

*Helping parents and guardians of children with special needs by providing professional and parent-to-parent support and education*

PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BROOKLINE

## PARENT PARTNER PROGRAM

### **Who we serve**

Are you new to the special education or 504 process?

Would you like more information about your rights?

Do you want help navigating the system for your child who has a disability?

Do you want to learn more about your role in your child's education?

Are you new to Brookline?

Are you interested in getting more involved but not sure how best to work with your child's educational team?

### **What we do**

Provide parents and guardians with education, coaching and support in the IEP and 504 process.

Explain District policy and practices to parents and guardians.

Interpret the rights of parents and guardians under Federal and State law.

Talk with parents and guardians by phone, e-mail or in person in a convenient location.

Provide support to prepare for meetings about your child at school.

Offer a partner to attend educational meetings with you.

Work with school staff to promote and support full engagement of parents and guardians.

### **Who we are**

Amy Ruth Nevis, M.S. is our professional Parent Partner Coordinator. She is a recently retired Special Education Administrator with almost 35 years of experience in public schools and as the Executive Director of the Judge Baker Children's Center. Amy is the parent of two

adult sons, one of whom had special education needs. She uses an impartial, collaborative and compassionate approach in her work with parents and school staff.

Peer Parent Partners are parents who have experience with a child with special needs. They receive specialized training, and work closely with the Coordinator. All Parent Partners are dedicated to supporting their peers with respect and empathy.

## **Our philosophy**

Families are primary decision-makers for their children, and key members of their children's educational teams.

Collaboration between home and school is always good for children.

No parent or guardian should struggle alone.

All questions are good questions and all concerns can be addressed.

All parents and guardians deserve any support they need to understand their rights and the rights of their children.

Parent Partner support is respectful, strength-based, individualized and culturally appropriate.

## **Confidentiality**

Parent Partner Program services are confidential. Our staff do not have access to any students records or information except that shared with us by a parent or guardian. We do not have direct communication with any school staff concerning any identified student without explicit consent of the parent or guardian.

## **How to Contact Us**

For an initial telephone screening, parents may contact Amy Nevis:

Phone: 617-730-2457

Email: [parentpartnerbrookline@gmail.com](mailto:parentpartnerbrookline@gmail.com)

School staff and outside agencies may also refer parents. To make a referral, please give parents Amy's contact information and obtain permission from the parent for Amy to contact them. Email the parent information, student name and school, and a description of the referral concern. Amy will initiate a phone screening to determine the appropriateness of the referral.

Staff may also consult with Amy directly.

**NOTE:** Parent Partners do not directly address questions or concerns about a student's specific services or eligibility for services. Parents with these questions will be supported in working with the appropriate District staff member.