

June 2004

Volume 5, Issue 8

SEPTA would like to thank

Disability Services & Advocacy, LLC

www.dsausa.net

For sponsoring the mailing of our newsletters.

Inside this issue:

2004 Donation Titles 1

Scholarship Winners 1

Free Bowling over the 2

In District Pre-K 2

Family Fun Day 2

Cancelled

News From the Web 2

Summer Program at the South River Public Library... family events, movies and basic skills for free

The Linguistics of Testing and Evaluations... 3

The Advocate

The Advocate is the free public newsletter of the Special Education PTA of South River.

Published monthly from August to June of each year by the Executive Board Members of the SEPTA - this newsletter is mailed directly to families of classified students of the South River Public School District from the Office of Special Education.

Additional copies are available at the South River Public Library. Past editions of the Advocate can be downloaded from our website. Interested individuals may sign up for our electronic newsletter and a listing of other newsletters related to special education issues by visiting our website at: www.specialeducationpta.org

Questions related to the Special Education PTA as an organization, the services we provide, and our calendar of events can be answered by telephone at: (732)751-7157 or by email at info@specialeducationpta.org

If you would like to submit letters or articles, post information or contribute pictures to be included in future editions of the Advocate please contact our newsletter by email at: SRPTAAadvocate@aol.com

The Advocate

*"Every Child is Born with Wings...
Make it a Choice to Educate and Advocate
for the Chances for All Children to Learn to Soar"*

2004 Donation Titles for SEPTA Resource Library

The SEPTA of South River will be donating the following new books and computer software programs to the Parent Resource Collection of the South River Public Library.

Writing Measurable IEP Goals & Objectives

A guide to quick and effective writing of accurate and measurable IEP goals and objectives. By Barbara Bateman

Why Johnny Doesn't Behave

20 concrete "tips" to help you avoid behavioral problem. By Barbara Bateman

Active Learning for Ones

By Bourland, Cryer and Harms

Active Learning for Twos

By Bourland, Cryer and Harms.

Right-Brained Child in a Left Brained World: Unlocking The Potential of Your ADD Child

By Jeffrey Freed and Laurie Parsons

Multiple Intelligence: Helping Kids Discover the Many Ways To Be Smart

By Pat Huggins & Donna Wood

Read with Me! Stress-Free Strategies for Building Language and Literacy

By Shari Robertson and Helen Davig

Book and CDROM program where parents can print out lessons to assist child in learning to read: paired reading, echo reading, questioning, predict-

ing, wordless picture books, reader's theatre.

Away We Go! Book Shelf Vol.1 & 2

(part of the Fast ForWord Program); includes 5 reading books and a multimedia CDROM for each volume. Fast ForWord is a new reading being used in for some of the resource and self-contained students in the Elem. School level.

Exceptional Parent Magazine (which includes Exceptional Parent Annual Resource Directory)

Look for these titles on the SEPTA Resource Collection Shelf of the South River Public Library at the end of June 2004.

If you would like to have a book placed on hold for you, please see any of the library staff for assistance.

And the SEPTA Scholarship Winner is...

The Board Members of the SEPTA met with a very difficult and challenging task on May 5th.

In all the years that the SEPTA has been giving its annual scholarship we have never faced such a tough and difficult challenge in selecting a recipient for our scholarship.

Let us first say to all applicants who submitted work and essays:

"We were truly impressed by your work and your achievements. We felt very proud of your accomplishments, your inert self-esteem and your drive to continue on a path / goal to the career you have chosen for your self."

After a long deliberation we are proud to announce Heather Chichanowski and Joel Springer as the 2004 SEPTA \$250.00 scholarship winners.

Good Luck to all of our graduating seniors and our sincere best wishes in succeeding in all your dreams!

NEWS FROM THE WEB:

www.special-kids.com

Launched by Special Kids Speech & Skills Development Resources, this new website offers access to exciting new services, products and research about educating preschoolers, children and teens with autism spectrum disorder (s), Down syndrome, Cerebral palsy, hyperlexia and other learning challenges.

Notice:

We are sorry to announce that the SEPTA

Family Fun Day at Varga Park has been cancelled.

Unfortunately, we did not receive enough responses from parents/adults offering to help with the running of this event.



Free Summer Programs at the So. River Library

This year, the South River Public Library will be offering a summer reading program that will host a lot of “family friendly events” where parents and children of all ages are invited to participate in many of the fun activities planned for June 28th through August 19th.

The theme for this years program is “Iditarod” which will encompass many cool ideas and events for the very young child to 8th graders and their families.

New components of this summer’s programs are the **Family Event nights which will feature a craft and/or activity followed by a movie showing,**

Idita-read basic skills for reading and math for 4th-8th graders (which will meet from July to August),

a young adult and parent summer book discussion group

And don’t miss the Library sponsored Ice

Carving Event where our own Iditarod Ice Sculpture will be created by Ice Works at Daley’s Pond on August 19th.

Don’t miss out on the fun!

Registration starts June 28th from 7-9pm at the library.

Look for your mailing on these programs to arrive in your mailbox soon.

For more information, please call the South River Public Library at (732)254-2488.

In District Pre School Experiences Music, Movement and a Whole Lot More.....

Since the beginning of this year, students of Ms. Janice’s AM and PM Pre-K class have been visited monthly by musicians of the East Brunswick Academy of Music. The students have been taught songs incorporated with various musical instruments as well as fun and interactive musical movement games. Students also gain self-esteem for their encouragement in being able to explore new things in a positive and rewarding environment while work-

ing on social skills such as “turn taking”, “listening to & following directions” and working /playing in an organized group model.

It is the second year that the SEPTA has provided this program to the students of the in-district preschool handicapped classes. The SEPTA would like to thank all involved for their generous help and support. SEPTA would like to thank the teachers of the East Brunswick Academy of

Music, Ms. Lisa Michallis (Dir. Of Special Education), Mr. Sherman (Elem. Principal), Ms. Janice Weston and the S.R. Board of Education for their approval to allow us to provide this program to the preschool children. We thank you for your support.

*Funding for In-District Pre School Music Appreciation is derived from the Kidstuff Discount Coupon Books ~ the **only** fundraising event SEPTA runs.*

Thank you to all who purchased/ supported it.

AMF Bowling Lanes offering Free Bowling Game (s) over the summer

The SEPTA was very pleased to find out that Terry, the General Manager at AMF Mid State Bowl in East Brunswick is making free bowling available to students during the summer of 2004. This information was obtained by us through the Daisy Assoc. of East Brunswick.) You will need to contact AMF Mid

State Bowl to receive a form (one form per child) that when submitted to the lanes will give your child a bowling pass good for one game per day throughout the forthcoming summer for that one child. Please specify if you will need more than one form when you contact AMF Mid State Bowl. If you have any questions or need

additional information on this program, please contact them at (732) 254-1400.

Enjoy the summer and happy bowling everyone!

Remember the **KOOL KIDS** bowling league (for classified students and their siblings) registrations start in September 2004. Please look for a future announcement concerning registration date and time in the September edition of the Advocate .

The Linguistics of Evaluations and Testing...

As a parent, did you ever receive a testing result for your child or an evaluation report and just “wonder” about the terminology used? Ever wonder if the test used for evaluating your child’s present level of performance was the “optimum one” available to show your child’s abilities to the best extent while considering all the intricate components that comprise his/her disability?

Well here are some “common terms” concerning testing that every parent should be aware of and how they translate for parents reading the test results.

Norm –Referenced Test:

Compares the child’s testing score to a group of “typically developing children” from across the county.

Criterion– Referenced Test:

Measures a specific set of skills and the level of their mastery based on the child’s age and/or grade level.

Reliable Assessment:

Is an assessment, when performed at different times, will provide the same test/assessment results. Ex. When the test is administered on two

different days, the still have consistent test scores/results.

Valid Test:

A test that measures what it is supposed to measure and also gives the same results as a similar instrument or test. You should be able to obtain the same error patterns from one test or another.

Standard Score:

This describes a score based upon the standard deviation from the test population. Typically a result/mean is 100 with a standard deviation of 15 points. Most school districts will qualify a student for services if his/her score falls 1 1/2 to 2 standard deviations below that mean. So to sum it up- if your child tests at below 85 or above 115, your child would be considered to qualify for services in most school districts.

Percentile Rank:

This refers to a converted standard score. It refers to your child scoring at or below a specific score.

Ex.: A percentile rank of 89% means that your child scored better than 89% percent of the testing population.

Age-Equivalent:

This score result refers to

the age range of children who scored the same result on a given test.

Ex. Your child may be chronologically 5 years of age but could receive an age equivalent test score of 4 years based upon his or her responses to the test.

Now that we can understand the technical terms used in testing and evaluations; lets take a look at the 10 items/criteria of a good assessment (McCauley and Swisher 1984):

1. Test manual should describe where the subjects came from, their gender, race, and socio-economic status.
2. For each subgroup or age level there should be at least 100 subjects.
3. The Manual should describe how items were included or excluded from the test. It is important to note that pilot testing and field study should be conducted before the test is standardized to help the authors decide which items to include in the test.
4. Means and standard deviations for each subgroup should be listed.
5. The test should be compared to a similar test to make sure it is valid and results should be congruent to the testing results of the similar test.
6. The test manual should show that the test has good predictive results. Does it identify children as accurately as other tests/instruments?
7. Test –retest study should be performed. A group of test subjects should be given the test twice to see if the scores are the same.
8. Manual for the test should contain evidence that two administrators (of the test) can give the test and receive the same score.
9. Manual should list thorough and easy to follow directions for test administration.
10. Manual should list any special qualifications required of the administrator giving the test.

Information on testing requirements/criteria and terminology of assessments are sighted from the company, Super Duper Inc.’s 2004 product catalog. For more information on a specific test (and what that test is testing for) please visit their website, www.superduperinc.com

The SEPTA of South River

81 Johnson Place
South River, New Jersey 08882
Information Line: (732) 651-7157
E-mail: info@specialeducationpta.org

NONPROFIT ORG

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 39

We're on the Web!

www.specialeducationpta.org

**"Every Child is Born with Wings....
Make it a Choice to Educate and
Advocate for the Chances for
All Children to Learn to Soar"**

*The SEPTA of South River was founded by a group of parents who
wished to promote the education and advocacy rights
of the special needs children of their community..*

By providing parents with the tools and effective advocacy skills ~

We endeavor to keep this goal a reality so that

***Every Child Will Fulfill Their Dreams
and Learn to Soar.***

Interested in
obtaining a copy of the
**SEPTA of
South River's
S. E. Resource CD-Rom?**

Contact S.E.PTA

At (732) 651-7157

Or Email us at:

info@specialeducationpta.org

Cost: \$7.50

(includes ship/handling fees)

Help Wanted:

Would you like to help with our
Newsletter, or Website?

Have you come across an inter-
esting book, article or website
that deals with education, special
ed., or parenting that you'd like to
share with others?

Write a short summary and we'll
love to put it in our newsletter
and web page.

Up Coming Events:

June:

June 1:

***Senior Awards
Night at S.R. H.S.
Auditorium***

June 2:

***SEPTA Meeting:
South River Public Library
6:30pm Parent Forum
7pm General Meeting***

Topic:

***New Board Officers
Parent Support of SEPTA***

July:

July 28:

***SEPTA Meeting
South River Public Library
6:30pm Parent Forum
7pm General Meeting
Topics:***

KidsStuff Discount Coupon Book

Fundraiser

***SEPTA Parent Information Booklets
Calendar for 2004-2005 school year***

August:

August 4th

***SEPTA Meeting 7-9pm
South River Public Library***

September

September 8:

***SEPTA Meeting 6:30-9pm
South River Public Library
Topics: Fundraiser &
Membership for 2004-05 yr.***

October:

Oct.4: SEPTA Workshop:

***"Learn How To Manage
It All"***

***Learning the tips and tricks
that will help you negotiate and survive
in the world of Special Education.***

6:30pm at the South River Public Library

****Please register by September 27, 2004***

**Visit our website for more information of
this event.**