

# 2026 Debbie Esposito Parent Leadership Award



The 2026 Debbie Esposito Parent Leadership Award recognizes a Special Education Parent Advisory Group (SEPAG) that has demonstrated exceptional leadership, collaboration, and sustained engagement on behalf of the entire special education community within their school district. This award honors the dedication, compassion, and strength that Debbie showed in her work at SPAN.

The award reflects the partnership and collective impact, emphasizing that it is not the effort of a single individual, but the result of coordinated collaboration. Award recipients will be recognized at the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Special Education (OSE) State Advisory Council's 4th Annual Special Education Celebration, scheduled for June 11, 2026, at the Learning Resource Center-Central (LRC-C).

## *Nomination Process*

- The SEPAG must be parent-led and active for more than one year.
- Nominations can be jointly submitted by both the SEPAG and the district representative. This joint nomination reflects the collaborative spirit at the heart of the award.
- Nominees must submit documentation illustrating how they embody collective impact in action.

## *Selection Guidelines*

- Nominees will be evaluated based on their demonstrated ability to foster meaningful collaboration with families and districts, build sustainable leadership capacity in special education, and empower others through innovative and inclusive family engagement practices.

## *To Apply*

- Click the link or scan the QR code and answer the questions, including 2 essay questions: <https://tinyurl.com/DEaward626>
- Submission Deadline: May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

For more information, please contact  
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