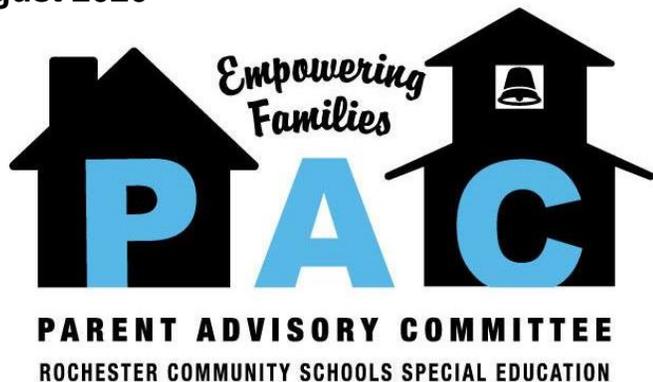


August 2020



The PAC is an organization dedicated to empowering Families of students receiving special education services through communication, education, and support with the purpose of obtaining the finest programs and services available within the Rochester community.

Our next PAC meeting will be held virtually at 7:00pm on September 22, 2020
a Zoom link will be posted to PAC Facebook before the meeting

Resources

WHAT IS [PAC?](#)

FOLLOW US ON [FACEBOOK](#)

GET INSPIRED ON [PINTEREST](#)

DISCOVER MORE ON OUR [WEBSITE](#)

SPECIAL EDUCATION [PARENT Q&A](#)

SPECIAL EDUCATION [TOWN HALL](#)

Seeking PAC Representation

We are seeking PAC reps for the following schools:

Brooklands, Baldwin, Hamlin, Hampton, Hugger, Long Meadow, McGregor, Musson, University Hills, VanHoosen, Stoney Creek High School and the new Virtual Campus.

Please reach out to our membership chair, [Erin](#), if you are interested in becoming a PAC rep for your school! We aim to have two reps per school.

FROM OUR CHAIR

Starting last Fall, most of the executive board members were new to leadership and fairly new to PAC. We were working with a brand-new Special Education (SE) administration at RCS and the first few months PAC worked on trying to bridge the past with what we would like to be in the future. And, then COVID. Enough said.

Since then, the executive board has stepped up to the plate and the new board has worked twice as hard as we did last year by meeting every other week. In May, we created a survey to find out the strengths and weaknesses of remote learning. We shared this information with RCS and together we held a Town Hall for SE families. We have had meetings with each SE administrator and we emphasized the importance of communication. Concetta Lewis, Special Ed Director, heard our concern and sent an email to those families with special needs shortly after. She asked PAC to join the SE administration to host another Town Hall a couple of months later.

Our emphasis and goal this year is to work on communication. Over a year ago we upped our involvement on Facebook to share more information to SE families. We are hopeful the new RCS website will be up this Fall so we can share resources there as well. We also created a Pinterest page and a YouTube channel. Our executive board has made it our priority to get information out to you so that you are better equipped. We hope this newsletter will keep you well informed. For quicker updates please follow us on Facebook.

We fully believe that shared information can help us help each other and move forward in a better direction. We encourage you to communicate with your team helpful tips and info about your child and in turn request helpful information on how you can help your child at home. As parents we don't always understand the teacher side and in turn teachers may not always understand the challenges at home. Open communication can help us all do our part to the best of our ability.

Ann

Oakland Schools Parent Advisory Committee

The Oakland Schools Parent Advisory Committee (OS PAC) is composed of parents of students with IEPs from school districts within Oakland County, appointed as representatives by their individual districts. Kim Herman and Michele Manhire are not only on our Rochester Community Schools PAC executive board, but are also our current RCS representatives for OS PAC. As representatives, Kim and Michele communicate information to the RCS PAC regarding Special Education events, programs, education, and guidelines.

You can learn more about the Oakland Schools Parent Advisory Committee and its resources by visiting their [website](#) and reviewing the Oakland Schools [Special Education Parent Handbook](#).

The [Michigan Department of Education Documents for Special Education](#) during Covid-19 and the free virtual events put on by the [Michigan Alliance for Families](#), which are often recorded for later viewing, may also be of interest to your family. Upcoming events include “Tips for Student Self Advocacy During Remote Learning” on August 27 and “Supporting your Child’s Learning at Home” on September 16.

Legislative Scoop

If there is one thing parents of children with IEPs know very well nowadays, it is the knowledge that their child’s school services are provided under a law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) which ensures a child’s right to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) based on their individual needs. But what isn’t always thought about is the fact that it wasn’t always in existence. It took many years of parents and disability advocates championing the cause with federal lawmakers to have this legislation come into being. It was through these past efforts that our children now have the opportunities they do to have a public school experience with their peers. Federal, state, and local legislators are all very much part of the process to ensure educational services continue for our children with disabilities, and parents keeping in touch with them is an important part of that process too, “still”. Here are the current legislators who are representatives for the boundaries of Rochester Community School District. We hope this information helps families to more easily communicate their needs, concerns, thoughts, or ideas to those in the position to help most... together we can keep education appropriate for all!

State and Federal Legislators

US Senator Gary Peters (D)

(844) 506-7420 / (313) 226-6020

www.peters.senate.gov/contact/email-gary

US Senator Debbie Stabenow (D)

(202) 224-4822 / (313) 961-4330

www.stabenow.senate.gov/contact

US Congresswoman Elissa Slotkin (D) - 8th District

(202) 225-4872

<https://slotkin.house.gov/contact>

MI State Senator Rosemary Bayer (D) - 12th District

(517) 373-2417

senrbayer@senate.michigan.gov

MI State Senator Mallory McMorrow (D) - 13th District

(517) 373-2523

SenMMcMorrow@senate.michigan.gov

MI State Representative Michael Webber (D) - District 45

(517) 373-1773

MichaelWebber@house.mi.gov

MI State Representative John Reilly (R) - District 46

(517) 373-1798

JohnReilly@house.mi.gov

Rochester Community Schools Path to Resolution

Who can help me?

The biggest question we get as PAC representatives is who can answer my questions? While you are always welcome to push the “talk to us” button on the RCS homepage or reach out directly to administrators, in an effort to keep things running smoothly, the following is the official process to address your questions and issues.

Your first step is always your child’s teacher or resource teacher. (The one who handles the IEP.) This is your case manager. If you have exhausted this option, the next step is your school principal. If that option has not worked out satisfactorily, your next step is to reach out to the appropriate supervisor. The supervisors are as follows:

[Natashia B. Smith](#), Supervisor for Early Childhood and Elementary. Oversees all early childhood, elementary special education services, resource and basic programs for CI, EI, and SXI. Collaborates with Supervisor of Adult Transition Program Services and K-12 ASD on ASD elementary students in basic programs.

[Tiffany Gauthier](#), Supervisor for Secondary Education. Oversees all middle school and high school Special Education services this includes resource and basic programs for CI, EI, and SXI. Works in collaboration with the Supervisor of Adult Transition Program Services on ASD middle school and high school basic programs.

[Genet Haise](#), Supervisor of Adult Transition Program Services and K-12 ASD basic programming. Oversees ATPS program and K-12 ASD basic programs. Collaborates with Supervisor of Secondary Special Education for secondary ASD rooms and Supervisor for Birth to Elementary for elementary ASD rooms.

If the supervisor is unable to resolve your issue, your next step is [Concetta Lewis](#), Executive Director for Special Education. Oversees all Special Education services. Or [Susan Demeniuk](#), 504 Coordinator. Oversees all 504 plans.

If by this point your issue has still not been resolved to your satisfaction, your next step would be appropriate cabinet members and finally, Dr. Robert Shaner, Superintendent for RCS. Contact information for Dr. Shaner and the Cabinet Members can be found on the [RCS Superintendent page](#).

Most importantly, don't forget us! Reach out to your school's PAC representative for guidance and support. You are why we are here!

PAC EXECUTIVE BOARD

CHAIRPERSON	Ann Ehlert	rcspacchair@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR PARENT ENRICHMENTS	Melissa Hoffman	melissa.bronstein@gmail.com
VICE CHAIR MEMBERSHIP	Erin Handzo	rcspacmembership@gmail.com
COMMUNICATIONS CHAIR	Kari Norton	rcspaccommunications@gmail.com
RECORDING SECRETARY	Kelsey Biswanger	rcspacsecretary@gmail.com
LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE	Michele Manhire	rcspaclegislative@gmail.com
BUDGET LIAISON	Kim Herman	rcspacbudget@gmail.com
PAST PAC CHAIRPERSON	Carrie Gregg	cgregg2005@gmail.com
RCS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Concetta Lewis	clewis@Rochester.k12.mi.us
RCS SUPERVISOR	Genet Haise	ghaise@Rochester.k12.mi.us
RCS SUPERVISOR	Tiffany Gauthier	tgauthier@Rochester.k12.mi.us
RCS SUPERVISOR	Natashia B. Smith	nsmith@Rochester.k12.mi.us
RCS 504 COORDINATOR	Susan Demeniuk	sdemeniuk@rochester.k12.mi.us