

Insider Information

Special Education

September/October 2019

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello Families! It's hard to believe another school year is starting. The staff has been working hard to prepare for this year and we are all excited to welcome the students back. New this year - a bi-monthly newsletter from our Special Education Department. These newsletters will include new updates, general information, and resources related to special education. If you would like to see a specific topic in the newsletter, please let us know. We welcome your thoughts!

We are confident and excited to start this year off strong and look forward to working together with you to ensure your child not only succeeds, but exceeds expectations.

Beth Jones

Director of Special Education & Pupil Services

BACK TO SCHOOL

Summer is coming to an end. You have prepared your children with supplies and are ready for a new year to begin. However, for a parent with a student with special needs, back to school means the start of a new year of IEP advocacy, new teachers, and new communications with your child's IEP team.

Here are a few tips to help you get ready:

- ★ Talk to your child - relieve some back-to-school jitters by talking about what to expect and answer any questions they might have
- ★ Establish a routine - focus on before and after school consistency (as much as possible). Discuss and plan any changes in routine ahead of time to prepare your child
- ★ Get yourself a new notebook - write down questions and concerns that you have as they come up. Include your child's successes and struggles. This information will be beneficial at your child's next IEP meeting.
- ★ Update the school nurse - contact Lisa Jensen via email (ljensen@peasd.org) to let her know of any medical changes or additional information you may have obtained from appointments over the summer

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND YOUR CHILD'S IEP

Your role as a member of your child's IEP team is invaluable from start to finish. Your child's teachers, special education providers and schools may change but you remain a constant in your child's life. You'll watch them learn, stumble, adapt and succeed.

As a parent, you can help your child develop self-awareness and self-advocacy skills that will assist them throughout their lives.

Things to Remember:

- ★ You can advocate for your child by being an active member of their IEP team
- ★ Your participation matters at every point in the IEP process
- ★ As a parent, your understanding and unique knowledge of your child is very valuable to the IEP team
- ★ Your IEP team wants your involvement in the development, implementation, and/or changes to your child's IEP

Learn more about parent involvement in the IEP by clicking this link: www.understood.org

SELF-ADVOCACY

What is self-advocacy?

Self-advocacy is the ability to speak up for what you need.

Being a self-advocate can help your child get what they want and need. You can help your child develop their self-advocacy skills at any age. It's best to start early.

How can you help at home?

- ★ Talk with your child about their strengths and weaknesses
- ★ Have ongoing conversations about their disability and what kind of support they need at home and at school
- ★ Praise your child when they ask for help or when they speak up for themselves
- ★ When a problem comes up, give your child a chance to solve it before stepping in

Additional resources on self-advocacy: www.understood.org

POSTSECONDARY TRANSITION PLAN (PTP)

Wisconsin state law requires transition planning to begin in school at age 14. The **PTP**, or Postsecondary Transition Plan, is provided by DPI. PTP is web-based and provides school districts with the ability to document transition requirements while also meeting individual student needs.

During this time in your child's education, it is important to begin thinking about making plans for the future. In the PTP process, your child considers what kind of work they would like to do and where they would like to work after high school. They will also have the ability to look into program options that teach them specific skills needed for the jobs that interest them. Your child is able to explore the transition skills needed while still in high school to prepare for the adult world.

Once your child is at least 14, you can prepare for the IEP by visiting the [WiTransition site](#). Here you can create a draft PTP or use the information on this site as a discussion starter with your child.

RESOURCES

[CESA 2 Parent Network](#)

[WI FACETS](#) (Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support, Inc.)

[A parent's guide to the PTP](#)

[Planning for the Future: Before Age 18](#)

TIG

The "Transition Improvement Grant" (TIG) is an amazing resource for information related to your child's transitions within school.

Learn more at:
<https://www.witig.org/>



QUESTIONS

We hope that you find this newsletter filled with helpful information. If you have any further questions or comments, please email:

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