



ASPED Families Seeks New Chair and Additional Advisory Group Members

Are you interested in getting to know and provide support to other families with students in special education? Would you like to help be a voice for students with disabilities and their families in Alameda?

ASPED Families seeks a new chairperson (or ideally two co-chairs) AND additional advisory group members to help lead the group in the 2021-22 school year. ASPED Families is a volunteer, parent-run group that provides family support, educational events and other opportunities for families with students with disabilities in Alameda. ASPED also strives to represent the needs and interests of Alameda's diverse special education community including meeting regularly with district special education leadership. ASPED also supports increased inclusion and understanding of students with disabilities through support of the Ability Awareness events.

The chair works with a small advisory group of parents (with input from the broader special education community) to determine the direction and specific activities of the group. ASPED also collaborates with other groups including ALCANCE (the AUSD Latino Achievement Roundtable), the new Alameda Mosaic Educational Advisory Committee, the North Region SELPA and various school PTAs. ASPED is formally affiliated with the Alameda PTA Council and has a small budget. The outgoing chair is available and willing to provide on-boarding and transition support to the new chair(s) as needed.

Students with disabilities have faced great challenges in the last year and a half, and as we look forward to the 2021-22 school year, there are great opportunities for special education—including an historical increase in funding from state and federal sources and new leadership at the district level. This year offers a unique opportunity to forge an improved relationship between special education families and AUSD.

If you are interested in either *chairing the group or joining the advisory board* or would like more information, please contact the outgoing chairperson, Heather Clapp Padgette, at hpadgette@yahoo.com.

FAQS

What are some examples of the type events that ASPED Families sponsors?

Events held in previous years include the following:

- An annual special education town hall with AUSD leadership;
- Speaker nights with local special education advocates and other experts;
- Classes for families on 'IEP basics' with DREDF; and

FAQs (cont'd)

- First-ever Special Education Board of Education Candidates forum in 2020.

How many individuals are members of the ASPED Advisory Group?

Approximately 6 to 8. The number is flexible and can be determined by the Chair(s) and current advisory board members.

How much time does participation in the advisory group take?

Approximately 2 hours per month-- time commitment varies by time of year and activity. ASPED is asked to participate in other district and community group meetings that occur at various intervals. Advisory board members may be asked to share responsibility for representing ASPED at these meetings and reporting back to the group. In addition, there are several individual roles that ASPED advisory members may be asked to help out with including Communications (updating website, helping out with newsletter preparation, publicizing events, etc.) and Ability Awareness. Members may also be asked to help out with organizing events. The chair puts in more time in coordination activities.

How many members does ASPED have?

Currently, ASPED doesn't have "members" per se, but it does maintain an email list of 300 for distribution of periodic newsletters and updates. ASPED also has a social media group.