hospital admission, or return to the hospital.

Our Mobile Team Provides

- Assessments
- De-escalation of the crisis
- Family driven and youth guided planning, including family therapy
- Crisis and safety plan development
- Information and education about mental health, and skill building
- Referrals and connections to additional community resources
- Working together and problem solving with other child or youth serving systems
- Visits with a Psychiatrist, as needed



- A specially trained team made of Master Level mental health specialists and Parent Support Partners who will respond to children and their families who are in a mental health crisis.
- C-M.I.C.S. will offer mobile services for children/youth in the school, community, home setting, or hospital (before an admission to an inpatient unit or following discharge from a psychiatric hospital), within the County of Lapeer.



Our mobile C-MICS crisis team is available to respond to families with a child in crisis during the following hours:

Monday thru Friday
9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M.

Sat., Sun., & holidays
Noon-8:00 pm



To request services outside of these hours call 810-667-0500 or walk in:

Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 PM.
at our main office

1570 Suncrest Dr., Lapeer, Mi.

After hours (24 hours a day):
Call **810-667-0500** or
1-888-225-4447 (toll free).

PAC Special Needs Mom-to-Mom Sale

Calling Moms & Dads to Buy or Sell Adaptive Equipment!

Please note:

- Table set-up is open from 8:00-10:00 a.m.
- Tables are FREE
- RSVP to reserve your table
- Vendor space is available upon request
- Teachers are welcome between 12-1 p.m.

PAC Special Needs: Adaptive Equipment Sale

When: Saturday, February 1, 2020 from 10 AM– 1 PM

Where: Oakland Schools 2111 N. Pontiac Lake Road,
Waterford, MI 48328

REGISTER AT:

<https://www.smores.com/08azn-join-us-at-our-event>

Bring items for children and youth with special needs, including:

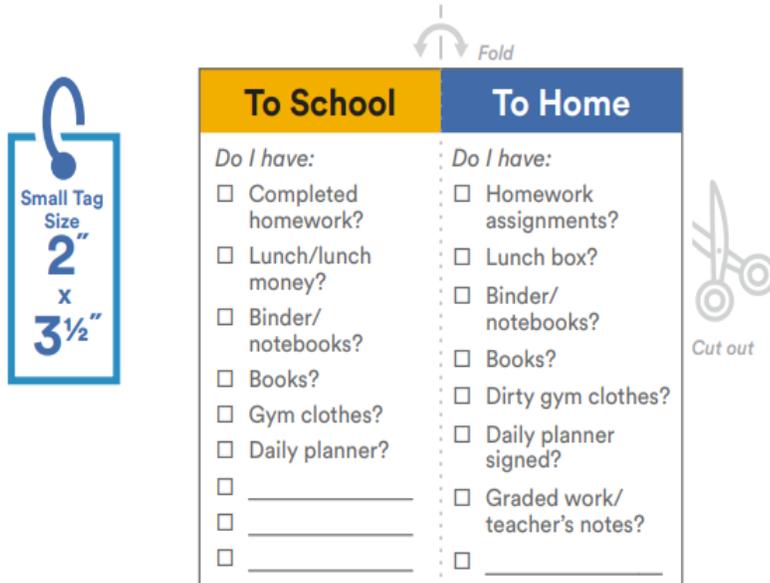
- Adaptive Equipment
- Therapy Tools or Supplies
- Educational Materials
- Toys, Games, or Books
- Specially-Designed Clothing

Understood

for learning & attention issues

Backpack Checklist Luggage Tags Use our sample lists for small and large tags, or create your own. Just slip your list into the tag and attach it to your child's backpack.

For a small (business card-sized) luggage tag (2" x 3½"):



Free Parent Resources

Visit

Understood.org

Parents want the best for their children. We do, too. For the first time ever, 15 nonprofit organizations have joined forces to support parents of the one in five children with learning and attention issues throughout their journey.

With the right support, parents can help children unlock their strengths and reach their full potential. With state-of-the-art technology, personalized resources, free daily access to experts, a secure online community, practical tips and more, Understood aims to be that support.

Download: Backpack Checklist

<https://www.understood.org/en/schoolLearning/learning-at-home/teaching-organizational-skills>



Youth Mental Health First Aid

The Michigan legislature passed a senate bill (31n) that allocates funding to enhance and expand the availability of mental health services and supports to general education students in Michigan. This includes a training model to help adults identify potential mental health issues, provide interventions, and provide treatment and support to students. Superintendents across the county elected to use the Youth Mental Health First Aid Training model.



In August, 18 school employees become certified instructors in Youth Mental Health. The goal, with the 31n mental health grant is to provide Youth Mental Health First Aid training to all middle and high school teachers by the end of this school year.