The Fall Issue 2026

OB SEPAG Connection

Old Bridge Families. Shared Experiences. Stronger Partnerships.



INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

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Building relationships and finding community.

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Bringing family perspectives into conversations that matter.

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Sharing information, building confidence, and finding your next step.

Welcome!

By Stefanie Babits & Diana Costa
Old Bridge SEPAG Co-Leaders

Welcome to the first edition of **The SEPAG Connection!** As your SEPAG co-leaders, we're also fellow parents of children receiving special education services here in Old Bridge. Between our families, we have children in prek, elementary school and high school, so we bring experiences from different stages of this journey—and we're still learning, too. We care deeply about working collaboratively with the district, bringing family perspectives into conversations, and strengthening the partnerships that support our children. We also want the SEPAG to be a place where you feel comfortable asking questions, sharing experiences, and finding support. Whether you're new to special education or have been navigating it for years, we hope you'll find opportunities to learn, grow, and connect with other parents who understand. We're glad you're here.

Connecting
Making space for families to meet and support one another.



Starting the Year with a Wave
In August, our Welcome Waves helped us start the school year with a little extra connection! It was an opportunity to introduce families to the SEPAG, have some fun, and remind parents that there's a community here for them. It was a perfect morning at the **Cottrell Farm Sprayground**. Looking forward to more events like this when the warm weather returns!



Connecting with Our Community
We enjoyed connecting with families at the **Old Bridge U-Knighted Resource Fair** on October 7! Thank you to everyone who stopped by our SEPAG table to say hello, ask questions, and learn about the support and resources we offer. Whether we were meeting for the first time or catching up with familiar faces, we appreciated the opportunity to listen, share, and build connections within our school community.

Kicking Off a Year of Partnership
Our October 19th SEPAG kickoff meeting brought families together to hear from Dr. Sasso and Dr. Tuohy, and receive district updates. During our parent-only session, families spoke openly, shared experiences, and raised questions and concerns. We'll follow up with administration to share themes and work together together toward solutions—putting family voice and collaborative problem-solving at the heart of our SEPAG.



Make Time for Connection This December



Parent Support Group Returns!
Wednesday, December 2nd | 6:30–7:30 PM
Glenn School · 185 Cindy Street
Join us for a welcoming, informal gathering to meet other parents and caregivers, share experiences, and know you're not alone. Open to families of Old Bridge students with disabilities, including those attending out-of-district schools.

December SEPAG Meeting
Monday, December 14th | 7:00–8:30 PM · Zoom- to register: tinyurl.com/obsepag2627
Stay informed, share your perspective, and connect with other families. We'll begin with district updates and questions, followed by our parent-only conversation. Whether you're joining for the first time or returning, your voice is welcome.

Advocating
Bringing family perspectives into conversations that matter.



Your School. Your Connection.
Our **Parent Liaisons** help strengthen the connection between families and the SEPAG. They welcome parents, share information and resources, and help us understand common questions and concerns across our schools. Their input helps us bring a broader range of family perspectives into district conversations. Find your school's liaison on our 2026–27 Parent Liaison List and reach out to connect, ask questions, or share what matters to your family.



Partnership in Action at Voorhees
The **sensory hallway** at **Voorhees Elementary** shows how parent voice can lead to meaningful change. Through concerns shared by families, advocacy from Diana Costa and the SEPAG, collaboration with Principal Dr. Arico, and PTA fundraising, a shared idea became a resource for students to move, regulate, and reset. It's an encouraging example of families and schools working together to support students.

Putting Family Priorities in the Spotlight
For the month of October, our **BOE Candidate Spotlight** invited candidates to share their perspectives on special education, inclusion, family voice, and partnership. This nonpartisan series gave all candidates an equal opportunity to respond and helped families learn more about issues that matter to our community. Thank you to the candidates who participated and the families who followed along!





The Work Between Meetings

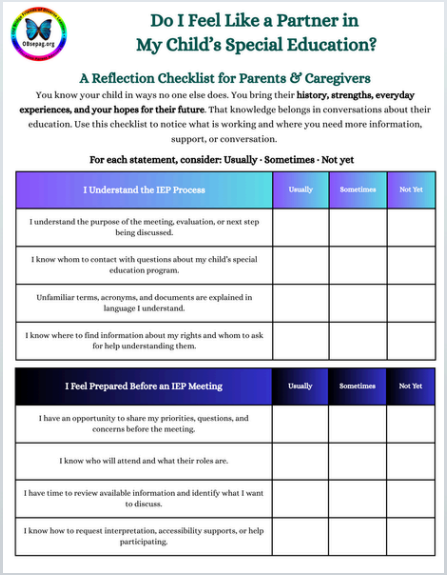


Listening to families is where our work begins. Between SEPAG meetings, we connect with administration to bring forward shared themes, ask questions, and explore solutions together. We also listen to parents and help connect them with information and support. We respect families' privacy while using what we learn to guide conversations about the experiences of students with disabilities throughout our district.

Empowering
Sharing information, building confidence, and finding your next step.

NEW RESOURCE!
Do I Feel Like a Partner in My Child's Special Education?
A Reflection Checklist for Parents & Caregivers

Our new **checklist** helps you reflect on your experiences, recognize what's working, and identify where you need more information or support. Use it to organize your thoughts and prepare for conversations with your child's team. You don't need to have every answer—your knowledge of your child is an important place to start. **Great to use for your next IEP meeting!** Explore the checklist



Do I Feel Like a Partner in My Child's Special Education?

A Reflection Checklist for Parents & Caregivers

You know your child in ways no one else does. You bring their **history, strengths, everyday experiences, and your hopes for their future**. That knowledge belongs in conversations about their education. Use this checklist to notice what is working and where you need more information, support, or conversation.

For each statement, consider: Usually - Sometimes - Not yet

I Understand the IEP Process	Usually	Sometimes	Not Yet
I understand the purpose of the meeting, evaluation, or next step being discussed.			
I know whom to contact with questions about my child's special education program.			
Unfamiliar terms, acronyms, and documents are explained in language I understand.			
I know where to find information about my rights and whom to ask for help understanding them.			

I Feel Prepared Before an IEP Meeting	Usually	Sometimes	Not Yet
I have an opportunity to share my priorities, questions, and concerns before the meeting.			
I know who will attend and what their roles are.			
I have time to review available information and identify what I want to discuss.			
I know how to request interpretation, accessibility supports, or help participating.			



Resources for Your Journey

Have you explored our updated website? Visit our growing collection of resources for parents and caregivers. Whether you're new to special education or looking for information along the way, we hope you'll find tools that help you feel more informed and confident. Bookmark the site and share it with another family!

Your Questions Can Help Other Families

Is there a topic you'd like to understand better or a resource you wish you had? Let us know! Your suggestions can help shape future newsletter topics, resources, and conversations. Chances are, another family has the same question.



Let's Stay Connected

Have a question, need help finding information, or want to get involved? Reach out, follow along, and help us connect with more Old Bridge families.

Email: obsepag@gmail.com
Our website: www.obsepag.org
District website: Old Bridge SEPAG page
Facebook: Old Bridge SEPAG
Instagram: @ob_sepag

