



NEXT STEPS UPDATE

JUNE 2009

Hello Everyone,



Although many of us are already looking toward summer, we have still not closed out this school year. Many of us still have PPTs, graduations and transitions coming up. This update is focused on information that will be relevant to all of us over the coming months. As always, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail with any questions you might have.

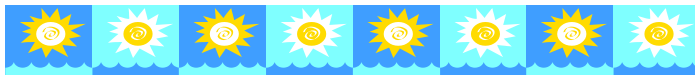


Jane

NEW NEXT STEPPERS!

Welcome to the newest group of Next STEP graduates. We met in Middletown for four weeks and had wonderful participation by all parents and professionals in attendance. We have added a fourth session to the program entitled Working on Improving Student Outcomes: Becoming a Parent Leader. We spent time learning about state and district data using Strategic School Profiles, State Annual Performance Reports and some district-specific improvement plans. It is our intention that this information will help parents be more able to participate in their children's school district at a level that will improve outcomes for all students. Thanks to all of you for your contributions, especially Luisa Rivera Pizarro for attending the state level focused monitoring steering committee.

To show our appreciation to all Next STEPs participants CPAC has hosted an annual picnic for the past five years and we hope to see you all there. As always, please know CPAC is a resource for you in your efforts to help other families in Connecticut.



SAVE THE DATE!

Friends and Family Summer Picnic

Saturday, July 18th at Camp Harkness
in Waterford

To register or for more information, please
contact us at 800-445-2722 or cpac@cpacinc.org.



You can also register online at
www.cpacinc.org/picnic

All are welcome but registration is necessary to
ensure that we are prepared. Thank you!

FEATURED RESOURCE: Transition to Adult Life

The new version of "[Building a Bridge: A Resource Manual for High School Students](#)" has finally been released. For those of you with students 16 years of age and older, this is a must read. Parents of younger children should look at this as well to see how long term planning works and to perhaps incorporate it into the way you plan each year for your child. A CPAC Parent Consultant, Beth Reel, serves on the state Transition Task Force and is available to answer questions on this detailed planning stage.

*****If you are unable to access any online document please call CPAC to obtain a copy*****

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center

338 Main Street, Niantic, CT 06357 • 800-445-2722 • www.cpacinc.org

E-mail: cpac@cpacinc.org • New Haven Office: 203-776-3211

What's going on in Connecticut:

Two Surveys:

- The State Department of Education, Department of Special Education Parent Survey on family satisfaction and involvement in special education has been sent out to 30 towns. Please call us or check our website to see if your town is being surveyed this year. It is important that these surveys get filled out and returned.
- For parents whose children have graduated or aged out of services in 2008 there is a different survey, called the Post School Outcome Survey. This is also currently being disseminated and should be filled out. The goal of the survey is to track how successful our students are after high school. This information is then shared with school districts as feedback on whether or not our students were successfully prepared for life after high school. The data from previous years is available now on the State Department of Education website under [Special Education Publications](#).



Special Meeting: Economic Stimulus Efforts:

The Parent Work Group for the State Department of Education will hold a special meeting on June 11th from 10 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. The purpose of this meeting is to brainstorm ideas for districts to support parents more effectively. Many school districts in Connecticut will be getting economic stimulus dollars (American Recovery & Reinvestment Act [ARRA] funding) and one of the ways they can use the money is to increase supports to parents.

We want to be prepared to help the districts do this wisely when they have the money and come to us for help. Anyone interested in sharing their ideas is welcome to attend. Please contact Jane for further details of the meeting location. Call or email jhampton@cpacinc.org.

District Determinations:

Each state is required by law to make a decision regarding each local district's compliance with IDEA. The report evaluates the districts on data from the 2007-08 school year and places them into four categories: meets requirements, needs assistance, needs intervention and needs substantial intervention. These decisions are made based on data collected on each district and Connecticut has put all of the local district's [Annual Performance Reports](#) online for public access.

UPDATE on LD and ED Guidelines:

Both documents continue to be under construction. They are at different points in their process of revision but CPAC is committed to posting them to our website when finalized.



CPAC has had the Connecticut Legal Services guide on special education reprinted for families. It is an easy to read guide with helpful information on topics including suspension and expulsion.

Also, we are currently updating our [Guide to Educational Terms](#) (English and [Spanish](#)) and should have copies available in a few weeks.

If you have families that you are working with and feel that either of these guides would be helpful to them, please feel free to call for a free copy, or have them call us at 1-800-445-2722.

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