

GHS PTSA Special Needs Committee

Information

Presentation

PTSA Background

PTSA and PTA are synonymous for this purpose

- The PTSA encourages the establishment of special education sections in any association where parents of children with special needs can be promoted and study groups can be formed to further interest in and understanding of children with special needs
- A special education section functions as an integral part of the PTSA, much as the various committees function. Joining a special education section means, therefore, becoming a member of the PTSA. Although it is governed by the Bylaws for Local PTA Units the section may adopt a set of standing rules to provide details not included in the by laws. The framework of the organization should be kept simple.
- The financial needs of a special education section, usually limited to the purchase of study group material and the cost of authorized projects, are provided for in the regular budget of the PTSA. Fundraising activities to cover special needs of the section should conform to the policies of the California State PTA. Funds so derived should be deposited in the treasury of the PTSA and earmarked for section use.

San Gabriel Special Needs Committee

- The Gabrielino High School PTSA voted to form a Special Needs Committee in the Fall of 2014 in response to members requests for knowledge about their special needs child, feelings of isolation and stigmatism
- This committee was written into the bylaws as a standing committee and given its own line on the yearly budget
- Administration liaison between District and Committee

Committee Mission Statement

The mission of the Gabrielino High School PTSA Special Needs Committee is to serve San Gabriel's students with special needs, their teachers, families and caregivers. In collaboration with the SGUSD, we work to foster excellent education and an informed and supportive community for all our city's children.

San Gabriel Special Needs Committee Objectives

- Provide information and support to parents of children with special needs, so they can help their children maximize their potential
- Collaborate with the school district to assist staff in most effectively helping children
- Provide information to all parents and community members about children with special needs, so that they may understand and support all children
- Help all children understand and appreciate challenges faced by children with special needs
- Work for adequate legislation and funding for children with special needs

Define Special Needs

- Children with:
 - Learning and processing disabilities
 - Physical challenges
 - Speech and language difficulties
 - Social/emotional issues
 - Mental retardation
 - Autism

Organizing a Special Needs Committee

Members

- PTSA President
- Chair (s)
- Board of Education Liason
- District Representation
- Teachers
- Parents
- Other community members

Committee Chair Requirements

- Knowledgeable about and sensitive to special needs children
- Works in constructive way with teachers, principal, staff and parents
- Can keep personal issues separate from committee – no personal agendas
- PTSA/PTA member
- Can volunteer time

Recruiting Members

- Recruit members from across our community- parents from both special ed and general ed, teachers, staff, community members and district representation
- Expertise in the following areas is welcome
 - Special Education, Communication, Events, Research, Leadership, Legislation and ELL Community and translation

What the Committee Wants To Accomplish

- Educate both parents and students within the district and community- General Ed and Special Ed
- Fundraise
- Act as liasons and partners
- Monthly support meetings
- Yearly conference to educate not only parents but all staff - both general ed and special ed
- Public forums to gather information and data
- Special needs website with information including links

Requirements for Success

- All committee members involved in developing programs, participating, helping
- Committee members representing various stakeholders
- Good communication of programs, issues, resources
- It is important to train or use trained facilitators for public forums and/or conferences

Requirements for Success (con't)

- Expert speakers – strict vetting for research based, proven topics
- Commitment of time
- Ability to listen
- A healthy sense of humor and a thick skin

What's next for the San Gabriel Special Needs Committee??

- Recruit new members – currently we have four
- Get the word out we are here
- Obtain SGUSD Board approval for collaboration
- Meet with each school site PTA to present committee and support group